

EASY ACCESS TO KNOWLEDGE IN SWIA'S NEW-LOOK WEBSITE

With the launch in February of SWIA's new-look, user-friendly website, a wealth of information on social work services is now available online to practitioners, academics and everyone else with an interest.

Improved navigation is now making it easy to access the substantial store of knowledge gained from inspections and reviews, with facts and figures collated by SWIA's own statisticians. This valuable resource is helping to achieve one of SWIA's main communication aims – to share as widely as possible its inspection-derived knowledge.

Corporate Manager, **Andrew Wilkinson**, told *Inspection Matters* that the re-designed website now better reflected SWIA's focus on 'people'. "Our inspections are all people-focused," he said, "and we wanted to carry this through online. Our aim has been to make the website as user-friendly as possible, and to show how the work of inspections is helping to drive up standards and improve people's lives."

The website at www.swia.gov.uk has been designed around four 'people-centric quadrants' that direct academics/researchers, people who use services, service providers and partners to the information they are most likely to want. Each quadrant features its own introductory vodcast (online video), bringing a personal touch to the web pages.

- Online visitors have been praising the new-look website ("I like it and found it easy to navigate" and "the SWIA website is hugely improved").

Inevitably, some have not found the information they were looking for and we are working to address comments about specific information as we receive these. Please keep giving us your feedback and help us to make the site as useful as possible. Visit www.swia.gov.uk.



SWIA staff now have their own Intranet linked to the external website. With up-to-date news on personnel, performance and training, this is an important aid to communication for everyone in SWIA.

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Self-evaluation tools for local authorities

SWIA is joining forces with partners in Changing Lives (the Scottish Government's change programme for social work services) and volunteer local authorities to develop a set of guides to enable authorities to assess how well their social work services are benefiting the people who use them.

As part of the current move towards outcome agreements between Government and local authorities, self-evaluation is becoming an increasingly important part of the process for each council in providing services. They need to be able to monitor how they are doing and to know if they are doing it well enough.

SWIA Inspector, **Gerry Hart**, is leading the team working on a range of self-evaluation tools for councils. He told *Inspection Matters*: "From our

programme of performance inspections so far, we know that for many local authorities there is some way to go before they have full self-evaluation systems in place.

"SWIA is creating a guide and other resource materials to help them look at their own performance and make continuous improvements. We see self-evaluation as a very important thing in its own right, and it will help SWIA to offer more proportionate inspections in the future."

In addition to a general guide to self-evaluation, covering the current range of inspection activities, SWIA is developing a further range of resources to be used at a more in-depth level. These 'good practice' self-evaluation guides will focus on commissioning practice, performance management and effective leadership in the first instance.

Smarter inspection – people who use services at the centre

SWIA received a commendation in the recent Scottish Government Excellence Awards for our initiatives to involve people who use services in every aspect of our work.

Our submission in the 'Smarter Scotland' category included the following quotes from people who use – or have used – services, illustrating the importance of their involvement in inspections and reviews.

"I never thought my views mattered, or that they were worth anything. Being part of the inspection team, and meeting senior staff from the agencies was good. Social workers could be better at what they do if they asked people about how they can help, more often."

A member of the Grampian multi-agency substance misuse inspection who had used services and is now drug-free.

"Change happens when people see people with learning disabilities doing things like chairing meetings and leading workshops ... Seeing us on the team can help social workers and other professionals learn."

A social work lay inspector with learning disabilities.

"There was a lot of reading to get a short version of Extraordinary Lives to make sense for children and foster carers. I was surprised when we sent it in that just about nothing got changed, our way of saying things were ok."

One of the care leavers who wrote a short, young person's version of *Extraordinary Lives – Creating a positive future for looked after children and young people in Scotland*.

Managing high-risk offenders

SWIA and its partners in HM Inspectorates of Constabulary (HMICS) and Prisons (HMIP) have begun a joint thematic inspection into the issues affecting the effective management of offenders who present a high risk of harm to the public.

This inspection will report on national themes and issues and will cover the work of the police, social work and prisons in managing high-risk offenders. It will provide a national picture of current strengths and weaknesses in the area of high-risk offender management, and make an important contribution to the future development of this critical area of practice and partnership.

Part one of the project started in March, with inspectors from SWIA beginning a two-month detailed case review of around 60 high-risk offenders from across 17 local authorities. During the case review inspectors are reading files and meeting the key staff in each case, as well as the offender himself. Prison Inspectors will carry out complementary reviews in five selected prisons, looking at how those establishments contribute to the risk management task.

Findings and themes from part one will help the inspection team in phase two of the project, which will explore the key themes of high-risk offender management in three selected local authority areas.

The team will use focus groups and individual interviews with staff and senior managers and other representatives from police, housing and child protection agencies.

