Introduction

This briefing paper has been produced to set out plans for monitoring and evaluation of the Patient Advice and Support Service (PASS) which became operational on 1st April 2012 (see www.cas.org.uk/patientadvice).

Role of PASS

PASS was established through the Patient Rights (Scotland) Act. The primary objective of the service is to raise awareness of patients’ rights and responsibilities and to provide free, confidential, impartial and independent advice and support to patients, carers and other members of the public wishing to provide feedback, make comments, raise concerns, or make complaints about NHS services in Scotland, including services provided by special NHS Boards.

PASS also helps people to deal with other issues that may have an impact on their health, and lets people know about the availability of other support services that they might find useful, such as advocacy, translation and interpreting services, other communication support and mediation.

Contractual Arrangements for PASS

NHS National Service Scotland (NSS) is responsible for contractual arrangements for PASS and awarded the contract for delivery of PASS to Citizens Advice Scotland (CAS). A framework for delivery of PASS was developed by NSS and agreed with individual NHS Boards.

CAS has sub-contracted with the Citizens Advice Bureaux Service in Scotland to deliver the service in geographical NHS Board areas, and has made arrangements for local service delivery in discussion with each Board.
Monitoring and Evaluation

In order to assess how PASS performs in practice and to ensure that it seeks to continuously improve the service that it offers to people, a number of arrangements have been in place at both national and local level to ensure effective monitoring and evaluation.

NSS is responsible for monitoring at national level to ensure that the delivery of PASS in accordance with the agreed contract. NHS Boards are responsible for monitoring the operation of PASS at local level to ensure that delivery at local level is in line with local agreements and meets local needs.

- National group

The Scottish Health Council also has a role in monitoring and evaluating delivery of PASS in order to:

- help PASS to improve how it meet the needs of service users
- help NHS Boards assess whether PASS is being provided in accordance with the appropriate standards and if it is meeting the needs of the patients
- help the Scottish Government Health and Social Care Directorates monitor and assess if PASS is being provided effectively and equitably across Scotland.

The Scottish Health Council has set up a PASS Monitoring and Evaluation Advisory Group to help it carry out this role. The group includes representatives from: Citizens Advice Scotland; NSS; NHS Boards; Scottish Government; and others with an interest in the provision of advice and support services for patients. It also includes two public partners. The group’s remit is to:

- Facilitate and encourage co-operation, engagement and co-ordination between key stakeholders;
- Provide a forum for obtaining advice and input from key stakeholders in order to ensure effective monitoring and evaluation of the Patient Advice and Support Service;
- Review and agree the content and format of quarterly and annual reporting;
- Monitor and review relevant aspects of service delivery including feedback from service users;
- Identify and facilitate sharing of areas of good practice and offer recommendations to support future development and continuous improvement.

At its first meeting in May 2012, the group agreed templates for quarterly and annual reports for PASS. It also identified a need for further work to be carried out to ensure a robust system is in place for gathering and reporting on feedback from service users. This further work is
now underway and a new process for gathering user feedback will be tested and rolled out in the coming months, supported by local Scottish Health Council staff.

- **Local groups**

To help ensure the development and delivery of an effective and efficient service in each geographical area, local advisory groups are also being established in consultation with the local CABx and NHS Boards. These groups will involve local stakeholders who will contribute to the development and delivery of PASS in the local area by:

- Providing information, advice and guidance on local issues;
- Providing information about local NHS initiatives, plans and strategies and those of statutory and other agencies which may have an impact on the local delivery of PASS;
- Reviewing and advising on PASS development plans and strategies where required;
- Contributing to the planning and delivery of marketing and promotional activity;
- Identifying and exchanging good practice of relevance to PASS; and
- Assisting, where appropriate, in planning and delivery of joint training and staff development events.

Links will be made between the work of the local groups and the national group where appropriate.

**Further information**

If you require any further information or have any queries about this briefing, please contact:

Sandra McDougall  
Head of Policy  
Scottish Health Council  
T: 0141 225 5560  
E: sandra.mcdougall@scottishhealthcouncil.org

Christine Lang  
PASS National Co-ordinator  
Citizens Advice Scotland  
T: 0131 550 1046  
E: christine.lang@cas.org.uk

August 2012