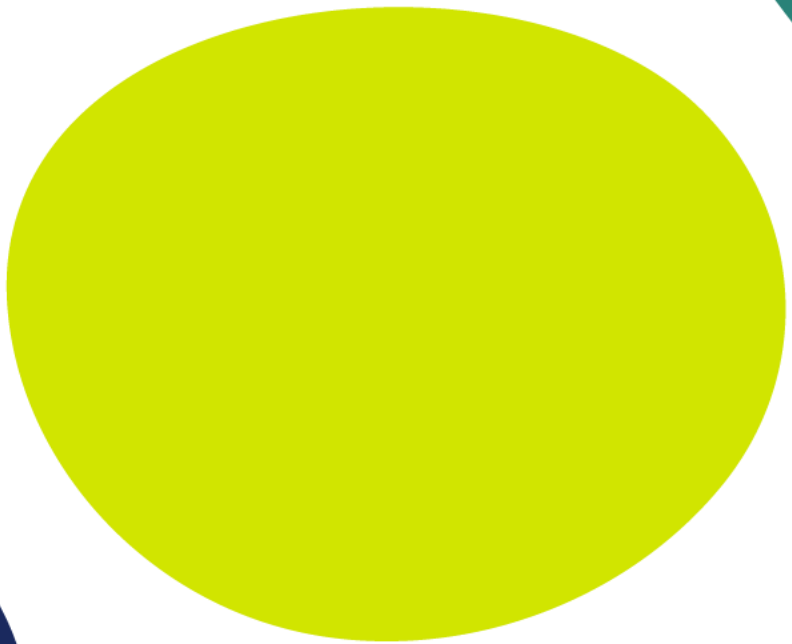
Learning from supported self-evaluation in Adult Support & Protection

An evaluation of workstream four



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We would like to thank all those who participated in this evaluation for generously sharing their learning experiences from involvement in workstream four. Thanks also to those that provided feedback on drafts of this report from partnerships, inspection agencies and Scottish Government.

Executive summary

This report presents a summary of key findings from an evaluation into a new initiative to develop skills, knowledge, and capacity around self-evaluation in Adult Support and Protection in Scotland. Iriss led the evaluation, using interviews and thematic analysis, to understand the impact of a process of supported self-evaluation (referred to as 'workstream four'), including challenges, strengths and implications for next steps. The purpose of the evaluation was to help shape a wider programme of support for robust multi-agency self-evaluation in Adult Support and Protection across Scotland.

Background to workstream four

In July 2023, Scottish Ministers requested that the Care Inspectorate lead the second phase of joint inspection of adult support and protection in collaboration with Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS) and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS). This second phase incorporated four workstreams and blended scrutiny with improvement-focused activity. Workstream four, led by HMICS, applied a unique approach to building capacity and promoting learning across the sector through supported self-evaluation. The joint inspection team, comprised of the Care Inspectorate, HIS and HMICS, worked with volunteer partnerships to co-design a methodology, looking specifically at adults at risk of harm for whom it is difficult to determine the three-point criteria as reflected in Quality Improvement Indicator (QI) 5.7 within the Quality Improvement Framework for Adult Support and Protection (QIF). Section 3(1) of the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 defines an 'adult at risk' as someone who meets all of the following three-point criteria:

1. They are unable to safeguard their own wellbeing, property rights or other interests
2. They are at risk of harm
3. Because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity, they are more vulnerable to being harmed than adults who are not so affected

The QIF sets out the importance of self-evaluation to drive continuous improvement in adult support and protection (ASP) and is a tool which will underpin future ASP joint inspection activity. Specifically, QI 5.7 relates to: 'Effective support and early intervention for adults with escalating risks for whom a straightforward application of the three-point criteria is difficult to apply'. 'Very good' for this indicator states:

‘We recognise where vulnerability and risks need escalated. We have early intervention pathways into other support services – including out-of-hours. We have trained staff readily available. We have effective systems to identify if there are multiple referrals for individuals. We act quickly to assess and manage their risks. And offer them help and support.’ (p.38)

Partnerships

Volunteer partnerships were offered two ways to engage with this work:

1. To work collaboratively with the joint inspection team and share in the design and delivery of all supported self-evaluation activities. This included participation in delivery and collaboration groups, development of methodology including record reading, staff survey, analysis of supporting evidence, focus groups and completion of final self-evaluation. These partnerships are referred to throughout this report as ‘self-evaluation partnerships’. Five partnerships volunteered to participate in this element of the programme and conduct self-evaluations of their adult support and protection arrangements for the cohort of interest. One partnership withdrew partway through the process due to involvement in other inspection activities. Details of the initiatives evaluated by the five self-evaluation partnerships are discussed in the overview report and are summarised in appendix 1.

2. To participate collaboratively with the joint inspection team in delivery and collaboration groups and development of the methodology, and in a desktop exercise to explore ways to strengthen their approach to adults for whom it was difficult to determine the three-point criteria. This would not include any reading of records or other self-evaluation activities. Instead, using the evidence from record reading in cohort one above, they would explore how to strengthen their approach to adults for whom it was difficult to determine the three-point criteria through a desktop exercise with the joint inspection adult support and protection team. These partnerships are referred to throughout this report as ‘learning partnerships’. Three learning partnerships participated in workstream four. Details of these learning partnership initiatives are summarised in appendix 2.

The number of partnerships expressing an interest in being part of workstream four exceeded the number of available partnership places.

Iriss evaluation findings

Iriss conducted an evaluation through interviews with participants to better understand the impact of workstream four. Aims of the evaluation were to explore the extent to which workstream four built on multi-agency local partnership capability to undertake self-evaluation in ASP and what was most and least effective in contributing to robust self-evaluation in ASP.

Workstream four strengthened capability by helping partners learn through practice, build confidence and skills, and work collaboratively across roles and agencies. The co-design of shared tools and using the QIF framework supported consistency, while fostering a culture of reflection, learning, and continuous improvement. It also improved the use of data and evidence, linked self-evaluation to governance and planning, and enabled learning to be shared and applied more widely across partnerships and other public protection areas.

Key challenges and strengths about the workstream four approach were identified.

Challenges

- Frustration at times from partnerships was related to expectations at the outset of what would be involved in workstream four and what was communicated in the initial brief. This meant navigating uncertainty as the workstream evolved.
- The impact of the timeframe and that the volume of information to be reviewed and discussed added pressure on staff capacity.
- Some technical challenges related to using SharePoint.
- The legislative context impacted on the file reading aspect of workstream activity.

Strengths

- Partnerships highly valued collaboration, learning together and the diversity of roles involved in workstream four.
- Partnerships valued the self-evaluation tools that were co-produced, reflected on how they are using them, and plans for their future use.
- The importance of having space and time for participation in the workstream.
- Feeling safe to have honest and sometimes difficult conversations.

- The communication, support, and responsiveness of inspection partners was highlighted as being excellent by self-evaluation and learning partners.
- Participating in workstream four supported self-evaluation partnerships to identify potential gaps and issues to see where improvements could be made.
- Professional curiosity was cultivated and supported by data analysis.

Suggestions

Feedback from participants in relation to what would further support robust multi-agency evaluation included:

- Creating a shared space for people to connect, learn, develop ideas, and access peer support for ASP self-evaluation.
- Support with adapting self-evaluation tools created through the workstream process.

Next steps

Workstream four was a new initiative and the evaluation surfaced what was impactful, effective, and difficult. The evaluation captures shorter-term influence and initial learning from partnership involvement. The learning from workstream four will directly shape national initiatives including the ASP Learning and Improvement Programme that includes the ASP pathway (part of the draft Scottish Learning and Improvement Framework for Adult Social Care Support and Community Health (SLIF)), as well as the Continuous Improvement Subgroup of the National ASP Implementation Group. Section six of this report makes recommendations and outlines how learning and insights from this evaluation contribute to key components of the ASP Learning and Improvement Programme to support robust multi-agency self-evaluation.

