

National Scottish Steering Group for Educational Psychologists (NSSGEP)

Workforce Planning for Educational Psychology in Scotland September 2013

Report prepared by ASPEP & SDEP in conjunction with Dundee University and Strathclyde University Training Courses

Introduction

This report was commissioned by the current national workforce group (now named the National Scottish Steering Group for Educational Psychologists (NSSGEP)). The report has been compiled by representatives from within the profession in Scotland and has been contributed to by the *Association of Scottish Principal Educational Psychologists (ASPEP)*, the *Scottish Division of Educational Psychology (SDEP)* and the two national training courses in Scotland based at the University of Dundee and the University of Strathclyde. The purpose of this report is to provide information about the current workforce of educational psychologists in Scotland to inform workforce planning.

Executive Summary

The 2011 HMle Aspect Report *Educational psychology in Scotland: making a difference* recommendations and national priorities for Scotland regarding vulnerable children, young people and their families emphasise a key role for educational psychologists in local authorities' delivery of services. Educational psychologists play an extensive part in the provision of educational services across Scotland; their contribution to national priorities such as: *Getting It Right for Every Child*; literacy and numeracy strategies; Curriculum for Excellence; LAC children and young people, and emotional health and well-being is essential to the continued progression across Scotland of these and other priorities.

This Workforce Planning Report (2013) highlights that the ASPECT Report recommendations, increased expectations regarding national priorities and a significant increase in additional support needs (as identified by Scottish Government data) is resulting in psychological services across Scotland reporting a significant increase in demand.

Increased demand for psychological services exists at a time when numbers of educational psychologists have declined to the same level they were at in 2001 when the then Minister for Education and Young People expressed the view in the foreword of the Currie Review (2002) that the level of staffing for educational psychologists in Scotland was in, 'urgent need to recruit and train more educational psychologists' The current report indicates that the removal of funding is having a significant and growing impact on the numbers of individuals applying to train for the profession and there is evidence of a

number of shortages of educational psychologists particularly in rural areas of Scotland.

Across Scotland there is inconsistent staffing of educational psychologists; a baseline for a FTE educational psychologist per head of population does not currently exist and the population range for 1FTE educational psychologist is anything from 2404 to 5620 per head of population. The likely result of this will be variable services provided to children, young people and their families depending on where they live.

Current conditions of service provide challenges for psychological services which require more consideration to avoid further impact on services. Sickness and maternity cover is extremely unlikely for psychological services. This leads to educational psychologists having to absorb constant additional workloads with the potential for impact on staff welfare. This issue is more acute given current staffing levels and demands.

The roles and function of principal psychologists is a potential further element to impact on the profession and requires clarification. An additional concern is that because of shrinking local authority budgets, principal psychologists are being given an increasing and variable range of education management tasks to carry out.

In the interests of addressing the issues outlined in this report, it is proposed that a review of psychological services in Scotland is carried out as a matter of priority with a view to developing a national framework³ for Scotland which supports the local authority delivery of equitable services to schools, children and families and their communities.

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Part 1

Overview of the role and function of educational psychology services in Scotland

1.1 The provision of educational psychology services by education authorities in Scotland is a statutory requirement. The main functions are set out in the **1980 Education (Scotland) Act** as follows:

'It shall be the duty of every education authority to provide for their area a Psychological service, and the functions of that service shall include:

- a) the study of children with additional support needs (as amended 2004)*
- b) the giving of advice to parents and teachers as to appropriate methods of education for such children,*
- c) in suitable cases, provision for additional support needs (as amended 2004) of such children, and*
- d) the giving of advice to a local authority within the meaning of the **Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968** regarding the assessment of the needs of any child for the purposes of any of the provisions of that or any other enactment. '*

1.2 In 1986 legislation renamed child guidance services as psychological services. Each of the 32 local authorities in Scotland has its own service, known either as a psychological service or an educational psychology service. Subsequent amendments include **The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act (2004)** which replaced the term 'special educational needs' with a more broadly defined population of 'additional support needs'. Under the Act, and subsequent amendments, parents and young people have additionally been given various rights to request psychological assessments.

1.3 The role of educational psychologists is to apply psychological skills and knowledge based on evidence of what works for whom and in what contexts. They work closely with schools, teachers, parents and other professionals to advise about how to help children and young people learn and develop. The broad statutory functions of educational psychology services are reflected in the five core functions set out following the National Review of Educational Psychology Services published by the Scottish Executive in 2002 (Currie Report). The core functions are: consultation, assessment, intervention, training and research. In the foreword to the Currie Report, the Ministerial Foreword comments:

'It is essential that we have the right number of educational psychologists in place to meet the ever-increasing demands for their skills and expertise from children, parents and professionals. The report makes it clear that there is an urgent need to recruit and train more educational psychologists.'

