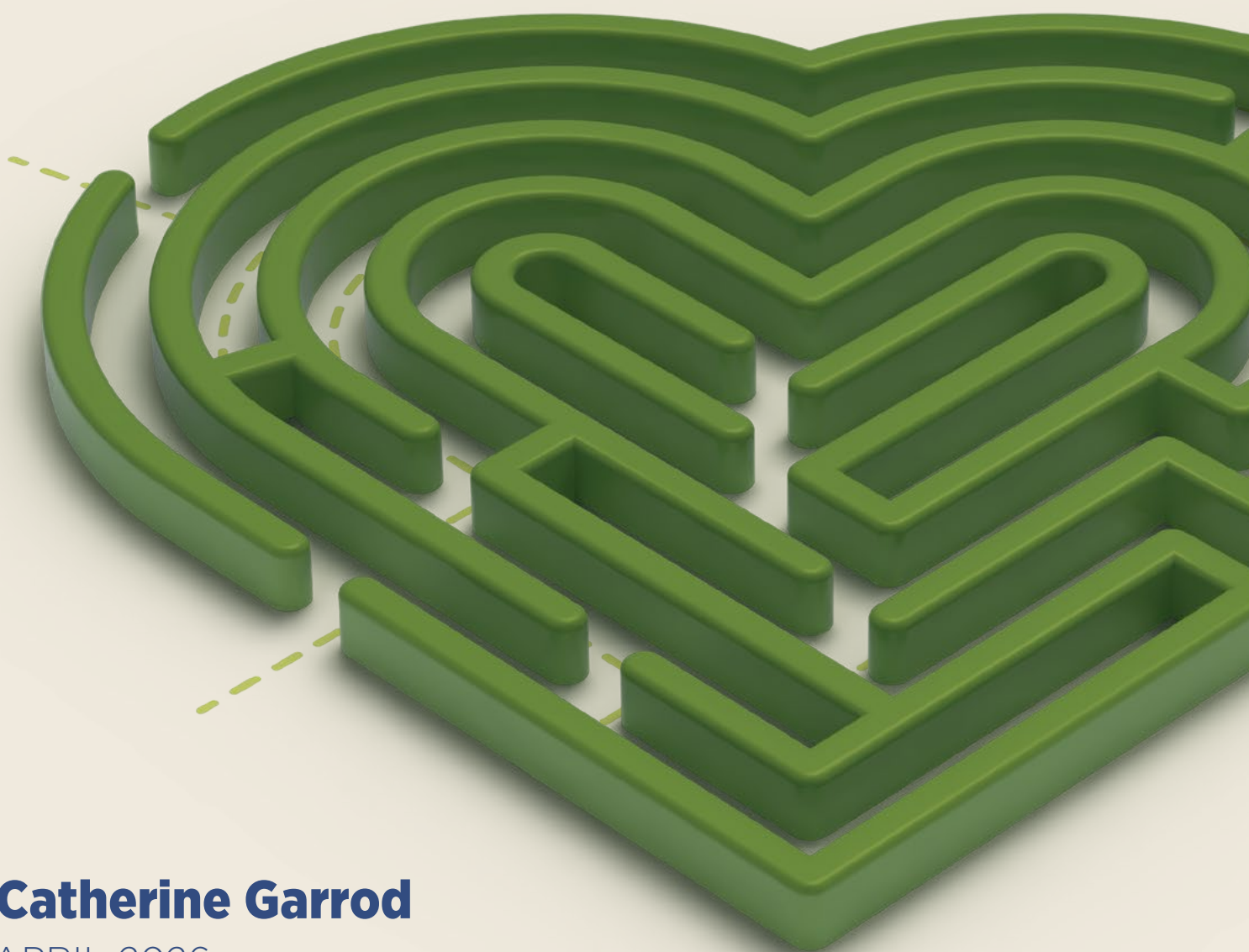


Involving supported people in commissioning

A guide for anyone involved in commissioning and procurement of social care services



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About this guide



Iriss is a Scottish charity. The people at Iriss work to help make social care better for everyone in Scotland. Iriss received funding from the Scottish Government to run a project on involving people with lived experience and disabled people in the commissioning and planning of social care support.

For this project, Iriss held an in person all day workshop with members of People First (Scotland), a disabled people's organisation for people with learning disabilities, from across Scotland and developed this guide with their feedback.

This guide is for commissioners and anyone working in the commissioning and procurement of social care services. The guide is written in plain words to be accessible.

Terms used in this guide



Below are explanations for commonly used words and phrases in this guide.

Social Care covers all aspects of personal and practical support and services for children, young people and adults who need help with daily life.

Commissioning is the way that social care is planned and delivered for people receiving support. Throughout this guide when we say commissioners we are referring to social care commissioners. Commissioners work for local councils and are responsible for planning the support provided in the local area from support providers or care providers. Often commissioners are responsible for managing a big budget to commission or plan services for social care.

Involving people with lived experiences. It is important that commissioners listen to people getting support when deciding what support or services to fund. This is sometimes called involving people with lived experience or involving Disabled People.