1. Introduction

Workstream four aims and objectives

Through workstream four, the joint inspection of adult support and protection team aimed to work with volunteer partnerships, using the Quality Improvement Framework developed in workstream two, to undertake a programme of supported self-evaluation. The focus was on quality illustration 5.7 and those cases where it is difficult to determine the three-point criteria. Workstream four was a process through which the joint inspection team could collaborate with partnerships to assess the strengths of initiatives designed to address early intervention and prevention (see appendices 1 & 2 for more detail on these initiatives). It also provided an opportunity for partnerships to work alongside the joint inspection team to develop and implement the methodology and develop a suite of tools to share with the wider sector. Workstream four aimed to share learning and promote a deeper understanding about self-evaluation approaches and its impact on improvement work.

Workstream four had two key objectives:

1. Jointly evaluate initiatives that partnerships deployed to support decision making about adults at risk of harm for whom it was difficult to determine the three-point criteria. Use the adult support and protection quality improvement indicator 5.7, which considers early intervention, prevention and trauma-informed areas of practice, to support evaluation of the initiatives.

2. Jointly develop a supported self-evaluation methodology with partnerships. Thus, providing partnerships with an extensive learning opportunity and insight into self-evaluation and improvement.

In addition, other agreed key aims were:

- To better understand the lived experiences and outcomes of adults at risk of harm where there are escalating risks, repeated presentations or continuous referral to services and for whom it is difficult to determine the three-point criteria.

- In collaboration with partnerships, develop and deliver a programme of supported self-evaluation. This will support the development of the partnerships' capacity to independently conduct self-evaluation using the quality improvement framework for adult support and protection.

- Engage with partnerships to explore the joint delivery of adult support and protection arrangements to:
    - Understand the impact of early and preventative interventions on outcomes for adults at risk of harm.
    - Understand the impact of multi-agency planning meetings, including interagency referral discussions on positive outcomes for adults at risk of harm.
    - Identify and promote good practice, support national improvement through strategic engagement, constructive dialogue, and information sharing.
    - Develop a comprehensive suite of tools and templates for self-evaluation of adult support and protection, to be published online for all partnerships in Scotland to use.
    - Share learning through the publication of an overview report of findings.

Workstream four process and activities:

Self-evaluation partners

Phase 1

This involved planning, engagement, and developing the methodology. A delivery group led progress after consultation, supported by collaboration groups across the country. Together, they co-designed key parts of the self-evaluation approach, including criteria, guidance, templates, surveys, and reporting tools.

Phase 2

This focused on collaborative evidence gathering and analysis through a joint self-evaluation team (JSET). Key elements included:

- Joint working: The inspection team and partnerships worked together in a JSET to complete all evaluation activities.
- Supporting evidence: Documents were reviewed collaboratively using a structured template to improve accuracy, transparency, and shared understanding.

- Staff input: Surveys and focus groups captured staff experiences, adding depth and context to the evaluation.
- Record reading: Partnerships reviewed case records using local arrangements, with findings jointly discussed and analysed to assess impact.
- Lived experience: Efforts were made to gather feedback from adults at risk of harm in a sensitive, trauma-informed way.
- Evidence analysis: All data was assessed against a quality framework, with strengths and areas for improvement agreed jointly, supported by external validation.

Phase 3

This involved reporting findings through a self-evaluation template rather than a formal report. Partnerships and the inspection team worked together to complete the template, either collaboratively in meetings or led by partnerships with follow-up feedback. The completed templates were presented to relevant committees to inform improvement planning, with inspection team members supporting discussions, sharing learning, and promoting ongoing improvement.

Learning partners

Learning partnerships took part in a collaborative improvement process alongside the inspection team. They refined their initiatives through tabletop exercises, case studies, and discussion, using evidence from earlier work and self-evaluations. Key activities included sharing documentation, developing case studies, engaging in group exercises and focus discussions, and reviewing self-evaluation tools and national best practice. This helped partnerships identify what worked well and where to improve, with responsibility on each partnership to apply the learning going forward.

2. Evaluation approach

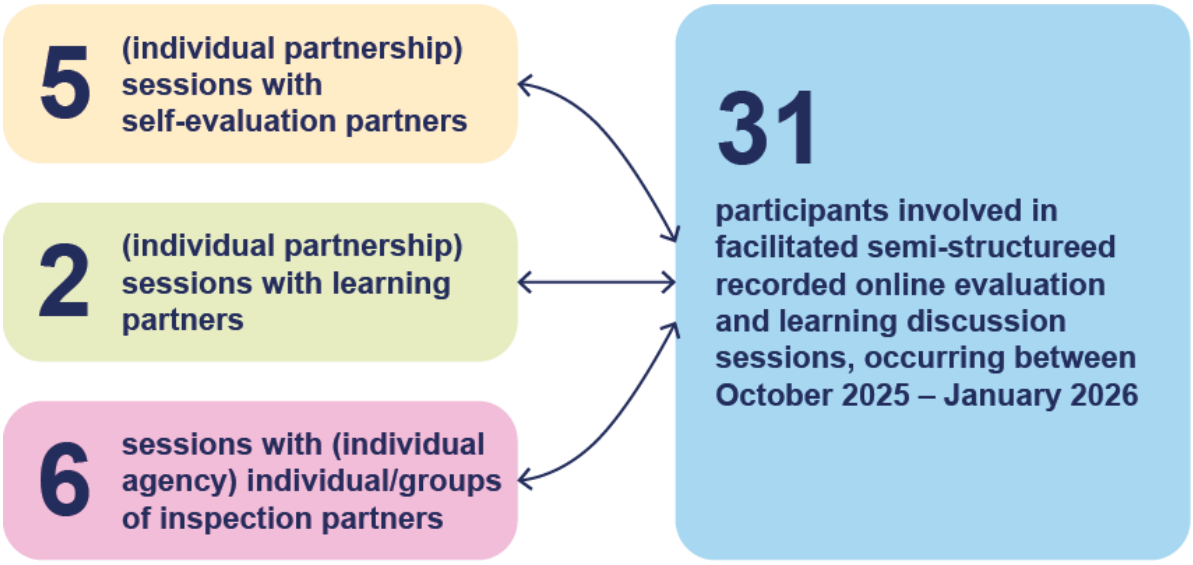
Aims

The overview report addressed objective one, while this evaluation related to capturing participant learning as part of objective two. Outputs, tools and learning from workstream four will inform next steps to support self-evaluation in the wider sector through the ASP Learning and Improvement programme. This programme, led by Iriss, aims to support multi-agency local partnerships to undertake robust self-evaluation within ASP to inform local and national improvement.

The aims of this evaluation included exploring:

- The extent to which workstream four built on multi-agency local partnership capability to undertake self-evaluation in ASP.
- What was most effective towards building on multi-agency local partnership capability to undertake self-evaluation in ASP.
- What, if anything, was less effective in contributing to robust self-evaluation in ASP.
- The learning of the Joint Inspection team from workstream four activity.

Method



Qualitative data was captured through semi-structured online evaluation sessions with a total of 31 participants. Information sheets and questions were used to guide the conversation and were shared with participants in advance.

Participants were from a variety of roles, agencies, and professions within partnerships and inspection agencies. One learning partnership respectfully declined to participate due to time pressures and having previously provided feedback on their experience during the workstream process.

Analysis

Transcripts of the recordings were thematically analysed using a blended approach (Howley, 2019, Johnston, 2023) drawing on inductive and deductive thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2022). This approach allowed for coding to build on existing themes (deductive) while also affording space for development of new themes (inductive).

Iriss drew on existing themes (deductive) from the SSSC's 'Involving People Plan,' (SSSC, 2019) and the National Standards for Community Engagement in Scotland which arose from the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

Strengths, challenges and implications from across the wider thematic framework (see appendix 3) are presented in this report.

