

# SCIE strategy for 2020–23

## Leading the way for improved social care



## Who are we?

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SCIE is the leading improvement agency and charity committed to evidence-based and co-produced improvement across social care for people of all ages.

We seek to:

- influence and shape national policy and practice through policy development and thought leadership
- drive better social care practice and outcomes by producing and sharing insight, research, guidance, improvement resources and materials
- co-produce our work with people with lived experience of the care and support system and support the adoption of coproduction across social care
- equip people working within social care and support with the leadership qualities, skills and capabilities they need to deliver better and person-centred care, through training, coaching and leadership development
- support organisations to improve the quality and impact of care and support through evidence-based consultancy.

## Our purpose

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### Vision

A society where care and support maximises people's choices, removes social inequality, and enables people to live fulfilling, safe and healthy lives.

### Mission

To research, evidence, share and support the implementation of best practice. We use this evidence and experience to shape policy and outcomes, and to raise awareness of the importance of social care and social work for creating a fair and equal society. Everything we do is informed by people with experience of care and support.



## Our values

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The success of our strategy doesn't just rely on what we do, but how we do it. This is where our values come in. We are committed to becoming a more diverse and inclusive organisation and living up to our values in everything we do. We are ambitious about building the leadership and culture we need to enable our people to work at their best. We will develop a behavioural framework that ensures we are all living our values and are holding each other to account for continual improvement.

### The values we have signed up to

Progressive	➔	always learning and developing
Inclusive	➔	working together for equality, diversity and fairness
Credible	➔	evidence-based, robust and reliable
Transparent	➔	open and honest
Committed	➔	focused on making a difference to people's lives.



## Our role

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Over the last 20 years we have worked across the social care sector gaining an invaluable insight into the issues that have affected people. We know what works in terms of good social care and support as well as why it works and how engaged and supportive communities can make a difference.

It is no longer sufficient nor appropriate to rely on platitudes or statements of intent when addressing the question of inequality in our society. The inequalities in health and social care exposed by the COVID-19 crisis and the Black Lives Matter movement have shown us that this is no longer enough. To uphold the right for people to be treated equally, no matter their background, requires more.

SCIE's role must be to challenge the structural inequalities in our society as it relates to social care. To do so, it will hold itself to account in recruitment, and how it supports and develops its staff; people who represent the diverse society in which we live. They will be talented and confident in the knowledge that they will be judged by their ability alone. In addition, SCIE will ensure that the voices of those it represents will always include those most disadvantaged by the structures of discrimination in our society, and hold its partners to account, as well. SCIE believes that co-production, both inclusive and transparent, presents the best opportunity to achieve this.

We have worked with knowledgeable and skilled partners to research and evidence the best examples of good social care and we will now focus our resources around three strategic intentions, where we believe we can achieve the greatest impact. We recognise that the policy and operating context is different across the four countries of the UK, and different again between children's and adult social care. We bring perspectives and learning from working with services for people of all ages, families and communities across the life course. This means we bring insight from different parts of the system, building on the best available evidence and learning from practice and policy in both children's and adult services. An example of this being when SCIE established the What Works for Children's Social Care centre and led on stakeholder engagement.

Through our work, research and evidence, from both an academic perspective and from evidence gained through the lived experience of people accessing care and support, we will reflect on the differences in inequalities in social care, as a part of our drive to improve on these areas. We always seek to ensure that our priorities, how we deploy our expertise, and our ways of working reflects these differences.



## Our key principles

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In order to deliver our strategy, we have established five key principles which will run across everything we do. These will enable us to continue to grow and strengthen our internal capabilities, and consolidate how we work with partners and people who access care and support. These are:

### Co-production

- We will work alongside people who access care and support to co-produce and design improved social care for today and for the future.
- We will provide a channel for the voice of people within the community and those who access care and support so that they have a more powerful influence over policy and practice

### Innovation

- We will draw on our experience of leading the Social Care Innovation Network to encourage local authorities, partner organisations, providers and citizens to develop and grow innovative approaches to care
- We will explore the potential for digital technology to enhance practice and create care services which enhance people's wellbeing and independence

### Evidence and practice informed

- We will keep abreast of emerging and innovative practice, research and thinking in social care and the wider community sector, to ensure we can provide thought leadership and understand where we can best contribute
- We will harness the power of data science to inform better decisions that in turn increase independence

### Partnership work

- We will collaborate, convening and harnessing the expertise, experience and influence of the wider sector, to explore and adopt new approaches to high-quality, person- and community-centred models of support
- We will work with partners to raise awareness of the importance of social work and social care including through events, webinars, writing and broadcasts

### A sustainable and secure SCIE

- We will operate effectively and cohesively, to make the most of our resources and further our charitable aims
- We will clearly define our brand and commercial offer to ensure financial security, increasing our reach and impact and actively marketing our offer to the charity, public and education sectors
- We will invest in our people to retain our sector-leading expertise and ensure we are a great place to work.

