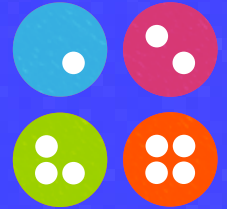


# Cornerstone SDS Aberdeenshire Newsletter



Summer 2015

“The difference this small amount of support has made to us as a family has been immense.”



## One family's experience of SDS

“Our initial contact with Cornerstone was during June 2014. An Advisor from Cornerstone and my Social Worker came out to discuss the possibility of me using a direct payment through Self-Directed Support to access support for my young son who has cerebral palsy. I have health issues of my own which can sometimes mean I find it difficult to care for an active child. My daughter often had to assist and take the role of carer for her young brother.

“We as a family were struggling, both myself and my husband were often late for work, my daughter was finding it very difficult to be on time for school, as the morning routine for our young son tended to take precedence.

“Having had everything explained we decided to recruit a Personal Assistant to come in each

morning to assist with bathing and dressing my young son and then taking him to nursery. We also recruited a second Personal Assistant to cover the times when our main Personal Assistant was not available.





“The difference this small amount of support has made to us as a family has been immense. Our morning routine is now far less stressful, both myself and my husband are able to concentrate on getting ourselves and our daughter ready for work and school respectively. We all arrive at where we are meant to be on time! Our young son is also given the time and support he requires to start his day well.

“Managing the direct payment has been straightforward as I have continued support from Cornerstone SDS and my Social Worker. Using a managed bank account has helped to simplify paying my Personal Assistant's.

“In summary, for us as a family having a small amount of support has made a big difference.”

**A very warm welcome** to the **first edition** of the Cornerstone SDS Aberdeenshire News. We will issue a newsletter every six months to keep you informed of what is going on locally and nationally relating to Self-Directed Support.

Self-Directed Support is based on the principle that people should be informed about the choices they have over how social care and support is provided for them. People can choose to take a lot of control over their support – for instance through a direct payment or individual service fund – or they can decide to take less control and ask the local authority to arrange the support on their behalf. The Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013 requires councils to offer people four choices on how they should receive services:

-  **Option 1** - Direct payment allowing you to arrange your own care support services.
-  **Option 2** - Direct your own support while letting a provider or guarantor manage the money and support for you.
-  **Option 3** - Let the council arrange support that is appropriate for you.
-  **Option 4** - A mix of the above options to meet your care support needs.

Cornerstone SDS is an impartial advisory service, contracted by Aberdeenshire Council, to help support you to make your SDS choices for your care and support. We will provide you with:

- General information and advice about the four options directly from an Advisor - helping you to make choices about the care and support available to achieve your outcomes.
- Guidance through the process of developing a support plan.
- If you choose a direct payment to enable you to employ your own Personal Assistants we will support you with; recruitment, contracts, training and ongoing procedures to manage the work of your Personal Assistants.
- Expert employment law support provided in partnership with Empire HR.
- A help line for Personal Assistants to call for advice and support.
- A directory of services available within the community that you can use to help you meet your outcomes for what you want to achieve.

## Meet the SDS team

We have a team of Advisors based throughout Aberdeenshire and have secured premises in Inverurie at 25 High Street - this is where our Management and Administration teams will be based. The Advisors will come out to your home to provide advice, information and support. Our SDS team across the region are:

*Claire Fraser, Operations Manager*  
[claire.fraser@cornerstone.org.uk](mailto:claire.fraser@cornerstone.org.uk)

*Angi Wood, Service Manager - Aberdeenshire*  
[angi.wood@cornerstonesds.org.uk](mailto:angi.wood@cornerstonesds.org.uk)  
01467 530526

*Sharon Francis, Team Leader*  
[sharon.francis@cornerstonesds.org.uk](mailto:sharon.francis@cornerstonesds.org.uk)  
01467 530527

*Laura Seaton, Resource Mapping Project Officer*  
[laura.seaton@cornerstonesds.org.uk](mailto:laura.seaton@cornerstonesds.org.uk)

*Jemma Morrison, Senior Admin Assistant*  
[jemma.morrison@cornerstonesds.org.uk](mailto:jemma.morrison@cornerstonesds.org.uk)

*Helen Summers, Senior Admin Assistant*  
[helen.summers@cornerstonesds.org.uk](mailto:helen.summers@cornerstonesds.org.uk)