Limitations

Not all partnerships were able to participate in this evaluation, therefore, not all views are represented in this report. All inspection partner agencies took part in interviews, as did the five self-evaluation partners. Of the three learning partners, one declined to participate due to lack of capacity. An interview with another learning partner was partially completed as participants were called away due to operational need. Despite attempts to reschedule, the interview wasn’t completed.

3. Challenges

This section looks at key challenges about the workstream four process and the impact on undertaking self-evaluation activity, including navigating uncertainty, time, processes, and the legislative context.

Navigating uncertainty

Navigating uncertainty was a challenge in relation to the scope and delivery requirements of workstream four.

Frustration from partnerships related to expectations at the outset of what would be involved in workstream four and limitations of the initial project brief. The evolving nature of the initiative meant navigating uncertainty about what was involved, including the challenges this presented in terms of resource planning.

> ‘It was definitely an evolving process and I think we all underestimated how much would be involved in the process… how involved and how time consuming it actually was. But definitely… it's absolutely beneficial.' (self-evaluation partner)

Time, processes and capacity

Time, processes and capacity was a challenge in relation to balancing the intensity and pace of the work with partners’ capacity to engage meaningfully in collaboration, review, and reflection.

Partners acknowledged the impact of the timeframe for workstream four. Some felt that this was unrealistic and that the collaboration window was too short. Space for collaboration and co-design was also impacted by the volume of information to be reviewed and discussed as part of the process. One inspection partner suggested that participants may have gotten more out of those sessions if they had been day-long events (whilst acknowledging the challenges around this).

Some felt it would have been helpful to spend more time in the design and thinking phase to support moving on from workstream four and considering how to use and adapt tools that were developed.

The frequency of workstream meetings was challenging at times with some at short notice. Some of the resources to be reviewed were lengthy and the volume of information shared was felt by participants. Capacity to review documents meant some colleagues were ‘wearing dual hats’, straddling

operational and strategic duties. For some partnerships, capacity was the biggest barrier to getting staff involved in self-evaluation.

> ‘I think it's probably harder now than it was a few years ago. But I do think that's probably something that we were trying to manage so that we're not doing it at a time that's not suitable or when we've got loads of capacity issues, people are off sick because there's loads of vacancies … I think we are trying really hard and every time we do self-evaluation we let the staff across all agencies and services know about it and know that they can get involved.’ (self-evaluation partner)

Participants described frustration at times when the process felt repetitive and lacked clarity, but once participants had gone through the process, the reasoning for the approach became clearer and made sense towards the end.

Legislative context

Navigating legislative and information-sharing constraints was a challenge because it limited participation in file reading and created additional demands on planning and resources.

Workstream four was not an inspection set in the regulations and legislation; it was a voluntary arrangement with partnerships relying on their local arrangements for multi-agency audits. These arrangements were variable in nature in terms of the agencies involved. This meant that inspection partners could not read any of the local partnership records with a case synopsis being developed for and read by the inspection partner to help inform discussions with colleagues in local partnerships.

Power dynamics were acknowledged in relation to challenges presented by the legislative space:

> ‘…you want to get that power imbalance addressed… you don't want to say to partnerships we've got the legislation, you have a duty to provide the records because that gets you back to that inspection language. But in order to see what you need to see to make the best determination about the strengths and areas for improvement it might be that in the future we need to tread that fine balance between, we'll use the legislation to see the records that we need to see versus what local arrangement have you got and is it good enough and strong enough to make a determination.’ (inspection partner)

Self-evaluation partners commented on shifting from what they had thought they were going to do, to what they were able to do because of the legislation in relation to the approach to file reading and GDPR concerns.

The legislative space for information sharing was described by self-evaluation partners as extra work with impact on planning and resources. Though this caused some stress and anxiety, participants found working through challenges to come up with a methodology for file reading both valuable and interesting. There were also comments about increased confidence to carry out self-evaluation from knowing what is involved, who should be involved and the resources required to help inform planning.

Technology

Managing access and navigation within SharePoint was a challenge particularly as involvement developed and the number of users increased.

SharePoint was used for document sharing and storage, which some partners found accessible and easy to navigate, while others had difficulty locating and accessing documents. The volume of users who required access to SharePoint was highlighted. At the outset, permissions were granted for a certain number of people in partnerships. As the project progressed and more people got involved, the requests for access ‘snowballed’ (inspection partner). Learning from this experience prompted inspection partners to consider limiting the number of people who have access to SharePoint, with partnerships having their own area in the system, with further discussion required about how access might be facilitated.

4. Strengths

This section outlines strengths of the workstream four process and highlights what participants valued and what supported them to carry out self-evaluation including collaboration, new relationships, good communication and co-designing tools. These processes increased knowledge, confidence and relational capacity as well as having ripple effects in other areas of public protection.

Collaboration and learning together

Workstream four was highly collaborative and involved people from a range of roles and agencies. The process of doing and learning together increased confidence and knowledge about self-evaluation. One partnership shared an example of drawing on workstream four learning to write a paper to propose a new approach for partnership auditing.

Inspection partners described workstream four as a space of collaboration and learning, helping build on and develop their own skills in self-evaluation. They valued being 'at the grass roots of it and building it up' (inspection partner) with colleagues in partnerships, sharing knowledge, learning and perspectives.

> '…I think once we got over the hurdles…I think being part of something which in fairness… was new to the inspection team as well… this was new to us all. So we're learning together.' (self-evaluation partner)

Some self-evaluation partners highlighted that being able to get involved at the start of the process had been beneficial. Inspection partners commented that people were keen to be involved even earlier in the development of the work but that the timeframes for the work couldn't accommodate that.

Diversity of roles and skills

The diversity of workstream participation was a strength shared in the evaluation. The value of different staff coming together to discuss cases and how this contributes to improving outcomes for adults with risk was underlined:

> '…[it] affirmed that all those practitioners are going to take that back to their work and their frontline duties. And just there were just lots of comments and nuggets of information that the different operational staff that were involved in file reading shared…' (self-evaluation partner)

Participants reported the excitement of operational staff to be involved in the desktop exercise, appreciating the opportunity this afforded local staff to connect and meet inspection partner agencies.

Protected time for file reading training and the opportunity to learn from someone else's casework was valuable. The shared learning from those in strategic roles engaging in self-evaluation alongside operational colleagues was also noted.

> '... we've seen some ripple effect of that, of people taking it back and arranging group supervision sessions back in their teams. So that's demonstrated the efficacy of involving operational staff in self-evaluation work, because that's undoubtedly going to help with reflective practice and their approach and response to adults at risk of harm.'(self-evaluation partner)

Partnerships reflected that involvement in the workstream had prompted discussions with managers around resource planning to help take forward further related work. Participants valued senior management being alongside front-line staff in self-evaluation and how this helped ensure that those who were closest to practice were involved.

Some participants were new to their teams while others had been there for many years. Some felt they were at the beginning of their self-evaluation journey while others felt they brought prior knowledge, skills and experience from practice. Some colleagues from inspection partner agencies were on secondment from their substantive roles to support workstream four, while others brought experience of involvement in co-ordinating and planning inspections.

There was some concern that knowledge and learning about self-evaluation would be lost as people move on from roles through retirement or to other posts which would impact sustainability and momentum. Among the reflections shared was a recognition of collaborative interdependency with other multi-agency colleagues in helping to ensure that knowledge and partnership learning was not lost during transitions. Peer support, sharing of learning within and across partnership areas, was an area of further development to support robust multi-agency self-evaluation. A shared online space for this was suggested.

Timing of involvement was highlighted as some colleagues joined the workstream part way through to step in for other team members. The importance of recording and capturing decision making was highlighted as being important going forward to further support involvement of colleagues joining later in the initiative. The importance of chronologies was also highlighted in helping to support understanding of progress.