During phase two of the inspection, HMICS will review the police handling of sampled offenders in selected forces, and issue a detailed questionnaire to Scotland's police forces about their practice in this key area. They will focus on how well operational staff and others work together to manage high-risk offenders in the community and what support they receive.

The programme of activity will include a national seminar in September, before the inspection report is published at the end of the year.

SWIA has a co-ordinating role in the inspection, and lead Inspector, **Gerry Hart**, told *Inspection Matters* that the detailed study by all three agencies should lead to a '360-degree view' of the ex-prisoners in the sample.

"With the case reviews and focus group activity, we have designed the inspection to provide a rich body of evidence," he said. "It is not meant to be a performance inspection, but rather a 'thematic review' on the management of high-risk offenders, drawing out the strengths and also the problems. We want to help create a blueprint for the future evolution of this area of practice."

'Back to the Future' conference provides insight into current challenges

'Back to the Future – Taking Forward the Messages from Inspection' was the theme of a major stakeholder conference held by SWIA in January.

Some 80 delegates, including local authority chief executives and heads of social work services, took part in the two-day event in St Andrews. **Adam Ingram**, Minister for Children and Early Years, told delegates that the conference provided an opportunity to share experiences and information

"while honestly taking stock of where you are and firmly establishing your goals for the future".

It was 'feedback time', with SWIA reporting on social work performance inspections completed so far. The agency has inspected two-thirds of all local authorities in Scotland and is on track to complete its programme by mid-2009. Already, enough data and evaluations have been collated to allow meaningful feedback and discussion of emerging themes.

Sharing the information at this stage allowed the earliest possible recognition of the areas of good practice and weakness. It provided the opportunity to consider the next steps to drive forward improvement in social work services.

Delegates heard from leaders of local authorities on key themes of leadership and performance management. Speakers included Councillor **Ronnie McColl**, of West Dunbartonshire Council and COSLA Spokesperson for Health and Wellbeing, who gave the local authority perspective on improving performance.

In their presentations, SWIA and the local authorities focused on both strategic and corporate issues about the delivery of social work services and practice and the challenge of delivering better outcomes for people who use services. Workshop sessions provided the opportunity to share experiences and improvement activity, focussing on partnership, personalisation, transitions and strategic planning.

SWIA's Chief Inspector, **Alexis Jay**, emphasised the

significance of the event. "It's important for our partners in local authorities to contribute to SWIA's future development," she said, "and forums such as this are vital for driving improvement in social work services.

"Since SWIA's inception, we've gathered a unique body of evidence which has provided a benchmark of quality and is already proving valuable to the development of services.

"We will continue to put users and carers at the heart of our inspection process, as we strive to help meet the needs of those in Scotland who rely on the services most."

- After the conference, delegates said that the most useful parts had included getting SWIA feedback from Inspectors, sharing information about good practice, and hearing from other local authorities. Some suggested that a future event could usefully include further discussion on risk management and assessment, and a national approach to these.

OPTIMISM IN COMPLEX AREA OF YOUNG PEOPLE'S BEHAVIOUR

The recently-published *Review of Residential Services for Young People with Harmful Sexual Behaviour* gives grounds for optimism in the promising practice going on in an area that has often been misunderstood or underestimated in its complexity.

This was the message from the joint report by SWIA, the Care Commission and HM Inspectorate of Education. Inspectors also highlighted room for improvement and for staff in different schools and community projects to learn from each other.

The multi-agency team placed the findings of their inspection of four residential schools providing specialist services for young people engaging in sexually harmful behaviour – Geilsland School, St Mary's Kenmure Secure Unit, Oakbank School and Kibble Education and Care Centre – in the context of current research. This included a specially-commissioned study by the Criminal Justice Social Work Development Centre. They

drew, too, on the findings of individual reports on the management arrangements in the four schools. Inspectors also visited the 18 local authorities responsible for placing the children.

Chris Robinson, SWIA Inspector and review editor, said research suggested that few young people who engage in sexually harmful behaviour in their adolescence will go on with this behaviour into adult life. She told *Inspection Matters*: "If the young people can be helped now and be given the best way of facing up to their behaviour, they are least likely to continue their behaviour.

"One of the most interesting features of the review is the analysis of how best to help the children. The best programmes are those that get them to concentrate on their behaviour. Adults need to be confident enough to challenge their offending behaviour, whilst meeting their needs for care, education and healthy development."

Ronnie Hill is Director of Children's Services Regulation with the Care Commission. He echoed Chris's view that all-round care is the bedrock for work with the young people. "We need to ensure good quality social care, education and health care – including aspects like dental health and mental health," he said. "If we get these right, we are more likely to make a difference. The care planning has to be right, with good leadership in the service and good monitoring. Collaborative work is needed, especially at the transitions when the youngster moves into and out of residential care.