*Denise Robson, Advisor - North/Central Aberdeenshire*  
[denise.robson@cornerstonesds.org.uk](mailto:denise.robson@cornerstonesds.org.uk)

*Pam Williams, Advisor - Central Aberdeenshire*  
[pam.williams@cornerstonesds.org.uk](mailto:pam.williams@cornerstonesds.org.uk)

*Shona Masson, Advisor - Central/South Aberdeenshire*  
[shona.masson@cornerstonesds.org.uk](mailto:shona.masson@cornerstonesds.org.uk)

*Fay Rennie, Advisor - North Aberdeenshire*  
[fay.ennie@cornerstonesds.org.uk](mailto:fay.ennie@cornerstonesds.org.uk)

*Wendy Ellis, Advisor - South Aberdeenshire*  
[wendy.ellis@cornerstonesds.org.uk](mailto:wendy.ellis@cornerstonesds.org.uk)

*Sue Woods, Advisor - North Aberdeenshire*  
[sue.woods@cornerstonesds.org.uk](mailto:sue.woods@cornerstonesds.org.uk)

*Deborah Benson, Advisor - South Aberdeenshire*  
[deborah.benson@cornerstonesds.org.uk](mailto:deborah.benson@cornerstonesds.org.uk)

## Growing team

In July, we were delighted to welcome Laura Seaton to the Cornerstone SDS team as our Resource Mapping Project Officer.

In her role, Laura will lead the development of an information resource which will detail the wide range of community based support, resources and services available through the public, private, voluntary and community sectors across and around Aberdeenshire. Once created, this information resource will be used to source alternative, creative and different services that suit the specific needs and requirements of each individual looking for support.



## First Anniversary of SDS Act

Aberdeenshire Council held a drop in event at Harlaw centre in Inverurie to mark the start of SDS Awareness week and the first anniversary of the Self Directed Support Act.



## Foundations of Self-Directed Support

If you want to extend your understanding of SDS in a more formal way, the Open University has reviewed and developed a modular self learning course on SDS - Foundations of Self-Directed Support in Scotland (KG097\_1).

The course has six sections, which can be studied in any order:

- Understanding personalisation and its history
- Making personalisation happen: Co-production
- Outcomes based thinking
- Personalisation and risk
- Workforce
- Working together for personalisation

The course is available to you for free and can be found by visiting:

[www.open.edu/openlearn/free-courses](http://www.open.edu/openlearn/free-courses) and searching for 'KG097\_1'.

If you complete the whole course you will be able to download a Statement of Participation.



# SSSC Workforce Development

Scottish Social Services Council colleagues have been developing a scope of work to help support SDS workforce development – in particular around the support and development needed to help the Personal Assistant role to ensure that choosing a career in care is an attractive option.

Cornerstone SDS has now joined this initiative, which is commissioned by the Scottish Government. The Group will continue to reach out to Personal Assistants, to help them develop skills, to assist with putting better communication systems in place and to bring them together as a network of support for one another.

Cornerstone SDS will provide updates around this as more information becomes available.



## Do you need help with the payroll function for your employees?

There are five companies who are able to provide anyone who becomes an employer under SDS Option 1 with a professional payroll service. This means that you are assured that your employees receive the right pay for the hours worked, and that tax and contributions are all processed.

Your Cornerstone SDS Advisor will be able to give you some more information about the payroll providers. Once you have selected the company that is right for you a welcome pack will be sent out to you. We will come back to you during the course of the year to find out how well you thought the payroll company supported you and to ask what kind of improvements you would like to see. This information will be given as feedback to the organisations and will help to ensure that improvements to the services are made when required.

The companies that you can choose from are:

### **Community Life Choices**

**01224 516088**

**[Alan.Frew@communitylifechoices.co.uk](mailto:Alan.Frew@communitylifechoices.co.uk)**

### **Fife Business Services Ltd**

**0845 8620846**

**[payroll@fifebusinessservices.co.uk](mailto:payroll@fifebusinessservices.co.uk)**

### **Cornerstone**

**01224 256013**

**[william.dryland@cornerstone.org.uk](mailto:william.dryland@cornerstone.org.uk)**

### **CJS Payroll Ltd**

**02890 705500**

**[cjs@cjspayroll.com](mailto:cjs@cjspayroll.com)**

### **Accountability**

**0191 4109178**

**[accability@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:accability@hotmail.co.uk)**

# Workshops on hiring Personal Assistants

**If you choose to become an employer of your own Personal Assistants then Cornerstone SDS is here to help you understand your responsibilities. Either an individual receiving support or a family member of someone receiving a care and support package may decide to become an employer.**