Roles, relationships, and new dynamics

Collaboration in workstream four created new dynamics between roles. For some, the workstream afforded an opportunity to have discussions with the strategic inspection team which one self-evaluation partner described as more equal and reflective than those which normally happen during an inspection. This partner added that they did perceive a change in relationship with inspection partners and that they felt confident in asking questions.

Participants reflected that it didn't feel that inspection partners were coming from a position of authority, that it felt much more equal and collaborative. The change in dynamic was also felt by inspection partners, who described their relationship with partnerships as one of a 'critical friend'.

> 'I think partnerships are saying, 'we want to have a relationship with scrutiny inspection to be more based on improvement'… and that was a feature that worked really well.' (inspection partner)

New dynamics needed different language around roles in the workstream. The term 'co-ordinator' was used instead of 'lead inspector' to help convey the difference between workstream four and inspection. The support and responsiveness of inspection partners during workstream four was reported by partnerships as overwhelmingly positive. Working closely with inspection partners helped build relationships and confidence in the process as well as supporting co-ordination and keeping plans on track.

Conversations, both difficult and positive, were supported by having good relationships across partnerships and with inspection partners. There was recognition that all partners were on a journey and felt like equal partners:

> 'They're (inspection partners) on a journey with us too, but they were upfront to say we don't know how this is going to work or maybe we don't even know what some of the answers could be here. But it felt like a joint venture and that's really good, actually, when you're part of that because otherwise, I think if the veil would fall and you know, the decisions have already been made, this is what it was going to be. It feels quite tokenistic then.' (self-evaluation partner)

Equality in relationships created safety for good conversations, characterised by honesty and being listened to:

> '…it felt like we could shape it and I felt any of the contributions that we made were listened to (by inspection partners) and then certainly on a good few occasions you could actually see, OK, they've actually listened and applied or they've changed.' (self-evaluation partner)

Communication and responsiveness of colleagues in inspection partner agencies was highlighted as being excellent and valued by self-evaluation and learning partnerships. Self-evaluation partners commented on how helpful the weekly meetings were with inspection partners. Participants also noted how the role of the Link Inspector had helped in sharing knowledge about tools, useful resources and facilitated sharing of learning between partnerships.

Involvement in workstream four helped give insight into the roles in other agencies and within the multi-agency partnership. Skills developed through involvement in the workstream were applied in other parts of participant roles. Appreciation of administrative and systems co-ordination roles was heightened.

> ‘I fed back quite regularly to people that I'm dealing with about the degree of work that is done in the background by (colleagues in other agencies in partnership) to support people because (some colleagues) see no outcome from it and… when I have the time and the capacity, I will feedback to (those colleagues) and just try to reassure them and tell them to look on our chronology that I've typed up. You wouldn't believe the amount of work that is going on with our partners for this person. It's not in vain, what you're doing. It's not just a forum for the sake of a forum. So, I've taken a lot from that and I like to think of always that appreciation of partners (in other agencies in multi-agency partnership), what they do, but why, what and the amount of work.' (self-evaluation partner)

The importance of co-ordination was a strong theme in relation to planning for involvement in workstream four but also in relation to co-ordination helping to maintain momentum. Inspection partner colleagues brought previous experience of co-ordinating and supporting planning for inspections.

Participants were prompted around what potential future role inspection partners might have in quality assurance self-evaluation. Some thought it would be beneficial if inspection partners had a role in supporting the process of the multi-agency partnership in self-evaluation ‘rather than just coming in to quality assure after the fact’ (learning partner). Others felt that it would be valuable having someone from the regulator there to offer guidance and feedback.

The question of Link Inspectors having a role in supporting self-evaluation was also discussed. Among the comments from inspection partners was that quality assurance of self-evaluation and improvement work needs to be multi-agency and that the Link Inspector role is not multi-agency. Partners commented that they felt quite strongly about the Link Inspector having a role in supporting self-evaluation. Among the views shared by self-evaluation

partners was that they saw their Link Inspector as being a consultant for inspection, someone who could be called upon for advice and guidance, helping to build and empower others to undertake self-evaluation in ASP.

> '...actually that's a very clear role for the Link Inspector to ensure that the partnership is… actually aware of how to take the learning from this. Yes, we have a responsibility locally, but I think probably as a link inspector to ensure the right people are sighted and around it.' (self-evaluation partner)

There was recognition of the role of the third sector in helping to reach and involve people and the role of the sector in preventative support and in addressing health inequalities.

Inspection partners commented that through their joint work with partnerships in the workstream they had further developed their knowledge and understanding about what the issues were for partnerships, including their different contexts and resources. Understanding context was also highlighted in considering different capabilities and capacity to inform future planning for involvement. One inspection partner reflected that in terms of understanding resources and evaluating them, it was important to recognise partnerships are at different places in their self-evaluation journey and needed varying time for support and engagement.

The impact on culture across different roles and groups was highlighted as being a two-way approach involving front line staff and also the Chief Officers Group (COG). Among the examples shared was how the COG was actively interested in self-evaluation which partnerships felt was helping to promote a culture of self-evaluation. Using the methodology to strengthen involvement and collaboration with third sector partners was another feature of a culture shift through workstream four. Some felt it was too early to fully appreciate the impact of workstream four on culture change.

Governance

The role of the delivery group was seen as relating to ‘governance of progress’ and planning for involvement (inspection partner). An inspection partner reflected that the good practice they wanted to emphasise across the partnerships is that self-evaluations were carried out in line with the governing of self-evaluation described in the QIF. Relatedly, the importance of self-evaluation being undertaken on a multi-agency basis with involvement of frontline staff, not only managers, and associated governance arrangements for that was also noted by an inspection partner. They also highlighted that the sharing of multi-agency partnership self-evaluations with Adult Protection Committees (APCs) and Chief Officer Groups (COGs) was a feature that was

built into workstream four. The importance of having a clear governance and reporting route across those layers and spaces of involvement with feedback loops and the role of professional curiosity was noted.

Multi-agency collaboration and public protection

It was recognised that the workstream approach to self-evaluation could be adapted and applied to other areas of public protection. One health professional reflected that it had influenced the way that they and the partnership will look at multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARAC) and multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA). Another partnership shared their interest in how this could be translated in relation to violence against women and girls over the coming year, in connection with related national work.

Participants highlighted the importance of the connection between existing groups, and of child protection, adult support and protection and violence against women and girls having equal standing in terms of responsibilities as multi-agency professionals.

> '…this can't be seen in isolation, if it is then it has kind of failed, we need to look at how it can be translated and we are all involved in different bits of work'. (self-evaluation partner)

There was also recognition that the people that partnerships are supporting where straightforward application of the three-point criteria is difficult to apply, have touchpoints across services and agencies.

> '[They are] still of concern in the community… are almost on the margins of society [...] known to police, known to A&E, were within the drug community, for example. So you know this is going to overlap with other areas of public protection' (self-evaluation partner)

The enhanced connection between multi-agency groups, meetings and structures were, by self-evaluation and learning partnerships, cited as being a strong foundation and something they want to build on. This included workstream four being discussed in violence against women and girls and child protection as well as adult protection groups. Partnerships shared how some new meeting structures had been developed to 'avoid multiple committees happening with often the same people'. The aim was to help promote synergy and capacity to share learning and plan.

Participants were asked how effectively the desktop exercise supported new or proposed ways of working within partnerships. Reflections included that the multi-agency collaboration session had helped in stimulating joint working

between their local multi-agency initiative and ASP. One partnership also felt that the event, and having colleagues from inspection agencies there, had helped raise awareness of the local initiative, clarify roles and responsibilities and contribution to ASP. It also helped clarify the person's journey to avoid misunderstandings and help promote joint working and pathways for timely access. The multi-agency session had raised awareness of local initiatives including preventative and early intervention support. The learning partnership has since been contacted by colleagues in other areas who were interested to hear more about local initiatives. There was also recognition that discussions about self-evaluation in public protection within the partnership had provided a space for discovery and increased awareness of what is out there.

