

Project scope

Health and social care integration:

Update on progress



ACCOUNTS COMMISSION 

AUDITOR GENERAL 

Prepared by Audit Scotland
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Background

The integration of health and social care services is a major programme of reform, affecting most health and care services and costing over £8 billion of public money. The aim of this policy is to meet the challenges of Scotland's ageing population by shifting resources to community-based and preventative care at home, or in a homely setting.

The reforms are far reaching, and aim to ensure services are well integrated and that people receive the care they need at the right time and in the right place. To achieve this, the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 required councils and NHS boards

to form new partnerships, known as Integration Authorities (IAs).

IAs across Scotland are very different in terms of their size, resources and local context. But all IAs are responsible for the governance, planning and resourcing of social care, primary and community healthcare and unscheduled hospital care for adults, in the local population.

Why are we doing this audit?

Given the scale of the reforms envisaged, we are carrying out three performance audits so that we fully understand, and are able to assess progress with

health and social care integration. We published our first audit in December 2015. This audit looked at the emerging arrangements for establishing, managing and scrutinising IAs. The audit highlighted significant risks which needed to be addressed if integration is to change the way health and care services are delivered.

This second audit will follow up on our previous key messages. These included uncertainty around budget setting and longer term funding, and the need for IAs to set clear targets and timescales for how they will make a difference to people who use health and social care services. It will also focus on how integration is changing the way services are planned and designed around the needs of local communities. This includes highlighting any early evidence of impact on the public.

Our third audit in this series, currently planned for 2020/21, will focus on the impact of the Act. The audit will assess the extent to which integration has led to a significant shift from acute and reactive services towards more community-based, preventative, and sustainable services. This audit will focus on the impact of these changes on improving outcomes for service users.

Our audit work will complement the joint strategic inspections of adult health and social care services being carried out by the Care Inspectorate and Health Improvement Scotland.

What will the scope of the audit be?

The overall aim of this audit is to examine the impact public bodies are having as they work together to integrate health and social care services in line with the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014. We will seek to answer the following questions:

- What impact is integration having and what are the barriers and enablers to this change?
- How effectively are integration authorities planning sustainable, preventative and community based services to improve outcomes for local people?
- How effectively are IAs, NHS boards and councils implementing the reform of health and social care integration?

- How effectively is the Scottish Government supporting the integration of health and social care and evaluating its impact?

How will we carry out this audit?

Given the scale of the reforms and the number of public bodies involved, we will use detailed case studies to allow us to explore a number of IAs. Alongside this we will review data and intelligence on health and care services and carry out a wide range of interviews with key stakeholders. This will help us to build a picture of how the integration is progressing across Scotland.

We will gather evidence using a range of methods, including:

- Reviewing documents (plans, strategies and reports) from IAs, NHS boards, councils, the Scottish Government, and other organisations
- Interviews with stakeholders, including IAs, NHS boards, councils, the Scottish Government, COSLA, third sector organisations and service users
- Analysing national and local data, for example, annual accounts and audit reports, national performance data and information from other sources such as ISD Scotland.

What impact will this audit have?

The audit will establish current progress with implementing health and social care integration in Scotland. It will identify barriers and challenges to integration, and what can be done to address them. It will also help support this implementation by drawing out early lessons learned and by highlighting areas of new practice. The report will also make a number of recommendations for the IAs, NHS boards and councils and the Scottish Government.

Audit timing and contacts

We plan to publish in November 2018. We are carrying out the audit on behalf of the Accounts Commission and the Auditor General for Scotland. For further information, please contact Neil Cartlidge, Audit Manager, on 0131 625 1778 or by email at ncartlidge@audit-scotland.gov.uk 



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