

Co-production and policy in Scotland

Co-production essentially describes a relationship between people who use services and those who provide services that draws on the knowledge, ability and resources of both to develop solutions to issues that are claimed to be successful, sustainable and cost-effective, changing the balance of power from the professional towards the service user. The approach is about 'doing with, rather than to people' and is used in work with both individuals and communities.

From a policy-perspective, the [Christie Commission](#) report and the [Scottish Government's response](#) provide the overarching drivers for co-production with two of the four pillars of public service reform emphasising the need for co-production:

- 'Prioritise spending on prevention' – reduce future demand by preventing problems arising or dealing with them early on
- **'Public service providers must work more closely in partnership'** – bringing public, third and private sector partners together with communities to deliver shared outcomes that really matter to people
- **'Public services need to be built around People and Communities'** – we want to unlock the full creativity and potential of people at all levels of public service (in all sectors) and empower them to work together in innovative ways. Scottish Government wants to help create ways for people and communities to co-produce services around their skills and networks
- 'Public services must improve their performance' – becoming more efficient and reducing duplication, demonstrating a sharp focus on continuous improvement to deliver our national outcomes

A range of national policies build upon these pillars with a strong focus on co-production woven throughout. The [Policy Memorandum](#) which accompanies the **Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014** is clear that co-production needs to be at the heart of delivering integrated health and social care services:

- "Full and appropriate involvement of carers and users of services and of non-statutory providers with planning and decision-making within the partnership arrangements"; which is
- "Consistent with principles of co-production, which underpin the Government's vision for mutual and person-centred public services which encourage the utilisation of the talents, capacities and potential of all of Scotland's people and communities in designing and delivering health and social services"

This will be reinforced in the forthcoming guidance to support the Act. This will include guidance on Joint Strategic Commissioning (Strategic Planning) where involving people who use services, their carers and the wider community will be critical to creating inclusive plans which identify what local needs are, existing assets and the services which will be required.

Other policies and legislation which emphasise the importance of co-production include:

- Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013, which empowers people to take control of their own package of social care;
- The proposed [Community Empowerment \(Scotland\) Bill](#) as envisaged will provide community groups with the right to Participate in an outcomes review which creates the conditions where co-production can happen. The Scottish Community Development Centre has also produced a helpful [briefing](#) on the Bill;
- Reshaping Care for Older People which aims to shift the balance of care from institutions to communities and transform the culture and philosophy of care from reactive services done to people towards preventative, anticipatory and co-ordinated care and support at home done with people.
- [Age, Home And Community: A Strategy For Housing For Scotland's Older People: 2012 - 2021](#) also highlights the need for older people to be seen as equal partners and valued for their experience in making sure that services are designed to be fit for purpose.

To find out more about co-production and examples of practice and why it should be embedded in mainstream practice. Some useful :

- [Co-production of Health and Well-being in Scotland](#)
- [The Scottish Co-production Network](#)
- [The Joint Improvement Team](#)
- The Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland's [People Powered Health and Well-being](#) programme which contributes to the NHSScotland Quality Strategy that by December 2015 all health and care services should be centred on people and personal outcomes.

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