> 'So you don't know what you don't know, so if we're evaluating these services and evaluating the provision and then sharing that through committee and all our governance structures, it kind of refocuses again because people see that's worked, that looks like a really good project…' (learning partner)

Learning partners commented that within their multi-agency initiative and because of their multi-agency approach, learning and skills were shared. This included housing colleagues learning about ASP and adult social care practitioners learning about money, advice and benefits. The partnership added that they were drawing on self-evaluation as a wider tool, being able to share that across the partnership.

Technology

Technology played an important role in the workstream. Teams calls created a sense of 'being around the table'. The support and responsiveness of colleagues who facilitated access to SharePoint for document storage was highly valued. Ideas were shared by inspection partner systems colleagues on how the SharePoint structure could be adapted to facilitate meaningful access in the future.

The responsiveness and support from inspection partners in helping to address technological difficulties was emphasised.

> 'I think we had amazing support from the inspection partners and from their admin as well. I mean as a team, we've supported each other, but I would e-mail to say I've not got access to some of the files on the dashboard… within 15-20 minutes I would have a reply to say 'try that now, I'll send you another link' so I just think there was somebody available at the end of an e-mail.' (self-evaluation partner)

Using Power BI to help visualise and analyse different types of data including findings from self-evaluation was shared by one partnership.

All partners expressed an interest in finding out more about being part of an ASP self-evaluation Community of Practice.

Workstream activities and tools

Methodology development was a valued stage and the self-evaluation tools created were outcomes based and adaptable. Participants shared that part of their interest in being involved in workstream four was developing a clear set of tools for self-evaluation. Having tools that can be developed further was beneficial, and stimulated thinking about other areas where they could be used.

Working together to develop the self-evaluation methodology through the collaboration sessions enabled partnerships to see how self-evaluation was developing across different areas. Workstream self-evaluation tools supported reflection on strengths as well as areas for improvement, an approach that felt more personal to the partnership and to people involved.

> ‘So I thought that worked really well… rather than just being given ‘here is what you need to improve on’ or ‘here is what we think your strengths are.’ (self-evaluation partner)

The audit tool and the final report tool were both described as helpful. Comments included how these tools were useful in terms of how the partnership could present information to the APC, Public Protection Committee (PCC) and COG. Partnerships valued the inspection team talking them through the final report which included the partnership's self-evaluation of themselves. Partners felt that the last meeting, being involved in analysis and having the templates and collaborative discussion made for a ‘slicker process’ (self-evaluation partner). The enhanced understanding that came from this and confidence in using the self-evaluation templates was also noted.

Other reflections shared around the usefulness of the tools were in the context of using them in discussing cases and the inspection partners analysis of the information partnerships presented to them. There was value in looking at it through the different lenses and perspectives of the professionals involved and their views of risks and thresholds.

> ‘… you know that really honest conversation… that was probably the most useful part, that collaborative stage, where you were talking about the cases. As you were looking at the learning that came out … and the good practice to take back to staff.’ (self-evaluation partnership)

For some, being involved in the development of the tools had helped start a conversation with multi-agency partners to help drive collaboration towards self-evaluation and plans to embed it on an ongoing basis. The value of being part of workstream four included the sharing of learning across geographical areas around challenges and helpful solutions, recognition of different contexts and ‘not reinventing the wheel’ (learning partner).

Involvement in workstream four helped build on partnership knowledge of joint inspection and methodology used. This included increased confidence in knowing more about what to provide, what inspection partners were looking for and the way that the inspection team would analyse information. Additional support that would be helpful included help to adapt the tools for other areas of the QIF.

The focus group element was a highlight for some. The engagement of staff involved in the local partnership initiative and the power of feedback from focus groups around outcomes for individuals was shared. The ‘really rich information from those with direct lived experience of our initiative’ (self-evaluation partner) was highly valued. For some, focus groups as part of self-evaluation was a new approach but are something planned for the future.

The case file reading was highly valued and helped demonstrate a focus on outcomes for the person for everyone involved whether in practice or other roles. Due to the legislative context, creative approaches were developed together. Partnerships reflected that working through challenges to come up with a methodology for file reading was valuable and interesting.

> ‘...it was hectic to go from what we had thought we were going to do to what we actually were able to do because of the legislative concerns that we had in GDPR and meant that we actually didn't read as much as we hoped we would, but it showed us a different methodology… we don't always have to do it the way that we've done it before… We had those facilitated discussions and all the file readers came together, we completed the template as a group and everybody knew what was in it and they were happy with it and everybody contributed. I think that worked really well.’ (self-evaluation partner)

For some the collaboration sessions and desk top exercises were most valuable because they gave local staff the chance to meet and involved inspection agencies as well as operational staff.

Self-evaluation partners reflected that using the QIF and the specific theme of 5.7, had helped broaden knowledge and understanding around self-evaluation. There were comments on how the QIF contributed to aims, vision and expectations including how it might help support and enhance consistency

for ASP across Scotland and benchmarking. Comments also related to how the QIF has ‘everybody talking the same language’ (inspection partner).

The ten statements of ‘what very good looks like’ in 5.7 for self-evaluation were cited as being helpful as a reference for file readers. Self-evaluation partners felt that this had helped give a common language and think about outcomes when analysing different types of evidence. The partner added that the partnership was looking at applying the same methodology for self-evaluation around risk assessment in case conferences.

Overall, being involved in the workstream activities was said to be how ‘we built relationships that are ongoing’ (self-evaluation partner) and how being involved would inspire other evaluation work.

Connection between plans

Partnerships reflected on the importance of an adaptive approach to planning with connections between plans included reflections on links between workforce planning and development planning and fora. Some partnerships viewed the existing partnership infrastructure and connections between planning groups as a route to help facilitate this.

A focus on reinforcing connection between plans, layers of involvement and feedback loops to help embed self-evaluation, learning and improving together was highlighted. This included how involvement in the workstream had given multi-agency partners impetus, would inform the new iteration of the ASP Committee Strategic plan and put the tools into practice. The connection between plans and risk registers was also highlighted by a learning partner as part of their intentions to further embed self-evaluation and audit.

The role of self-evaluation to inform improvement planning and connection between plans and communities, connections and networks with relevance to other areas of public protection was highlighted. This included how improvement plans were being refined in collaboration with colleagues working in child protection, mental health, alcohol and drug services and community justice. Related reflections were that QI 5.7 spans the full area of public protection and that actions being taken forward to develop and implement the improvement plan would help embed and strengthen the role of self-evaluation.

Where plans sit within the planning landscape was also a feature highlighted by learning partners. This included links to community wellbeing plans and team plans. The ambition to simplify and streamline planning and reporting across those different layers was also among the aspirations shared.

Involving people with lived experience

Approaches and plans for involvement of people with lived experience included partnership projects focusing on what good engagement is and how to build it. Some self-evaluation partnerships are planning to focus future self-evaluation on involving people with lived experience including interviewing them 'off the back of a self-evaluation activity to triangulate an audit… to add that piece to the puzzle more formally around self-evaluation' (learning partner). One partnership shared how they were planning to gather feedback from adults who have been subject to an Interagency Referral Discussion (IRD), including practitioner perspectives, and using elements of the workstream methodology in their single agency audits. Some partnership plans included embedding a life-course approach through procedures and policies with a focus on transitions between child and adult services 'to stop compartmentalising people' (learning partner).

Professional curiosity, data and gaps

Professional curiosity was a positive outcome from engaging in workstream four. The QIF for ASP describes 'very good' professional curiosity as:

> '...where a worker or a group of workers explore and proactively try to understand what is happening for an adult at risk of harm. They don't make rash assumptions or take a single source of information and accept it at face value.' (pg 43)

Reflections highlighted the role of data analysis in prompting professional curiosity and asking 'those bigger questions… why is this happening? And how can we get together and have a look?' (self-evaluation partner). One participant described the impact of workstream four as strengthening organisational culture for learning and improvement with greater professional curiosity.