## Our strategic objectives

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### 1: Driving improvements in social care locally

Local authorities are increasingly committed to delivering transformed care which is person-centred, preventative and strengths based, but are stymied by a number of critical challenges, including:

- Challenge, within a constrained financial environment, of involving people with lived experience in decision-making about care and support
- The challenge of shifting commissioning from a procurement-based model, towards one that is co-produced with the sector and people with lived experience, and focuses on outcomes
- Difficulty in developing strength-based and collaborative leaders, who can work across local places, including with the NHS and the voluntary sector
- Lack of reliable and meaningful data and evidence to drive good commissioning and targeted interventions to those who need them most
- Overly bureaucratic processes and procedures for direct payments which deny recipients full choice and control

SCIE helps local authorities and social care organisations transform care and support to deliver better outcomes in collaboration with citizens. We do this by helping organisations to create the right conditions in which strengths-based practice can thrive; using data and evidence to drive better decisions; supporting the development of asset-based commissioning; working with frontline workforce representatives, partners, providers, communities, and children, adults and young people with experience of accessing care and support, to develop personalised care; and optimising the use of technology to drive better care.

We will:

- support a growing number of ambitious and farsighted local authorities and other social care organisations to transform care and support and improve outcomes for people in the community using high-quality improvement tools and guidance
- apply our strategic model of commissioning, helping local authorities develop a systems-wide, co-produced, commissioning strategy which builds on community assets supporting local authorities to build the right conditions in which productive strength-based practice can thrive, and where it is recognised that addressing social inequalities will open the door to social inclusion
- support local authorities to harness the potential of data, robust evaluation and predictive analytics to drive better decisions and prevent demand escalating, and to manage changing demand and impact of the inequities evidenced due to COVID-19
- identify and share innovation, research and good practice, to inform policy and transformation programmes within local authorities and other social care providers across social care

- review local authorities' strategic and operational approach to digital technology, supporting them to make the right choices and investment in digital technology
- continue to produce guidance for commissioners and providers such as that produced on Young Carers Breaks which included a young carer's co-production group
- be part of the consortium commissioned by the Department for Education to deliver the Strengthening Families support programme, which will provide support to 20 local authorities over five years to implement three successful Innovation Programme projects: Leeds Family Valued, Hertfordshire Family Safeguarding and North Yorkshire's No Wrong Door.

We will know we are successful as by 2023:

- people will say 'SCIE was critical in helping us think through the challenges we faced and develop and execute a plan which was not just sustainable, but has greatly improved outcomes'
- 80 per cent of our clients will report that they are very confident we have helped them adopt better ways of coproducing social care with those who use care and carers
- we will have worked with over 60 local authorities to help them improve their adult social care offer, and demonstrate how they have improved outcomes and experiences for people who use services and carers
- we will have delivered against the key performance indicators and milestones agreed by our Board published on our website.

## 2: Influencing better policy and practice nationally

COVID-19 has had a devastating impact on social care. Deep-rooted inequalities in society have also been amplified by the crisis, as has the sector's fragile financial situation and the low pay and conditions experienced by many care workers.

As a crisis, however, it has led to some positives. Within communities, we have seen a willingness to become part of mutual aid and support networks; the steadfast professionalism and commitment of the social care workforce throughout the crisis; and the capacity for many organisations to innovate, moving their entire operations online or developing totally new services in the face of enormous challenges.

There is a growing body of evidence about what works in terms of community-centred, personalised care and support – and in terms of new technologies which can transform care experience – but there continues to be a struggle to roll these out to the whole sector. However, we expect that innovative models will become more commonplace, central to commissioning intentions, and demanded by people who will be much more active in shaping how we design services.