"Many of the young people have very troubled backgrounds. Many have been abused in the past and have had multiple carers in multiple settings. They can be very distrustful of people in authority. It can be difficult for them to come forward and tell us what they think, especially when things are going wrong and they

have concerns about child protection and abuse and the improper use of restraint."

Following the review, the Care Commission are collaborating with SWIA, ADSW and HMIE to set up a system where providers of care services should inform the Commission about child protection referral. The Commission can then check as necessary and pick up patterns that will show if things need to be improved. They have written to local authorities and schools, encouraging everyone to share appropriate information in the best interests of the children and young people, and so that the youngsters will know their concerns will be acted upon.

- The report *Multi-agency Inspection – A Review of Residential Services for Young People with Harmful Sexual Behaviour* is available online at www.swia.gov.uk.

Ensuring good governance in the voluntary social care sector

A conference organised for voluntary sector board members and senior staff providing social care services has helped to further a draft self-evaluation framework for ensuring good governance within their organisations.

Following its recent review of governance of Turning Point Scotland, SWIA joined forces with Community Care Providers Scotland (CCPS) and Changing Lives, the Scottish Government's change programme for social work services, to arrange a day session at the end of February. The aim was to enable voluntary organisations to shape a self-assessment framework to evaluate their own governance arrangements, based on the model developed for the Turning Point Scotland review.

Conference speakers included Adam Ingram, Minister for Children and Early Years, Kirsten Gooday, CCPS Policy and Development Manager, and Jim Jackson, CCPS Chair and Chief Executive of Alzheimer Scotland. Jennifer Crowson from SWIA and Turning Point Scotland's Netta Maciver (Chief Executive) and Jennifer

Truesdale (Corporate Services Manager) gave a presentation on the successful governance review, showing how the process had benefited both Turning Point Scotland and SWIA.

Other contributions to the programme came from Mosaic drama group, who helped develop the discussion on governance. From the Scottish Government, Shane Rankin spoke about the Single Outcome Agreement, which affects the voluntary as well as the public sector.

Small groups gave the 120 delegates the opportunity to comment on the draft self-evaluation framework. There was good support for the framework and SWIA will now take the model forward, with the aim of publishing it in early summer. Organisations will be able to use the framework to check either their own governance or that of their peers. SWIA may also offer training for using the assessment framework, which will remain a purely voluntary method of assuring good governance.

IMPROVING CARE FOR OLDER PEOPLE

Shona Robison, Minister for Public Health, was the keynote speaker at the national conference, 'Improving care for older people: messages from regulation and inspection', held in Edinburgh at the end of January.

Jointly organised by SWIA, the Care Commission and Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC), the conference attracted 170 delegates, including care service managers, heads of community care planning, people who use services and carers. They came together to share their experiences and discuss how the quality of life for older people can be improved.

Shona Robison told delegates: "The work of the inspection and regulatory bodies plays a vital role in identifying and promoting good practice and in improving standards of care. This joint event is an important opportunity for care professionals to share knowledge and expertise." She told the conference that she had read both the SWIA inspection reports on the effectiveness of health and social work services for older people in Tayside and Forth Valley and thought they were very helpful.

Other speakers included Professor **Mary Marshall**, one of the leading experts in dementia studies, **Alexis Jay** (Chief Social Work Inspector), **Carole Wilkinson** (Chief Executive, SSSC) and **Jacquie Roberts** (Chief Executive, Care Commission). Their focus was on working together to drive improvement through regulation and inspection.

Individual workshops were led by the three organisations, and one of the SWIA sessions looked at the important issue of improving services by working in partnership with older people and their carers. SWIA Lead Inspector, **Margery Naylor**, and Associate Inspector, **Kay Eastwood**, put forward findings from performance inspections of local authority social work services and the two pilot multi-agency inspections of services for older people (MAISOP) in Tayside and Forth Valley. Both across Scotland generally and across authorities within the two MAISOP areas, inspections had found noticeable differences in the levels and kinds of services for older people. However, following the SWIA inspections, improvements were already being seen.

For one of the organisers, **Margaret Anne Gilbert**, the conference was a lively introduction to her work on secondment with SWIA. Margaret Anne, who is currently on a two-year secondment from the Mental Welfare Commission, told *Inspection Matters*: "I was asked to help soon after I started work at SWIA, and I really enjoyed being involved."

A nine-page SWIA handout from the conference features examples of good practice in improving care for older people, all taken from the agency's inspection reports. The handout is available online at www.swia.gov.uk.

SWIA people

On secondment to SWIA ...