Involvement in data analysis enabled participants to ask questions and consider their professional curiosity, for example if data from case file reading was indicating that not all inquiries are screened as they should be. From a clinical perspective, a self-evaluation partner commented on how self-evaluation helped contextualise, not interpret data in isolation, giving consideration to the analysis of different types of data and how we know the difference being made.

Inspection partner reflections included comments about partnerships noticing areas for improvement and immediately flagging them up, not only in ASP but wider areas of improvement. Self-evaluation partnerships spoke of how

working through self-evaluation had helped identify potential gaps and improvements to explore with other teams.

There were reflections that self-evaluation brought an additional qualitative element to data that was already collected, helping to ensure a focus on outcomes and influencing decision making. Partnerships shared views related to data analysis around ASP, that this has been 'fairly binary so far' (self-evaluation partner) with updates being provided to the Scottish Government and various committees including the COG, Integration Joint Board, children, families and justice. This consisted of analysis of data, numbers of case conferences and referral sources. Although this data was helpful, the contribution of learning from self-evaluation provided more qualitative insights. The importance of data gathering having a purpose was emphasised.

> 'For me, data is only worthwhile if you do something with it. It's all very well producing it and we produce an awful lot of data and that sometimes I get really frustrated around that goal being all work into this for what, you know, what difference does it actually make? Whereas for this it felt that we could apply learning to that and bring about some fairly simple straightforward changes and developments in our practice.' (self-evaluation partner)

Reflections were captured on the National Minimum Data Set (NMDS) for ASP, partnership performance reporting procedures and peer auditing. Examples were shared of how partnership performance data analysis helped identify trends and self-evaluation contributed to a better understanding of that trend. Among plans shared by one partnership for self-evaluation was a focus on self-neglect which is a focus within the NMDS across Scotland.

The role of data in quality assurance was also highlighted alongside the role of self-evaluation as part of how we know we're making a difference.

> 'We couldn't look at our data without a quality assurance and vice versa… I think when we're looking at it as a whole, you probably need a good mix. So you need to know what the service user is thinking, what the staff are thinking, what we're seeing in practice. When we look at our files as well as looking at the data that we've got. So I think it, I mean it's all connected… I'd not be content until we've got them all. It's like the way we want them.' (self-evaluation partner)

Partnerships also shared how data was being drawn on to inform their quarterly reporting for Adult Protection Committee (APC), Public Protection (PP) and COG purposes. Examples included how task groups had been set up to look into areas of concern and in some cases, joining a pan-partnership area group where issues affect several local areas. Some inspection partners reflected on the capacity of partnerships for data analysis.

5. Next steps

Workstream four can be considered a test of change and through the evaluation, demonstrated that the experience had a meaningful impact for those involved. This was a valuable, if sometimes challenging project with a range of strengths and challenges impacting on participants' ability to carry out robust multi-agency self-evaluation activity. Participants gained understanding, knowledge, confidence and skills around self-evaluation, applying the QIF, tool development, collaboration and multi-agency working. There is already early evidence of ideas, tools, and learning from workstream four spreading to other areas of public protection. This section makes some recommendations built on insights from the evaluation to consider what this means for future national support for self-evaluation in ASP.

Recommendations

Conditions needed for future self-evaluation activity based on evidence of the strengths and challenges of workstream four include:

- Early and meaningful involvement of a range of staff in shaping self-evaluation focus and activity.
- Sufficient time for co-design of process, activities and tools, by aligning timescales with the scope of work and providing sufficient space for meaningful collaboration.
- A clear initial brief for self-evaluation activity, manage evolving aims transparently, and give adequate notice for any meetings.
- Keep the volume of project materials manageable, recognising capacity constraints.
- Create practical and adaptable tools and resources to support self-evaluation.
- Ensure approaches to self-evaluation activity remain facilitative and inclusive rather than directive.
- Support staff (building confidence, and capabilities) with the tools, time, and skills needed to embed effective self-evaluation.
- Build strong relationships with inspection partners.
- Effectively coordinate and facilitate self-evaluation activity.

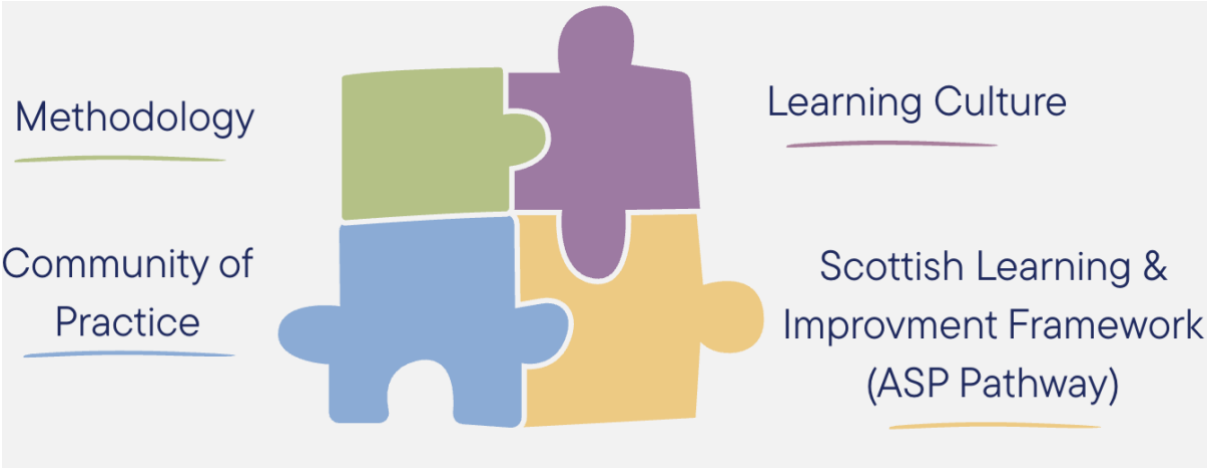
- Create opportunities for shared learning across partnerships about robust self-evaluation.
- Ensure clear governance and leadership support.

ASP Learning and Improvement Programme

Between June and September 2025 Scottish Government undertook a series of workshops with inspection partners, multi-agency local partnerships and evidence providers including those who took part in workstream four to explore key elements to support robust local self-evaluation to inform the development of the ASP Learning and Development Programme. Led by a Scottish Government PhD intern, two focus groups were held with local partnerships, Iriss and inspection partners to explore which indicators, topics, and themes should be prioritised in the Self-Evaluation Programme. The Learning & Improvement programme aims to build on existing and/or planned multi-agency local partnership self-evaluation activity through a programme of self-evaluation relating to a shared theme and/or cohort to inform both local and national improvement.

In October 2025 Scottish Government held a workshop with inspection partners, Iriss and the Scottish Learning and Improvement Team which identified core components of the programme including a bespoke ASP pathway to capture and report on improvement and a learning system to understand how to support partnerships to carry out self-evaluation, learn and improve (see figure below).

In January 2026 Scottish Government commissioned Iriss to lead on co-designing the core components of the programme to enable local partnerships to learn from self-evaluation and build in feedback loops at local and national level to share learning on improvement relevant to the shared theme. In February 2026, Scottish Government commissioned work to develop the ASP Pathway (a key component of the programme).



Learning from workstream four can be used to strengthen the development of these interconnected components and inform the co-design process, working with partnerships at different stages of self-evaluation practice development. What follows is a mapping of core programme components and learning points from the evaluation.

Component: Community of Practice

Description: Facilitate a network of local partnership self-evaluation leads to share existing knowledge, skills, tools/resources, and experience to improve the consistency of quality approaches to self-evaluation.