In partnership with Empire HR, Cornerstone SDS Aberdeenshire hosted a total of six workshops throughout Aberdeenshire to offer expert employment law advice on the subject of recruitment. Topics covered were:

1. Key Steps in the recruitment process
2. Personal files
3. Pre-employment checks – what are they and why must they be done
4. Best practice for handling reference requests
5. Data protection and confidentiality issues
6. Self employed workers v Employees

The second workshop focused on the various types of absence and how to manage this. The purpose of the session was to provide information and tips for dealing with:

1. Short term sickness absence
2. Long term sickness absence
3. Managing annual leave
4. Family friendly leave
5. Time off for dependents

We had more people come along to this second workshop and are looking forward to continuing to encourage more employers to attend these useful sessions.

Workshops are held in Peterhead, Inverurie, Stonehaven, Banff, Fraserburgh and Banchory

Feedback has been very positive, with attendees stating that they were more knowledgeable after the session than they were before.

In relation to what was most useful, responses included:

1. Information relating to the legal aspect of recruitment
2. Knowledge of the employer's responsibilities
3. Reminder of the help available (from both Empire and Cornerstone Advisors)
4. Information on types of advertising
5. Guidance on personal files for employees
6. Information on right to work checks
7. Importance of record keeping and data protection

Several comments related to the benefit of meeting other people in the same situation – at one session, two employers went for a coffee together afterwards!

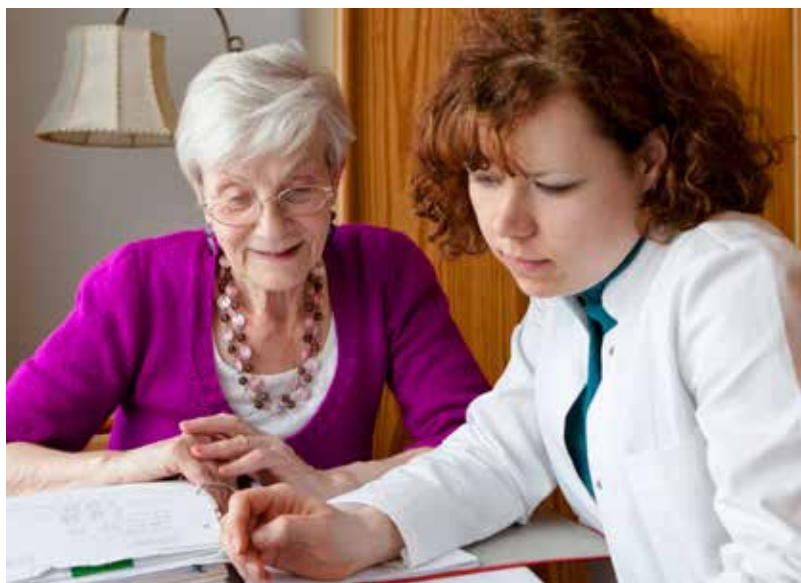
Timing and venues were problematic for some so we plan to try some different venues and times for the next sessions.

The next workshop will focus on Pension Auto-Enrolment, which will soon affect anyone who employs staff. Letters or emails have been sent out with the dates for these but if you haven't received this please get in touch and we can advise you where your nearest workshop will be held.

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**“I wish this had taken place when I first started being an employer. It was very helpful. It is nice to meet other people in a similar situation to share experiences.”**

Feedback from an individual who attended one of our workshops.



# Government changes to Pensions - Auto-Enrolment

The UK Government has decided that every employer in the UK needs to have a pension scheme in place to offer to all employees. This new legislation is called Pensions Auto-Enrolment and the Government is phasing this in across the UK – the date for SDS Employers in Aberdeenshire is February 2017. It may seem like a long time away but it is important that work begins now to start to have arrangements in place.

You will have received a letter from Cornerstone SDS Aberdeenshire highlighting that the new arrangements are being looked at, and letting you know that we are currently all working on this together (Aberdeenshire Council; Cornerstone SDS, Empire HR and various payroll companies) to make this process as easy as possible for you to set up. We will be back in touch with you in the next few weeks by letter to provide more guidance.