Margaret Anne Gilbert is on secondment from the Mental Welfare Commission as a SWIA Inspector for two years. Already she has been involved in organising the national conference, 'Improving care for older people' (featured in this issue of *Inspection Matters*) and as a member of the performance inspection teams in Aberdeen, Clackmannanshire and Falkirk. Margaret Anne said: "I'm enjoying the work very much and find it very stimulating. In the Commission, the perspective is about the individual. With SWIA, the main focus is on individuals, too, but it's looking at the wider picture. I'm finding a lot of cross-overs between the two organisations' work, but realise there is a lot to learn!"

Susan Blyth is on a year's secondment from Audit Scotland, where she is a Senior Auditor, to work as an Inspector in SWIA's performance inspections. She and her colleague, Sessional Inspector Eric Walker, are responsible for inspecting financial management (see 'Inspecting the financial side of social work services', *Inspection Matters*, February 2008). "I'm an accountant to trade," said Susan, "and working with social workers has been a breath of fresh air. They have made me feel very welcome. Since Eric and I are involved in every inspection (and at the moment I'm working on three inspections and one follow-up) our real challenge is to retain the information about each individual council."

On secondment from SWIA ...

Two members of SWIA's inspection staff have been seconded this year, following separate requests to the agency.

Katie Lamb, who was Lead Inspector for the Shetland performance inspection and SWIA Inspector in the multi-agency *Review of residential services for young people with harmful sexual behaviour* (featured in this issue of *Inspection Matters*), is currently on secondment to the independent inquiry of Kerelaw School, jointly commissioned by the Scottish Government and Glasgow City Council.

Following a request to SWIA from the City of Edinburgh Council for assistance with an improvement action plan, **Irene Scullion** has been seconded there until June. Irene's work as an Inspector has included the development of multi-agency inspections of children's services in health, education and social care in Bulgaria, under a Bulgarian/ UNICEF contract awarded to SWIA in 2006.

SWIA believes that both secondments represent a good opportunity for our Inspectors, with experience gained from performance inspections and other work, to contribute to these separate initiatives.

Ken just can't retire!

Over 10 years ago, SWIA Administrator, **Ken Logan**, took early retirement from the international company he had worked with for many years. But since then he has hardly stopped working, both in public service and for the voluntary organisation, Edinburgh Direct Aid. Now Ken has left SWIA to work for the Scotland Office in Edinburgh. Before he left at the end of March, he told *Inspection Matters*: "While I have a tinge of sadness, it is good to be going to a new challenge."

Ken knows all about challenges. He spent the first nine months of his 'retirement' helping full time with Edinburgh Direct Aid. "Since the war in Bosnia, I have visited the region on numerous occasions, seeing a vast change," he

said. "Edinburgh Direct AID has diversified since these days into Palestine, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Kenya. Only recently I helped pack goods which will go in a container to an orphanage in Kenya. Like the container which went to Pakistan (made into a clinic), it will be used as a permanent house/room at the orphanage."

After his full-time work with Edinburgh Direct Aid, Ken said that "due to saying yes too often" he decided to get some permanent work. Since then he has had a number of different jobs in public service, with the past four-and-a-half years spent at SWIA and its forerunner, SWSI.

- Best wishes to **Daniel Harrison**, SWIA's Assistant Statistician, who has moved to work for Disclosure Scotland.



SWIA Inspections 2007-2008

Performance Inspection	Inspection dates	Publication date
Edinburgh	June 2007 – February 2008	March 2008
Aberdeen	August 2007 – April 2008	May 2008

SWIA Inspections 2008-2009

Performance Inspection	Inspection dates	Publication date
East Dunbartonshire	December 2007 – May 2008	August 2008
Clackmannanshire	January 2008 – June 2008	September 2008
Midlothian	February 2008 – July 2008	October 2008
Falkirk	March 2008 – August 2008	November 2008
Scottish Borders	April 2008 – October 2008	January 2009
North Lanarkshire	May 2008 – November 2008	February 2009
West Dunbartonshire	June 2008 – December 2008	March 2009
East Ayrshire	July 2008 – January 2009	April 2009
Stirling	August 2008 – February 2009	May 2009
Renfrewshire	September 2008 – March 2009	June 2009
South Ayrshire	October 2008 – April 2009	July 2009

NEWS ON INSPECTIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

Recent publications

Performance Inspection of East Lothian Council's Social Work Services – Report and Summary (February)

Multi-agency Inspection: Collaborative working across services for older people in Forth Valley – Report and Summary (January)

Multi-agency Inspection: A Review of residential services for young people with harmful sexual behaviour (December)

- When SWIA published the East Lothian Performance Inspection report at the end of February, the Council's Chief Executive, Alan J. Blackie, commented: "The SWIA inspection has been a very useful process. It has shown some areas where we should make improvements, but it has also given us a lot of very positive feedback about our social work services, for example, that we deliver good outcomes for many of our service-users. Particularly heartening is the fact that SWIA feels we have the capacity to deliver the improvements that we want to make."

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