Workstream Four learning implications

The thread of collaboration runs through the evaluation as being a highly valued part of the self-evaluation process and as a key mechanism for learning. Building positive relationships through the work helped provide safety for good and difficult conversations. Power dynamics were recognised and equitable relationships nurtured, supported by learning and doing together. Developing and or adapting tools provided a focus for discussion and enhancing understanding of different contexts, local areas and roles. Consequently, when asked what next steps of support might look like, participants suggested a Community of Practice.

Membership of a Community of Practice should reflect the diversity of multi-agency participants in the workstream given this was such a valuable aspect of involvement. This is also appreciative of points made in the evaluation about the reality of people accessing support who have touchpoints across different agencies, teams and services. There is scope for including those working in other public protection areas as well as those from the Continuous Improvement Subgroup.

It was also raised in the evaluation about the role of inspection partners in future self-evaluation support. The evaluation captured that their role was particularly helpful in terms of co-ordination, the facilitation of the process and of sharing of learning. Potential involvement of the regulator was also raised.

The role of technology is relevant here as it needs to effectively support the practical and relationship-based functions of the Community of Practice. Based on learning from the workstream, this means using a platform that people can access, use to communicate, share decision-logs, discuss data and store tools. A Community of Practice could also support those joining self-evaluation work at different points in the process.

The development of a Community of Practice is a core part of creating a learning culture for self-evaluation.

Component: Learning Culture

Description: Identify the conditions required for sustainable, robust self-evaluation and how these conditions can be created to prioritise self-evaluation and improvement activity within local partnerships, with a focus on learning.

Workstream four learning implications

Through the evaluation, points can be drawn around the conditions needed to support a learning culture including:

- Enough time for learning. This was a noted challenge in the evaluation and links to the importance of the initial briefs clearly outlining expectations.
- Approaches to support that is adaptable and responsive. Partnerships will be at different stages and have different capabilities around self-evaluation.
- Good communication, supported by the right technology and systems.
- Support for bringing people in at different times of the self-evaluation process - supported by a robust Community of Practice.
- Practices that support double loop learning - focusing on embedding not just sharing learning. This relates to points about loss of knowledge when staff leave.
- Appreciative approaches that recognise strengths and celebrate success.
- Creates the conditions for good collaboration through the Community of Practice (e.g. protected time, effective technology, leadership, senior leadership buy-in).
- Encourages professional curiosity and use of data to dig deeper, identifying strengths and gaps for improvement.
- Promotes a connected view across public protection areas and avoids the siloing of ASP.
- Recognises and supports staff working in uncertainty, understanding this can be uncomfortable and unsettling.

- Promotes and recognises the skills, capacity, and capabilities around improvement as well as self-evaluation, with links to the Continuous Improvement Subgroup.

Component: Methodology

Description: Design, develop, test and implement the self evaluation methods which would then be applied by local partnerships as part of implementing the programme.

Workstream four learning implications

Through the workstream a suite of tools have been developed and will be made available to the wider workforce. Help to adapt tools was suggested by evaluation participants as an important next step of self-evaluation support. This could include adaptation and further development of tools to support meaningful involvement of people with lived experience in self-evaluation, a recognised challenge from the evaluation.

The learning from workstream four can now be used to bolster initial briefs and expectations of any similar initiatives taking place in the future.

Component: Scottish Learning and Improvement Framework: ASP Pathway

Description: Enable local partnerships to gather, analyse and report on their ongoing ASP activity; innovations; and/or improvement plans, and to demonstrate the difference these activities/services/plans have made or where continuous improvement may be warranted.

Workstream four learning implications

The importance of data, evidence and understanding the difference made by self-evaluation activity on the workforce and people accessing support was a strong theme across the evaluation. There is a strong alignment here with the ASP pathway which will provide one place that local areas can use to bring together the data, evidence, feedback and reflections they have to self-evaluate progress towards:

- Supporting people to improve outcomes.
- Working collaboratively to plan and deliver and improve services and supports.

As such, the pathway brings together operational and strategic reporting and self-evaluation and improvement efforts.

The ASP pathway is made up of a high-level framework of ‘stepping stones’ that show how services contribute to improved outcomes. Each stepping stone includes links to recommended evidence sources and success criteria that show what good looks like for this aspect of the process. The self-evaluation process involves a systematic approach of reviewing the evidence against the success criteria for each stepping stone and recording a narrative that summarises progress, evidence and areas for improvement. An overall assessment of progress and confidence in evidence can also be captured using a RAG rating for each stepping stone.

The ASP pathway will be a powerful tool to support the other components; promoting evidence-informed planning and decision-making; collaboration; a focus on outcomes; good use of data; and feedback loops about what’s working and areas for improvement.

6. Conclusion

Workstream four was an ambitious, intensive and unique approach to building capacity and promoting learning across the sector through supported self-evaluation. This evaluation aimed to understand how workstream four built on multi-agency local partnership capability to undertake self-evaluation in ASP; what was most and least effective towards achieving this; and the learning of the Joint Inspection team from workstream four activity.

Workstream four built capability in the following ways:

1. **Building skills and confidence through practice**
   Partners learned by doing self-evaluation together, increasing confidence, knowledge, and understanding of methods (e.g. file reading, data analysis, use of the QIF). Joint activities (case discussions, focus groups, analysis) helped staff develop practical self-evaluation skills and apply them in their own roles.

2. **Strengthening multi-agency collaboration**
   The workstream brought together staff from different agencies, roles, and levels (frontline and strategic). This improved understanding of each other's roles, strengthened relationships, and supported shared ownership of self-evaluation. It reinforced that robust self-evaluation needs to be multi-agency, not siloed.

3. **Co-developing tools and shared approaches**
   Partnerships helped design and use tools, templates, and the QIF framework, creating a shared language and more consistent approach. These tools gave partnerships practical resources to continue self-evaluation independently and will also be shared with the wider sector.

4. **Creating a culture of learning and reflection**
   The collaborative, non-hierarchical approach (with inspection teams acting as 'critical friends') supported open, honest reflection and professional curiosity. Self-evaluation became more embedded as part of continuous improvement rather than inspection.

5. **Enhancing use of data and evidence**
   Partners developed the ability to combine qualitative and quantitative evidence, moving beyond basic reporting to deeper analysis of outcomes. This strengthened evidence-informed decision making and improvement planning.

6. **Embedding governance and links to improvement planning**
   Self-evaluation was connected to existing governance structures (APCs, COGs, improvement plans). This helped ensure learning feeds into strategic planning, workforce development, and service improvement.

7. **Supporting sustainability and wider application**
   Learning was shared across partnerships, encouraging peer support, replication, and adaptation. The approach was recognised as transferable to other public protection areas (e.g. MAPPA, VAWG, child protection).

This evaluation captured both the strengths (collaboration, support from inspection partners, co-design of tools) and the challenges (uncertainty, capacity, legislative context) of the workstream approach to support self-evaluation. It provided a way for participants including the joint inspection team to reflect on and share their experiences. Learning and tools developed through workstream four will help shape the ASP Learning and Improvement Programme, and the development of the SLIF ASP Pathway to ensure we build on what we know to roll out support for robust self-evaluation across Scotland.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Self-evaluation partners' initiatives evaluated in workstream four

South Lanarkshire – Multi-agency high-risk and complex case group

The multi-agency high-risk and complex case group considered referrals of adults at risk of harm with escalating risks where it was difficult to determine if they meet the three-point criteria. It ensures that robust governance is exercised by senior managers. And effectively supports staff to pursue a way forward that keeps the adults at risk safe and enhances their wellbeing.

Dumfries & Galloway – Multi-agency safeguarding hub

Adult support and protection referrals are processed and triaged via a single access point. The multi-agency safeguarding hub procedure sets out that an initial referral discussion will be held where the adult may meet the three-point criteria and there are escalating risks, or where there is a complex situation that a multi-agency discussion might resolve. The multi-agency risk management framework is a forum for senior managers to review and provide direction. This is for those complex and high-risk situations where existing processes were unable to protect the adult at risk of harm. And for those who did not meet the three-point criteria but remained at risk.