1.4 Educational psychologists work in partnership with children and young people, parents, educational establishments, education management and a range of agencies across a wide range of settings at local, authority level and national level. They provide support, training and consultation to local and national groups including senior local authority management and senior civil servants. Given they are statutory services, educational psychology services are subject to external inspection from Education Scotland and other national inspection bodies working in the context of integrated inspection processes.

The core functions are included in performance indicators published by HMIE for Local Authority Educational psychology Services from 2007. The national requirement is for these core functions to be delivered at a range of levels including individual, school, locality and authority.

1.5 Following publication of the Beattie Report (*Scottish Executive 1999*), educational psychology services nationally were additionally supported to develop post-school psychology services to support vulnerable young people, aged 16-24, making the transition to post-school education, training and employment.

1.6 In 2007 HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) developed a framework for self-evaluation and quality improvement: *Quality management in local authority educational psychology services (2007) (QMILAEPS)*, in partnership with educational psychological services and university staff. A programme of inspection of all 32 educational psychology services (EPSs) began in 2006 and was completed in 2010. The findings were published in 2011 as *An HMIE Aspect Report: The findings of inspections of local authority educational psychology services 2006-10*.

This comprehensive report concluded that psychological services were making a positive difference to the lives of children and young people in Scotland, particularly the most vulnerable. The role of educational psychology services was recognised to be very broad and, in addition to emphasising the effective contribution of services to support families and schools, the report concluded that educational psychology services make important contributions to the implementation of key national priorities. Those specifically emphasised are the *Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 and 2009 amendments*, and the *Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC)* agenda. The foreword to the report noted:

The breadth of this work gives educational psychology services a pivotal position in assisting education authorities in the development and implementation of policies and practice to raise educational standards for Scotland's children and young people. (HMIE, 2011)

1.7 The policy framework for children and young people in Scotland is underpinned by *Getting It right for every child (GIRFEC)* and *A Curriculum for Excellence (CfE)* and across both, the principles of prevention and early intervention. The principles and components of GIRFEC are embedded across all areas of educational psychology practice and policy. As highlighted

in the HMle Aspect Report, educational psychologists have high quality partnerships with agencies and support the process of working together to ensure that assessment and planning for children and young people leads to their successful inclusion in their class, school and community.

1.8 Educational psychologists support the implementation of a CfE through the ongoing application of psychological principles and research to build capacity in universal services. The HMle Aspect Report emphasises that most psychological services had made a significant contribution to CfE implementation strategies, particularly the health and wellbeing agenda. The HMle Aspect Report also recommended more prioritisation of educational psychologist knowledge of child development and pedagogy to support the development of learning and teaching practice in schools.

Scottish educational psychology services make a vital and broad contribution to the implementation of national policy locally and the delivery of local authority improvement plans. How this is currently provided is:

- **Preventive and proactive capacity building**

Educational psychologists emphasise the need to assess the needs of the whole child and to develop positive solutions which build on the strengths of children and their families. Through this values-based approach EPs work with others, not to reinforce deficits, but to build their skills and confidence to get it right for every child. Educational psychologists draw on their knowledge and skills to implement evidence informed approaches which maximise outcomes and impact and best value.

- **Targeted approaches**

Educational psychology services are critical to the delivery of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 (as amended 2009). They enable and support the local authority to fulfill their statutory duties in terms of the rights of individual children and young people with additional support needs for assessment and effective intervention. The range of needs supported is extensive and reflects the breadth of identified additional support needs e.g. recent Scottish Government data from the Support for Learning Division (2013) has identified at least 18% of the school population has additional support needs. This includes, for example, children and young people presenting with complex needs, sensory impairment, dyslexia and social and emotional vulnerabilities. Educational psychologists provide a vital role in developing targeted interventions for vulnerable groups of those most at risk (e.g. nurturing approaches, literacy interventions). The Children and Young People's Bill includes provision to support the needs of targeted groups for example, the early years, looked after children and young people and children at risk in terms of their emotional well being. With regard to supporting local authorities to develop and implement effective policies and practice, psychological services provide essential input and often lead on authority strategic initiatives.

- **Universal approaches, universal impact**

As well as targeting support for vulnerable individuals and groups of children and young people educational psychologists apply psychology and research to inform the best use and development of universal resources. Psychological services design and put into practice interventions which help both individuals and communities develop resilience and protective factors. Educational psychologists train and develop the skills of other professionals, for example teachers, early years staff and carers to improve and support children's attainment and achievement. In the last year most services have been involved systemically in the development and promotion of more effective and efficient systems for developing literacy and numeracy within local authorities and in the implementation of the ASL Act and supporting the introduction of appropriate policy and guidance (See [Appendix](#))

Part 2

Training requirements and regulatory structure for Educational psychologists

2.1 In addition to educational psychology services having a statutory function in Scottish local authorities, statutory professional standards and codes of conduct apply to the profession. These are external requirements for professional registration and practice.