Supported Decision-Making allows people with disabilities to make choices about their own lives with support from a team of people they choose. Through Supported Decision-Making people with learning disabilities and others should be able to be fully involved in the commissioning and procurement of social care.

If you would like to see more about this, members of People First (Scotland) have made a [film about Supported Decision-Making](#). They took part in an [IMPACT network](#) looking at involving people with a learning disability in Commissioning across the UK. “We said that Supported Decision-Making is key to the effective participation of people with a learning disability in all decision making processes. Our film describes what Supported Decision-Making is and how it should be implemented in Scotland.”

About commissioning

The members of Peoples First were asked five questions. These are below with their responses which have been gathered and themed.

1. WHAT IS GOOD COMMISSIONING?

- Good commissioning and procurement involves people who are receiving social care support in the planning and buying of that support.
- It is about individuals and their representatives being involved in the decisions at every level of commissioning affecting their support.
- It is about supported people (particularly people with learning disabilities) and their representative organisations being involved in strategic commissioning decisions as well as the everyday decisions about their support.
- It's about supported people being valued, respected, listened to and involved in the ongoing decisions about their support.

2. WHAT'S NOT WORKING WITH SOCIAL CARE AND COMMISSIONING?

Money and funding

- There is not enough money/funding for social care.
- Cost of living – not enough money for people for food and bills.
- Self directed support – not always being listened to.

*"No control over my own money.
I get told how to spend my money."*

Transport and travel

- People are not able to travel anywhere and are often stuck at home all day every day and they become isolated and lonely.
- The Council won't pay for taxis to day centres or other social activities.
- Supported accommodation – not always listened to by support workers.

Social care support hours have been cut or stopped

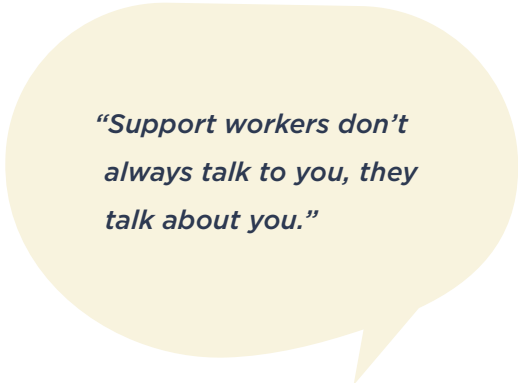
- Social care support stopped during COVID and never started again.
- Some people have had social care support stopped and left with no support.
- Overnight support stopped.

Not always listened to by professionals, social workers and support workers

- GP and other appointments are too short.
- We need time to understand information and ask questions.
- Professionals talk to the support workers etc. and not the individuals.



"We want to be treated with respect."



"Support workers don't always talk to you, they talk about you."

3. WHAT'S WORKING WELL FOR PEOPLE RECEIVING SUPPORT?

The right support at the right time

- Good communication.
- Having support for as long as you need it.
- Treated with respect.
- Support visits on time and every day.

"Right person providing right support at the right time."

Social support

- Support to go out in the evenings.
- Family support – strong relationships with extended family.
- People First who reach out and support our independence with speaking up.
- Listening to people getting support not just family, carers or professionals.

"Self directed support – able to recruit own staff, manage money, decide on the care and support I need, living the life you want. There are rules but SDS is flexible. It led to improved mental and physical needs."

Other support

- Equipment – wheelchairs, walking frame, etc.
- Housing – People having the right to their own home.
- Good transport links and help with paying for transport.
- Support for disabled people to be parents.

"Person led – speaking to the person, not just their personal assistant or support worker."

4. WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE?

Social care Funding

- There is a lack of funding everywhere. More money and funding needed.
- Making support more consistent across the country.
- Funding for wheelchairs and equipment.

Supported Decision Making

- Make commissioning easier to understand.
- Listen to disabled people when planning services.
- We want to feel valued.



"We need to be in control of our lives."

Flexible support visits

- Support to go out during the day or in the evening.
- Right support at the right time.
- Better training for support workers and social workers.
- Support to go out in the evenings – flexible support.

Support with communication and understanding information

- Not expecting everyone to go online.
- Help with money and welfare benefits.
- Better communication.
- Accessible transport and help with travel and timetables.
- GP appointments – having more than five minutes, need time to explain and understand.
- Having someone with you when going to appointments.

5. WHAT IS 'ONE THING' FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY COMMISSIONERS TO REMEMBER?

*"We are the experts.
Commissioners, councils
and the government should
ask us how we would
like money spent."*

*Less talk and more action –
more funding for social care.
Too much focus on process
and systems, not people."*

*"There needs to be a
human rights approach
not just person led."*

Person Led

- We want to be listened to, valued and respected. Listen to our opinions about what support we need. We are not invisible, we are people with feelings.
- Commissioners should live in our 'shoes' for some time.

Choice about where we live and support to live in the community

- Long Stay Hospitals for people with learning disabilities should be closed.
- Group living isn't always a choice. Some people want to live on their own in their own home.

Support to Work

- We want to work. More employment opportunities and apprenticeships for people with learning disabilities.

Thanks



Iriss would like to thank the members of People First (Scotland) who worked with us to create this guide.

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Scottish Government
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