# Providers and Personalisation

The Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland (CCPS) had been commissioned over the past few years by Scottish Government to undertake work to help the third sector and local authorities get ready for the implementation and opportunities of SDS. This has included work on leadership roles, financial management challenges, workforce developments, back office systems and processes and ensuring personalisation is at the heart of everything happening in SDS.

This work is now being reviewed to understand what still needs to be done - the Scottish Government has agreed to continue to fund the CCPS team but on a smaller scale.

# Self-Directed Support – Option 2 – Individual Service Funds (ISF)

Aberdeenshire Council has selected four organisations to provide support to individuals who select Option 2 Individual Service Funds. This allows someone who meets the eligibility for care and support, to have lots of control over the shaping of how their services are delivered to them, but without the responsibility of setting this all up and of managing the money needed to pay for the services.

People who choose the SDS Option 2 can select from one of four organisations who will be able to provide this support management service. There is a cost for the initial meetings – to get to know you; to understand more about the type of services you would like and how these will be delivered and to set in place the management of all of this. Thereafter there will be a weekly charge which will vary depending on the amount of time your care and support takes to manage on your behalf.

The organisations that you can select from are:

## **Barnardos**

**Melanie Duncan - 01224 624090**

**[melanie.duncan@barnardos.org.uk](mailto:melanie.duncan@barnardos.org.uk)**

## **Inspire**

**01224 280005**

**[aberdeenshireisf@inspiremail.org.uk](mailto:aberdeenshireisf@inspiremail.org.uk)**

## **Cornerstone SDS ISF Service**

**Fay Rennie - 07900740227**

**[fay.rennie@cornerstone.org.uk](mailto:fay.rennie@cornerstone.org.uk)**

**Claire Milne (finance) - 01224 256053**

**[claire.milne@cornerstone.org.uk](mailto:claire.milne@cornerstone.org.uk)**

## **Enable**

**020 3137 45 89**

**[info@enablemoneymanagement.co.uk](mailto:info@enablemoneymanagement.co.uk)**

# Puzzle Corner

Can you find all 23 words hidden in our SDS word search?

P	Z	P	P	P	C	N	G	L	S	F	T	H	Y	C	D	T	D	C	N
W	U	F	S	E	M	O	C	T	U	O	F	X	D	P	U	N	M	O	K
T	Q	M	U	S	Q	N	R	L	T	W	U	I	J	J	I	E	M	U	I
N	S	P	G	U	B	J	M	N	X	P	R	W	R	C	G	M	O	G	N
E	S	E	D	P	M	R	C	I	E	E	A	D	V	I	C	E	G	S	D
M	E	R	N	P	S	E	F	N	C	R	N	C	K	H	A	V	R	N	E
S	N	S	Z	O	W	S	M	T	R	S	S	J	O	I	C	L	E	O	P
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F	Y	N	O	I	T	A	R	O	B	A	L	L	O	C	H	K	G	U	G

ADVICE  
COLLABORATION  
FAIRNESS  
INDEPENDENCE  
OUTCOMES  
PERSONALISATION  
RESHAPING  
SUPPORT

ASPIRATIONS  
CORNERSTONES  
SDS  
FLEXIBILITY  
INTEGRATION  
PARTICIPATION  
PLANNING  
RESPECT  
WELLBEING

ASSESSMENT  
DIRECTPAYMENT  
FREEDOM  
INVOLVEMENT  
PERSONAL  
REFERRAL  
REVIEW



*Further information about SDS can be found on the Scottish Government's website - SDS Scotland:  
[www.selfdirectedsupportscotland.org.uk](http://www.selfdirectedsupportscotland.org.uk)*

*If you would like to find out more about the Cornerstone SDS Aberdeenshire service please get in touch with us at:*

**25 High Street  
Inverurie  
Aberdeenshire  
AB51 3QA**

**Tel: 01467 530520**

**Email: [aberdeenshire@cornerstonesds.org.uk](mailto:aberdeenshire@cornerstonesds.org.uk)**

**Facebook: Cornerstone SDS**

*We are always seeking ways to improve our service so if you have any feedback on the service we provide we would welcome your comments. You can do this by speaking to your advisor or by contacting the Service Manager, Angi Wood on 07825050028 or email [angi.wood@cornerstonesds.org.uk](mailto:angi.wood@cornerstonesds.org.uk)*

**Cornerstone SDS**  
**[www.cornerstonesds.org.uk](http://www.cornerstonesds.org.uk)**