2.2 Educational psychologists are trained psychologists who have completed an undergraduate degree in psychology and an advanced postgraduate qualification in educational psychology. The term '*educational psychologist*' is a protected professional title in the United Kingdom. Educational psychologists require to be registered and regulated through the UK regulatory body which is the Health and Care Professions Council.

Completion of the postgraduate requirements for educational psychology in Scotland comprises two elements. Stage One involves completion of an accredited MSc. Two universities provide this qualification currently in Scotland: the University of Dundee and the University of Strathclyde. In order to access a place on the MSc candidates must have obtained a 2:1 honours degree in psychology (or equivalent) and worked in a relevant professional context with children or young people for a minimum of two years. In recent years, for example, those accepted for these training courses commonly have work experience as teachers, additional needs assistants, educational psychology assistants or, in some other cases as a speech and language therapists, social workers, residential care workers etc.

2.3 Completion of Stage One is not a sufficient basis to apply to the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) for registration as an educational psychologist. Candidates from the Scottish training courses must also have completed the requirements of the accreditation criteria stipulated by the British Psychological Society (BPS) in the document: *Standards for Psychological service policies and arrangements for supervision of the*

probationary period for trainee educational psychologists in Scotland (Stage 2), December 2011. The BPS, supported by the Scottish Division of Educational Psychology, manages the Stage 2 Qualification process on behalf of the HCPC. The combination of the accredited MSc (Stage 1) and the Qualification (Stage 2) meet the HCPC's Standards of Proficiency for Educational Psychology.

2.4 The Stage Two qualification is a demanding and rigorous process and requires demonstration of work at Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) level 12. Whilst completing this qualification candidates are employed as probationers in Scottish educational psychology services. Services with whom probationers are placed require to be accredited and to provide a Co-ordinating Supervisor and may provide Additional (Work Place) Supervisors. The Stage 2 Qualification involves a minimum of twelve months of supervised induction in order to complete the third year of initial training and to meet the requirements for moving to independent professional status. For those who are employed on a part time basis the period of probation will be extended on a pro- rata basis.

Taking into account the requirements for an initial degree in psychology (four years in Scotland), two years of relevant experience, and three years to complete MSc Stage One, Stage Two and probation, it takes 9 years to train a fully qualified educational psychologist. This is much longer than other forms of post graduate training, apart from clinical psychology.

2.5 Scottish educational psychology services will generally design their induction and support arrangements in the probationary year to enable probationers to become eligible for Chartered Membership of the British Psychological Society (BPS) on completion of the Stage Two¹.

Part 3

Profile of educational psychology services in Scotland

3.1 The Association of Scottish Principal Educational Psychologists in association with the Scottish Division of Educational Psychology (SDEP) previously compiled a report entitled: *Workforce Planning Report August 2012*. The previous report highlighted what for the profession are a number of concerns about future service pressures arising from an insufficient supply of qualified educational psychologists to meet the predicted demands. The present report summarises some key points and includes some additional comparisons. The key points are as follows:

- The impact of legislative changes in Scotland have increased the demand on educational psychology services

¹ Chartered status is a designation associated with the BPS and is not a term used as a protected title by the Health and Care Professions Council (see below) but remains a legally recognised title under Royal Charter granted to the British Psychological Society in 1965.

- The nearest comparator professional group for educational psychologists as identified in *The Review of provision of educational psychology services in Scotland* (Currie Report, 2002) is clinical psychology. Comparisons of staffing levels over the last 10 years demonstrate that NHS psychologist staffing ratios have been vastly improved whilst educational psychologist ratios have deteriorated to below the levels provided in 2001
- Clinical psychologists have the same length of training and similar processes for training accreditation and quality assurance. Educational psychologists are being clearly disadvantaged by comparison and currently are already experiencing less favourable salaries and salary progression. Health is using 'Choice and Partner Agencies Approaches' (CAPA) to re-direct referrals causing a further impact on demand for educational psychology services.
- Training for NHS psychologists is fully funded (including fees and expenses) whereas funded training for educational psychologists in Scotland has been withdrawn. This carries the key risks that over the next five years, suitable candidates for educational psychology training in Scotland will alternatively elect to:
 - train in clinical psychology
 - move to England where they can continue to access fully funded training courses in educational psychology
 - enter funded training for another profession instead

3.2 Increased demands

In recent years the numbers of children and young people identified as having support needs with education has increased significantly. National statistics compiled by the Scottish Government indicate that pupils identified as having Additional Support Needs in Scotland have nearly trebled in the five years from 2006 to 2011. The implementation of the Children and Young People's Bill and related legislation and regulations in terms of their implementation principles, guidance and outcome aspirations will further increase demand over the next few years (see [Table 1](#))

Table 1

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Total ASN	36,148	36,510	38,716	44,176	69,587	98,523

Additionally, More Choices, More Chances 2006, resulted in the Post-School Psychological Pathfinder Services and has extended the client group for educational psychological services from 0-19 years to 0-24 years.