Falkirk – Multi-agency protocol for applying clear and collaborative escalating thresholds

There was a well-established protocol for applying clear and collaborative escalating thresholds. It triggers consideration of an interagency referral discussion. There is a protocol, produced using feedback from adults with lived experience, for convening an escalating concerns case conference. They plan to introduce a STRIVE model where multi-agency partners meet regularly to consider lower-risk cases where early supportive intervention will prevent deterioration.

Moray – Interagency vulnerable adult process

There was a multi-agency interagency vulnerable adult (MIVA) process. Partnership representatives discuss individuals repeatedly flagged to social work via police concern reports. It is a supportive, collaborative person-centred framework – adults at risk are fully involved. Police concern reports have significantly reduced for individuals involved.

Angus – Early screening group

The early screening group was a well-established multi-agency forum that meets weekly to review referrals, primarily from police and housing related to adults at risk. It focuses on unallocated cases and those with escalating concerns, enabling timely decisions and early interventions. The group plays a key role in identifying vulnerable adults early, assessing risks collaboratively, and ensuring protective actions are taken promptly.

Appendix 2: Descriptions of initiatives provided by learning partners

North Lanarkshire

Transitional safeguarding is described as 'early protection for young adults'. North Lanarkshire's initiative looks to use the increasing evidence base on what works with young adults, to promote an approach across adult and children's services. This will enable a trauma-informed fluidity across services to best safeguard a young person. This is not based on eligibility of service and systems, but on cognitive maturity, trauma and the young adult's individual experiences and circumstances. The initiative has initially focused on developing the conversation across multiagency partners. This is an approach that requires a culture change. With support from the Adult Protection Committee, governance is currently embedded in the health and social care partnership for younger adults. The steering group has wide-ranging representation, with oversight from the public protection Chief Officers Group.

Dundee

The Adults at Risk Multi-agency Screening Hub (AMASH) is being established to ensure a collaborative, integrated approach to identifying and responding to referrals for adults at risk of harm. The Short Life Working Group has been created to oversee the development, design, and implementation of the AMASH, ensuring that appropriate multi-agency cooperation is established and best practices are followed so that no one falls through the gaps. The AMASH development is to link and be part of the wider Adults at Risk pathway that will support escalation and deescalation within the system as required.

Clackmannanshire and Stirling

The Transform Forth Valley (TFV) Self-Neglect and Hoarding Service provides tailored support for individuals struggling with self-neglect and/or hoarding. Collaborating closely with partner agencies, the service creates personalised plans that address housing needs, benefits, mental and physical health, substance use, fire safety, and community engagement.

Aims:

- Provide person-centred support through a multi-agency approach
- Apply self-neglect and hoarding policies and toolkits

- Promote early intervention to prevent risks from escalating
- Ensure safety and dignity while reducing harm

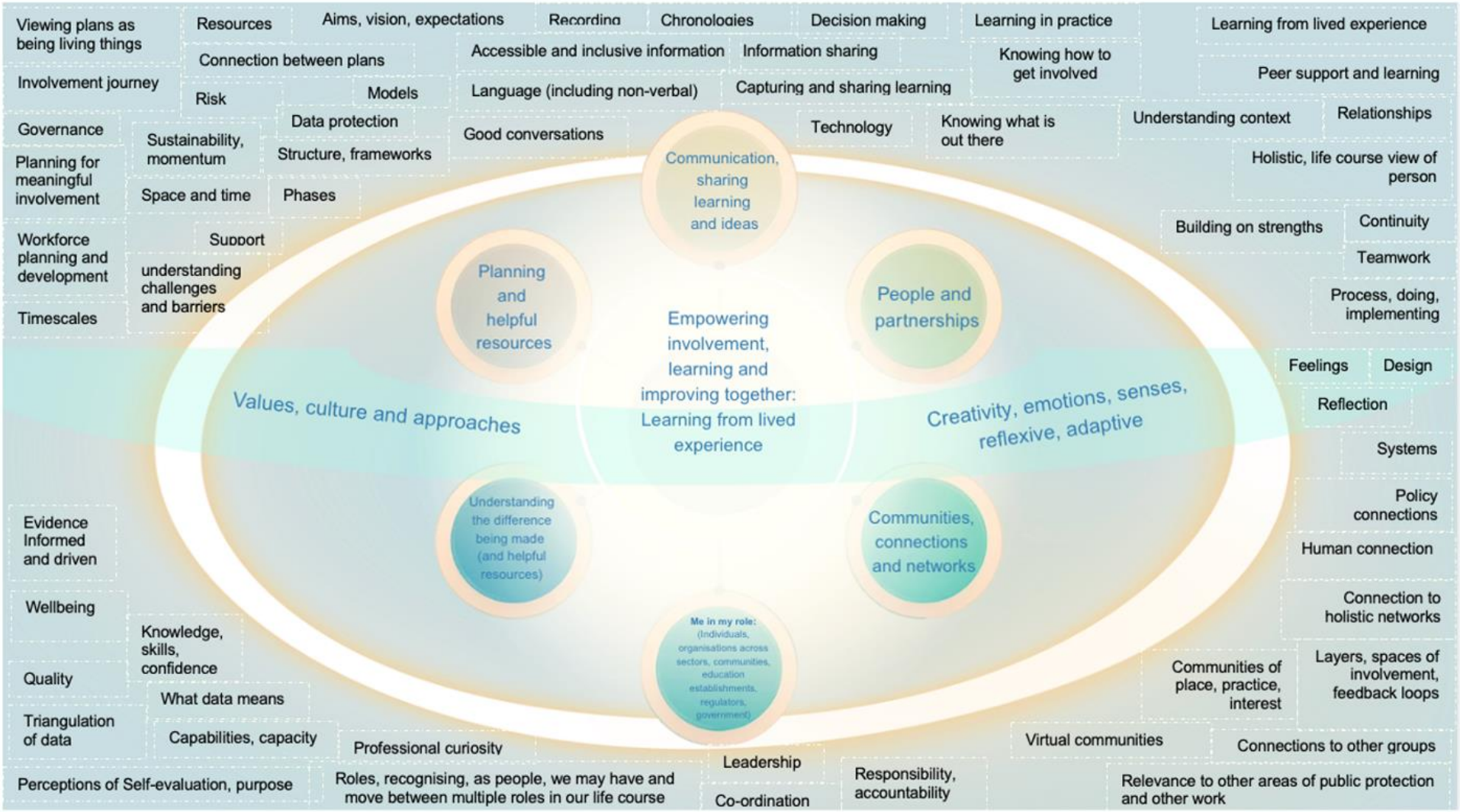
STRIVE (safeguarding through rapid intervention) is a multi-agency partnership in Clackmannanshire dedicated to making sure the right help reaches the right people at the right time. Daily meetings are held to review referrals and ensure a swift, fair, and coordinated approach to support. The work is committed to strengthening collaboration across services and ensuring that individuals, families, and households receive early, effective help.

STRIVE brings together a wide range of agencies, including: Clackmannanshire Council (Housing Services, Education, Criminal Justice Social Work, Money Advice, Children's Services, Adult Services, and Early Help and Intervention), Health Services, Clackmannanshire Third Sector Interface (CTSI), Police Scotland, Community and Voluntary Sector Partners who will support cases where environmental concerns have been identified and provide signposting to the most appropriate services.

- A referral to STRIVE is appropriate where a service has a concern for the welfare of an individual, family, or household.
- The concern is serious enough to warrant support, but it is not an emergency and does not require statutory intervention

Multiple issues have been identified that may need the involvement of more than one council service or partner agency.

Appendix 3: Themes and subthemes



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