



Briefing: The Carers (Scotland) Bill – A Slow Start

Carers have been campaigning for carer legislation for many years and are eagerly anticipating the new rights within the Carers (Scotland) Bill coming into force in 2017. Having waited this long carers expect this legislation to be implemented promptly and for it to make a significant and discernable difference to their lives.

However, the Scottish Government appears to anticipate a slow start to its implementation with the maximum estimated costs set at £19.40 million in 2017-18 rising to £88.52 million in 2021-22.

Setting costs so low for the first year of the Bill is likely to provoke a cautious approach from local authorities who will not feel confident in promoting the new duties to carers in case they do not have sufficient resources to fulfill demand. This could lead to institutional drag and drift as we have seen in some local areas in relation to the implementation of the Social Care (Self-directed Support)(Scotland) Act.

We need the government to be ambitious in its approach, to plan for the Carers Bill to have a rapid acceleration and a major impact for carers within its first 100 days. It needs to enable all parties involved to effect significant change for carers by identifying new carers, encouraging those in contact with services to take up an Adult Carer Support Plan and promoting the self-directed support options to those carers with an eligible need.

We call on the government to increase the estimated costs in Year 1 and to set out a programme to promote the Bill and ensure carers are informed of their rights.

The National Carer Organisations, October 2015

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