3.3 Professional comparator groups

Table 2 compares changes in staffing ratios over the last ten years for educational psychologists and the nearest comparator professional group,

clinical psychologists and NHS psychologists. It is evident that there has been a regular improvement in the ratios for clinical psychologists and NHS psychologists whereas the ratio for educational psychologists evidenced some gains which have since been lost. The key issue here is that by 2012, educational psychologist ratios have regressed to below the ratios of 2001; comparatively the NHS psychologists have vastly improved ratios in relative terms.

Table 2

Year	Scottish Population figures	Ratio of EP per head of the Population	Ratio of Clinical & Other Applied Psychologists per head of the Population
2001	5,064,200	13362-1	15 577-1
2002	5,064,200	data not consistently gathered by ASPEP 2002 -2005	14 095-1
2003	5,057,800		13 633-1
2004	5,078,400		12132-1
2005	5,078,400		11500-1
2006	5,094,800	11766-1	10682-1
2007	5,144,200	11745-1	9792-1
2008	5,168,500	11667-1	8853-1
2009	5,194,000	11725-1	8414-1
2010	5,222,100	12258-1	8436-1
2011	5,254,800	12723-1	8341-1
2012	5,281,693	13613-1	8126-1

(NHS data has been derived from figures provided by clinical psychologist training courses and Health work force planning documentation)

3.4 Educational psychologist staffing ratios

Table 3 provides a comparison of service establishment figures derived from ASPEP staffing surveys in relation to the specific client group served by educational psychologists. The data shows a small decline in available capacity over the 10 year period. However the main significance of this data lies in the impact of the data presented in Tables 1 and 2. Specifically, the demands on educational psychology services in terms of children and young people identified as having additional support needs have nearly trebled over the last five years alone. Whilst the nearest benchmarked comparator, clinical psychology and other NHS psychologists, has more or less doubled their staffing ratios over the last 10 years, the educational psychologist ratio has remained virtually static.

In this context it is significant that, in 2001, when the national establishment stood at 379, the then Scottish Executive took the decision to instigate the Currie Review to address concerns about the inadequacy of the supply of educational psychologists given recruiting and demographic trends. The 2012 ASPEP Workforce Planning Report indicated the following:

Table 3

Year	Psychological service establishment posts	Av ratio EPs per head of client group
2001	379	3269-1
2011	413	3567-1 (range 2404-5620)
2012	388	3572 -1

The recruitment patterns are not equitable across Scotland. In 2001 the disparity of access to educational psychologists across Scotland was noted by the difficulties recruiting educational psychologists in rural areas. This trend continues; for example Highland has been noted in the national press as experiencing significant difficulty recruiting staff. Other rural authorities have also indicated significant staff shortages (eg Shetland, further updates to follow).

3.5 Training course comparisons

In 2013, the NHS staff group including clinical psychologists will be fully funded in their training for over 200 posts as has been the case for many years. By comparison, educational psychologist training received no direct grant funding and only a very limited loan facility. The fees required for a candidate to train privately amount to £18,700 - £18730 for two year's training. With the addition of living costs, this raises significant concerns across the profession about equality and fairness in terms of accessing professional training.

As the removal of funding from the Scottish training courses has been a recent development, since 2012, there is limited information available about the impact of this change. There is, however, data available relating to reduction in applications to the Scottish training courses in educational psychology. Table 4 provides data from the Universities of Dundee and Strathclyde regarding data trends in university selection procedures.

Table 4

Year	Applicants	withdrawals	Offered interview	Attended interview	selected	reserves	Took up the course
Dundee 2010	127	0	68	67	22	5	22
Strathclyde2011	212	1	62	59	22	5	22
Dundee 2012	105	13	64	46	24	12	22
Strathclyde2013	67	1	32	26	22	0	18*

There are a number of factors to note:

The selection process for the 2012 intake to the University of Dundee's training course had already commenced and was affected by the withdrawal of the central funding announced in November 2011. This decision had an adverse effect on the number of initial applicants to the programme (reduction from 127 in 2010 to 105 in 2012).

*This includes a trainee who had a deferred place from 2011. Only 17 of those interviewed in 2013 offered a place accepted a place

The number attending for interview reduced from 67 to 46 and the number able to take up an offer also reduced. 24 places were offered and 22 prospective trainees took up places including 6 candidates from the reserve list. Since 2010 there has been a 17% drop off rate of applicants for the Dundee training course or 28% reduction with the inclusion of the 13 candidates who withdrew following the announcement of funding removal.

