



## **Public Procurement: A Consultation on Changes to the Public Procurement Rules in Scotland**

April 2015

The Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance is the national membership body for Scottish advocacy organisations. The SIAA promotes, supports and defends independent advocacy in Scotland.

The right to independent advocacy for those with mental disorders or who are potentially at risk is enshrined in Scottish legislation. However, independent advocacy can also have a key role in supporting anyone who is vulnerable due to their situation or circumstances.

Our response focusses on guidance specifically in relation to procurement of health and social care services. There are issues in relation to such procurement which should be addressed in the new regulations and guidance.

We believe that contracts should not be awarded on the basis of cost alone. In order to ensure best quality as well as best value, cost should be only one factor in deciding on suppliers. This is of particular consideration in relation to health and social care services. Where it has been decided that such a contract should go through the procurement process there must be clear and transparent methods of measuring the value of the contract.

Sustainability and ethical considerations should be at the heart of the procurement process. Therefore the contract length must be sufficient to allow the provision of decent levels of pay and security of employment for staff and also the necessary time to enable the development of relationships with vulnerable clients. Payment of the living wage should be a requirement as should good employment standards.

Guidance for the procurement of health and social care services must be person centred and undertaken in co-production with the people for whom the service is to be procured. This must include wide engagement with representatives from affected groups using multiple approaches to ensure the engagement is meaningful.

Strategies to support effective and meaningful involvement of service users will be required. Access to independent advocacy, one to one or collective, for vulnerable individuals can help support their effective engagement with such a process.

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The Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance (SIAA) is Scotland's national membership body for advocacy organisations. The SIAA promotes, supports and defends independent advocacy in Scotland. It aims to ensure that independent advocacy is available to any person who needs it in Scotland.