We believe in a positive, co-produced vision of social care which exemplifies how social care can support people to live good lives in their local communities. SCIE wants to support more organisations and individuals, in collaboration with people who access care and support and their carers and communities, to take action to achieve this vision.

### We will:

- speak with an authoritative voice, providing sector leadership and a strong policy perspective so more national policy, programmes and practice in the sector are driven by evidence, co-production and a vision of preventative, community-led strengths-based care
- deliver a new commission on the role of housing in the future of care and support funded by The Dunhill Medical Trust, which will revisit the findings of the 2014 commission – which made several recommendations including the need to broaden the definition of residential care to housing with care – to explore their relevance today, examine progress with their implementation and set out a practical roadmap of reforms
- work as a partner and critical friend to government, responding independently and intelligently to new government policy, supporting and advising on a range of national policy programmes, initiatives, and influencing guidance and practice
- tackle inequalities by engaging in research and using our findings and existing evidence to influence policy, and to promote best practice. For example, by encouraging implementation of the NICE Guideline developed in partnership with SCIE, People's experience in adult social care services: improving the experience of care and support for people using adult social care services
- produce high-quality research and evaluations which demonstrate what works and makes the difference in social care, promoting evidence-based good practice
- collaborate with Social Finance, a not-for-profit social enterprise, on the implementation of Leaving Well digital tool, which aims to support outcome-based plans for care leavers as part of improvement of care leavers' services
- continue to host the Think Local Act Personal (TLAP) partnership which works to promote personalisation and community-based approaches to care and support.

### We will know we are successful as by 2023:

- people will say 'I read a SCIE policy paper on social care reform, and I used it to convince senior policy leads in our department to invest in a new initiative that we believe will improve lives'
- 80 per cent of our clients will report that they are very aware of our work to improve national policy and practice
- we will see a direct link between our research and evidence and emerging social care policy, improving the experiences of people accessing care and support
- we will have delivered against the key performance indicators and milestones agreed by our Board published on our website.



### 3: Supporting better safeguarding everywhere

Across different sectors, there is an increasing level of challenge being experienced with regard to safeguarding. These include an increased focus on statutory requirements, high-profile incidents and the governance demand and accountability placed on organisations. This sits in tension with the financial pressures and limited capacity already experienced within the sector. Charities, particularly, therefore find themselves needing to urgently seek independent partners to provide assurances about the quality of the safeguarding set-ups and arrangements. Parts of the education sector are also readying themselves in anticipation of changes to inspection requirements and scope. This will see greater emphasis on safeguarding leadership and governance as fundamental to the safe operation of the more complex structures of education, such as multi-academy trusts. Local authority children's services, adult social care, housing and health and care settings will also be affected.

When harm is caused to children or adults, partners are required to learn lessons to drive improvements and change. Yet, there is an ongoing struggle to conduct these reviews to time and with quality, reducing the effectiveness of case reviews as a learning mechanism. The reframing of safeguarding to include contextual risks and new audiences (for example, higher education settings), creates the need for revised case review models.

The COVID-19 context has created new risks for both children and adults and new ways of working for professionals, as well as bringing new people into the health and care sector. This creates a fresh wave of demand for training that helps people to ensure that safeguarding remains everybody's business. It also creates an urgency to learning lessons where people have been harmed, both from Safeguarding Adult Reviews and Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews.

We will:

- expand our nationally recognised safeguarding offer of both case and institutional reviews and audits to enable more organisations and people to practice safely and keep communities safe
- deliver safeguarding reviews in rapid time which enable the whole system to learn and act on a local incident, keeping more people safe
- support sector quality and capacity for safeguarding reviews, building on our development of a national SAR library and quality markers that builds on our national reputation for Learning Together
- build on the model we have developed on adult rapid reviews in order to be able to provide the same for children's services
- build closer links with the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel to support national and local reviews
- develop case review methodologies for new contextual safeguarding risks (as driven by Contextual Safeguarding Network and Firmin's research).

We will know we are successful as by 2023:

- people will say 'SCIE carried out a comprehensive and robust audit of our organisation's approach to safeguarding and I feel confident that we are now delivering safe services'

- people will know that SCIE is the go-to organisation for support with safeguarding, we will have worked with 30 organisations to audit and improve their approach.
- 80 per cent of clients who have received safeguarding support from SCIE will report that they are very confident we have made their organisations/services safer
- we will have delivered against the key performance indicators and milestones agreed by our Board published on our website.