In 2013, the second year of funding withdrawal, these patterns have continued and have become further entrenched leading to a marked reduction in the numbers applying for the Strathclyde University training course. The drop off rate of applicants for the Strathclyde University Educational Psychology training course is currently 68%. Table 4 also demonstrates a reduction in actual numbers of potential trainees likely to start the training course.

Part 4: Critical issues summary
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4.1 Demand pressures

It is evident that there are a number of key drivers for educational psychologists that emerge directly from the legislative requirements for statutory assessment and advice. The day-to-day demand for services is very high indeed and links directly to the increasing demands for services associated with a broadened legal definition of 'additional support needs' and increased identification of children and young people who require assessment and intervention.

Demands have also been raised in association with the *More Choices More Chances* agenda for vulnerable young people in transition post-school. These demands come not only from parents but also from Head Teachers and teaching staff, social workers, the reporter to the children's panel and other non-authority services such as NHS staff including psychiatrists and other mental health professionals and paediatricians, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists etc). The demand for time from educational psychologists regularly exceeds the capacity of services to respond.

There are risks that educational psychologist practice becomes more reactive at a time when Education Scotland has emphasised the importance of educational psychologists working strategically at a systemic level. It is important to ensure that adequate service capacity is safeguarded for this.

4.2 In terms of quality assurance and effective service delivery across all Scottish local authorities, it is currently unclear how all of the requirements set out in Part One of this report can be provided by psychological services on an equitable basis in all Scottish local authorities.

In the context of reduced availability of educational psychologists, examples of the impact on outcomes for young people include:

- Increased delay for LAC children accessing education due to delays in planning support programmes
- Increased delay for child protection planning and intervention
- Reduced school staff training and development work
- Reduced implementation of Education Service initiatives to address national priorities e.g. improving literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing
- Increased referrals to ASN tribunals
- Increased parental complaints to schools and Councils
- Reduced contribution to multi-agency assessment, identification and planning processes e.g. autism identification, CSPs, joint care pathways, GIRFEC processes

4.3 Concerns re long term supply of educational psychologists

The Workforce Planning Report 2012 has predicted a significant decline in the national full time establishment (FTE) figure for educational psychologists in Scotland. This is due to two main factors: a quarter of the profession will be eligible to retire over the next three to five years; and the removal of central funding from the post-graduate MSc training courses. The present report (see Part 3 [Table 4](#)) details the beginnings of a worrying trend in the reduction of expressions of interest in the national training courses since central funding was removed.

4.4 Time for psychology and the need for equity in service delivery

Currently, there is no standardisation across Scotland in terms of availability of numbers of educational psychologists. This means that there is a major risk of children and families and local authorities receiving different psychological service support in different parts of Scotland. Clearly there is broad agreement through national priorities and the HMle Report about the role and function of Psychological services. However, what remains unaddressed is an agreed framework and protocol indicating how an educational psychology workforce for Scotland should be staffed and structured so that an equitable service can be delivered across Scotland to meet the needs of all Scottish communities.

4.5 The role and function of principal psychologists

An additional concern is that because of shrinking local authority budgets, principal psychologists are being given an increasing and variable range of education management tasks to carry out. This has occurred in different areas of Scotland without formal acknowledgement nationally and conflicts with the general principle in the Currie Report that educational psychologist time should be safeguarded for educational psychology. Indeed the view taken by the Currie Report was that the work of educational psychology both in main grade and management posts was too important strategically to be diluted. There is a need to consider the requirements here in order to ensure best value for educational psychology Services in their contribution to national priorities.

Part 5

Proposals for progression

In response to a shared recognition of the need to monitor and review the national workforce requirements for educational psychology services, a Terms of Reference and Governance paper has been commissioned by the national workforce group. The current version of this paper is reproduced as Appendix 2 to this report. This paper has been agreed in principle by representative bodies on the current group and the Scottish Government as a starting point to explore shared issues of concern. A number of priority tasks have been identified in the Terms of Reference and Governance Paper which, it is proposed will be overseen by a National Scottish Steering Group for educational psychologists (NSSGEP) with an extended professional representation. Some key aspects of this, as identified by the profession in Scotland, are as follows:

5.1 Priority tasks identified by the Terms of Reference Paper

- It is recommended that the NSSGEP should explore effective models for Psychological service structures including necessary management structures to address the question of appropriate supply and demand of educational psychologists across Scotland.
- The NSSGEP should develop a National educational psychologists' Service Establishment Framework (NEPSEF) The framework will provide guidance to Councils regarding educational psychologists FTE required to deliver a service for local Council populations which fulfils the statutory duties located with educational psychologists and is in keeping with the Currie functions, the HMle Aspect Report (2011) recommendations for service provision and National Priorities for education
- The NSSGEP should explore viable funding routes for a national training model to ensure that the most cost-effective mechanism for a funded training programme is in place alongside the fulfillment of all professional accreditation criteria.
- The NSSGEP should gather data regarding job vacancies including national and localised shortages of educational psychologists, destinations of psychologists leaving the profession and maternity demographics annually to inform planning.
- The NSSGEP should gather data regarding salaries and conditions of service in order to support equitable remuneration and conditions with the profession's closest comparators

5.2 Developing a Framework for Future Psychological services

(Based on the Terms of Reference priority tasks) The following requires further exploration:

5.2.1 Staffing

For the range and intensity of work required to meet the demands for a broad service as recommended by HMle, each local authority Psychological service will require a minimum FTE per head of pupil population up to age 25 to be able to deliver a satisfactory range and depth of service across the core functions and levels of practice.

5.2.2 Management structures

Management structures need to be explored with a view to safeguarding sufficient management time not only to ensure progression and organizational development but effective service delivery at sufficient breadth and to provide proportionate management per service FTE. This will allow for some variation in small and rural areas to ensure suitably qualified individuals are attracted to more rural areas and to ensure equitable provision of qualified Psychological service managers' availability across Scotland.

Psychological service management provision must demonstrate:

- qualified educational psychologists who manage and lead services as per SNCT requirements to ensure quality of service provided
- significant current experience in the field of educational psychology
- strategic knowledge at Council level

5.2.3 Principal psychologists

Consideration needs to be given to safeguarding the function of, and requirement for, educational psychology services to provide competent professional advice to education management in local authorities relating to the needs of children and young people. This should retain continuity with the SNCT agreement and maintain the integrity of independent advice required, by statute, from local authority Psychological services

5.2.4 Conditions of service – staffing and locum cover

Currently, due to the specialist nature of an educational psychologist's remit, specialist training and staffing limitations, educational psychologists tend to absorb additional tasks rather than have access to additional staffing. Even before the current financial climate, maternity leave and staff absence can rarely be covered by locum staff. In times of staff shortage and decline of overall numbers of educational psychologists there are serious risks that shortages will become more acute thereby impacting on staff welfare. There are significant concerns regarding the issue of resulting staff illnesses following on from major workload and demand issues which will inevitably cause further staff shortages and impact further on vulnerable children and families. A national agreement regarding locum cover for educational psychologists on extended sick leave and maternity leave is required.

5.2.5. Conditions of service - salaries

There is a need to review the pay of educational psychologists in the context of their specialised training and qualifications, the McCrone Review, and with reference to appropriate benchmarks, in particular clinical psychologist colleagues. The review should gather data on the loss of service members to more highly paid management posts in national organisations and local authorities.

5.3 Data gathering and workforce planning

To date, ASPEP has, on its own initiative, gathered data nationally regarding numbers of educational psychologists in local authorities, job vacancies etc.

Due to capacity issues, the profession currently has no choice but to conduct data gathering on a limited basis only. The profession is also, on this basis, subject to the contention that any data gathered lacks objectivity. A national workforce database, centrally organized and monitored should be established

Conclusions

Increases in demand for Psychological services; inconsistent staffing across Scotland; removal of funding for training; problematic conditions of service; expansion of roles for principal psychologists and shortages of educational psychologists currently in several Scottish services indicate that the profession is in the midst of a critical period.

In the interests of addressing the issues outlined in this report, it is proposed that a national review of Psychological services in Scotland is carried out urgently with a view to developing a national framework for Scotland which supports the local authority delivery of equitable services to schools, children and families and their communities.

References

Educational Psychology Service in Scotland: making a difference, HMle Aspect Report (2011)

Review of Provision of Educational Psychology Service in Scotland, Currie Report, Scottish Executive (2001)

Developing Sustainable Arrangements for the Initial Training of Educational Psychologists, Dept of Education (2011)

Workforce Planning Report 2012 Association of Scottish Principal Educational Psychologists (2012)

Appendix 1

Practice Examples

GIRFEC

A practical intervention to develop Early Language and Literacy

Shonagh Anderson, Dundee Educational Psychology Service

This 4 week pilot intervention was a collaboration between Dundee Educational Psychology Service, Speech and Language Therapy, the Libraries service, and staff and parents at a local Dundee Children's Centre. Based on the principles of VIG, the intervention focused on improving communication between parents and their children, all of whom were 2 years old and who were open cases to SLT due to delayed language. Each weekly session focused on one particular aspect of the daily routine - getting dressed, mealtimes, bathtime, and bedtime. Using play, songs, music and toys, the parents, with coaching and direct teaching from the team running the group, interacted with their children around a fun activity. The sessions were videoed, and the best aspects of interaction were shared with the parents at the start of the following session. Initial evaluation at the end of 4 weeks identified gains in the children's communication skills, and most significantly, a marked difference in the parents' perception of what their children were capable of, and their awareness of what communication comprises of. One parent said 'I thought he couldn't communicate because he wasn't speaking, but now I know he is communicating all the time'. Another parent said 'the groups were better than the bingo!'. This short workshop will cover the planning and content of the sessions and show some video. Early findings will be considered with an opportunity to discuss next steps.

The contribution of educational psychologists to multi-agency assessment and diagnosis of autism: a national perspective

Shirley Paterson, South Lanarkshire Council Psychological service & Carolyn Brown Fife Council Psychological service

Despite significant progress being made in the area of autism identification and assessment as reflected by the NICE and SIGN Guidelines, the process of identifying, assessing and diagnosing children and young people on the autism spectrum continues to present ongoing challenges in terms of both waiting times and processes.

Against a backdrop which includes the ASD National Strategy, GIRFEC, the team around the child, integrated and joint assessment processes, this workshop will use an interactive approach with participants to consider what best practice looks like for autism assessment and diagnostic processes in terms of structures and policy. The workshop will consider what the elements

of educational psychologists' contribution are alongside partner agencies, and what challenges exist in a climate where services are experiencing financial constraints.

The presenters, from two large Psychological services in Scotland, will use national data gathered from Scottish Psychological services and findings from current local Council initiatives to engage the workshop audience in the development of a National Autism Diagnosis and Assessment Framework for educational psychologists and their services.

Curriculum for Excellence

Improving Literacy: an evidence based approach

Jean Campbell, Nancy Ferguson, Martin Gemmell, Jennifer King, ASPEP/SDEP

Educational psychologists are well-placed to support local authorities in delivering the vision of the Literacy Action Plan within a Curriculum for Excellence. EPs have unique expertise in the areas of children's learning, social, emotional and cognitive development, and education/psychological research. Work at an authority level is informed by work with educational establishments and children, and families.

This workshop will provide an opportunity for EPs to contribute to the initial scoping of a literacy assessment framework, commissioned by the Scottish Government, as part of the National Literacy Strategy. Drawing on a research base of the key factors required for successful literacy interventions, the workshop will consider 'what works' and the role of the EP in supporting local authorities

Additional Support for Learning

Addressing Barriers to Learning using the ABLe framework

Polly Jones, Dundee Educational Psychology Service & Carol McGarry, East Dunbartonshire Psychological service

The ABLe framework for inclusion has been created within Dundee Educational Psychology Service in collaboration with colleagues in schools, and allied health professionals. It is a comprehensive, practical online tool which staff can use to investigate barriers to learning and select strategies for adapting the learning environment to be more inclusive. ABLe is also currently being trialled in East Dunbartonshire, and is at the very early stages of introduction to Perth and Kinross, in both cases led by the educational psychology Service. A short introduction has been shared with some colleagues in Angus EPS as part of a Tayside-wide development day.

The ABLe model brings together the information required to gain a better understanding of what is getting in the way of a learner making progress, and also access to a comprehensive range of advice and strategies to help us to

meet the learning needs of the whole class or group. One advantage is that the majority of the information is located in one place, and as such ABLe is a "one stop shop" to help us meet the challenge of inclusion. The information in ABLe is based on recent research and best practice.

The ABLe model is presented as two connected mind maps, and linked checklists and strategies. One mind map focuses on the individual learner and the other on the learning environment. The reason for using this structure is that, unlike conventional checklist systems, the mindmap structure enables the user to open up only those aspects that are most relevant for the child or situation under consideration.

The map of the learning environment provides a checklist for developing inclusive school or nursery environments. Few of the aspects described will be novel to an experienced teacher or educationalist, however, the map helps to focus attention on those particular aspects that may make education more accessible to a particular learner or group of learners.

The Learner map is organised according to different aspects of child development. The principal headings are: thinking (including attention and memory); language and communication; sensory-motor; adaptability (including most social, emotional and motivational aspects) literacy; numeracy. Each area has two linked documents; one being an observational checklist and the other a list of possible strategies.

This workshop will showcase ABLe and give examples of how it is being used within Dundee and East Dunbartonshire at present.

Children and Young People Bill

Building Capacity

The Best Possible Start In Life: The contribution of educational psychology

Susan Taylor, Aberdeenshire Educational Psychology Service and Emma Brown, Aberdeen City

Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Educational Psychology Services will outline their work with NHS Grampian in revising their antenatal parent education programme. The aim of this work has been to bring educational psychology to the universal work of midwives and health visitors.

Work is underway to support the delivery of the Scottish Antenatal Parent Education pack sections three, using adult learning approaches and six, early days and parenting. This pack aims to ensure consistency across Scotland, in the messages delivered to future parents via antenatal education. Through a professional development programme, educational psychologists will support midwives and health visitors to consider aspects of infant brain development, attachment and communication. The programme aim is to use language and activities which could be used in antenatal classes with all parents. Time has been allocated in the programme to allow community groups to plan how

learning from an initial training event will impact on local practice. The programme also identifies follow up development activities using blended learning approaches.

We will link our ongoing work to the local and national early years strategy and provide an opportunity for discussion and reflection on the educational psychology contribution to this area of work.

How might 'Reflective Dialogue' build capacity in schools?

Dr Rachel Hayton & Joanne Johnston, Dumfries and Galloway Council Psychological service

This workshop introduces a pilot study and subsequent evaluation carried out in 2011 which has since been incorporated into the Council strategy for supporting school leaders. The workshop describes how psychologists engaged with head teachers and maingrade teachers and how school staff involvement in 'reflective dialogue' has helped build capacity, promote resilience and increase teacher confidence

Ten primary school head teachers opted in to a pilot project which offered a termly, one-to-one meeting with an educational psychologist. The stated aim of the meetings was to discuss elements of head teacher practice which they themselves identified. The meetings began during a time of change within the local authority with the retirement of most of the supporting Education Officers and the introduction of leaner, more targeted, support from the central schools' services team.

Although initially referred to as 'supervision', the term 'reflective dialogue' was eventually chosen to describe the process. Solution orientated questioning was used in order to help participants think positively about the challenges they were facing. Participants were helped to identify how their insights might be generalised to other areas of work and changes that they might make to improve teaching and learning in their schools.

A brief evaluation was carried out at the end of the Summer Term. The five-item questionnaire asked participants to identify how this intervention had impacted on themselves, their staff and pupils.

Feedback included statements such as;

It's probably the only opportunity I have to take time to talk about the job and how it impacts on me.

It's a recognition that we are valued.

In this climate of change there are too few opportunities to discuss on a professional level with another professional. It has been especially useful as ... (EP) is not a Head Teacher and brings with her an objective viewpoint.

The intention of the meetings had been to offer opportunities to reflect on current practice and to look at ways of generalising successful experiences. A

by-product of this process has been a reported increase in head teacher resilience, increased confidence in solution finding and improved self care through the application of positive, strength-based, psychology.

Appendix 2

National Scottish Steering Group for Educational Psychologists (NSSGEP) Terms of Reference and Governance Paper

General Principles

The National Scottish Steering Group for Educational Psychologists (NSSGEP) will oversee the role and function of educational psychologists in supporting local authorities and providing advice to the Scottish Government in terms of addressing its national priorities for education in particular with regard to:

- Psychological service delivery
- Early intervention
- Evaluation of interventions and impact
- Fulfilling statutory duties
- Building capacity in schools
- Ensuring effective implementation of Curriculum for Excellence
- Support for all vulnerable and at risk groups
- Research implementation
- Getting it Right for Every Child

Membership

The NSSGEP should incorporate appropriate representation from the profession and stakeholders including: Scottish Government, Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES), Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), British Psychological Society (BPS), Health Care Professions Council (HCPC), Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS), Association of Scottish Principal Educational Psychologists (ASPEP), Scottish Division of Education Psychologists (SDEP), Education Scotland, training providers and other interested parties. The Chairperson will have responsibility to ensure that the representation is appropriately balanced. The membership will be reviewed annually.

Frequency of meetings

Meetings will be held three times a year. It may also be necessary to have additional 'work stream' groups attached to and/or reporting to the NSSGEP.

Chairing arrangements

A senior Scottish Government representative will chair the NSSGEP

Role and Responsibility of the Scottish National Steering Group for Educational Psychologists

1. To review and agree joint priorities and actions year on year.
2. To consult and link with ASPEP and SDEP Executives and other representative organisations via the provision of relevant documentation and minutes.

3. Report progress against the agreed priorities to the above groups.
4. Advise the Scottish Government in relation to workforce planning.
5. Where required, to produce or commission the development of strategies and reviews.
6. To monitor the implementation of strategies and report progress against the agreed priorities of the group.

Initial Priorities

- It is recommended that the NSSGEP should explore effective models for Psychological service structures including necessary management structures to address the question of appropriate supply and demand of educational psychologists across Scotland.

- The NSSGEP should develop a National educational psychologists' Service Establishment Framework (NEPSEF). The framework will provide guidance to Councils regarding educational psychologists FTE required to deliver a service for local Council populations which fulfils the statutory duties located with educational psychologists and is in keeping with the Currie functions, the HMle Aspect Report (2011) recommendations for service provision and National Priorities for education.

- The NSSGEP should explore viable funding routes for a national training model to ensure that the most cost-effective mechanism for funding training is in place alongside the fulfillment of all professional accreditation criteria.

- The NSSGEP should gather data regarding job vacancies including national and localised shortages of educational psychologists, destinations of psychologists leaving the profession and maternity demographics annually to inform planning.

- The NSSGEP should gather data regarding salaries and conditions of service in order to support equitable remuneration and conditions with the closest comparators.