

Review of Provision of Educational Psychology Services in Scotland



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Ministerial Foreword



I am very pleased to be able to introduce this report of the Review of Educational Psychology Services in Scotland.

The Scottish Executive is committed to developing a more inclusive society and education is central to achieving this.

Educational psychologists have an important part to play in promoting inclusion through their work with children, parents, teachers and a range of other professionals.

A Steering Group, chaired by Eleanor Currie, Director of Education for East Renfrewshire Council, conducted the review. The group had representatives from health, social work, local authorities and schools. Parents and voluntary agencies were represented, as were psychologists themselves.

This review focused on issues impacting on the supply and demand of educational psychologists, and also examined the structure and delivery of educational psychology services across Scotland. The report affirms the key role of psychological services as an integral element in the local authority structure. The recommendations focus on the need for the Executive, local authorities and psychological services to work together to improve working practices, quality assurance and service delivery.

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, if we are to achieve this. I endorse fully this recommendation and shall be providing additional funding to improve the support for trainee psychologists. I shall also increase, and keep under review, the number of psychologists being trained.

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to Eleanor Currie and the Steering Group for the care and thought which went into producing this report.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cathy Jamieson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line under the name.

Cathy Jamieson, MSP
Minister for Education and Young People

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Executive Summary

1. Introduction

1.1 In 1998, Mr Brian Wilson, the then Scottish Education and Industry Minister, met with representatives of various psychological organisations to discuss their concerns about the future supply of educational psychology services. These concerns related to the:

- increasing gap between the supply and establishment of educational psychologists;
- age profile of educational psychologists with, as in teaching, supply problems likely to be exacerbated as the large numbers recruited when services expanded in the 1970s and 1980s reach retiral age; and
- difficulties recruiting educational psychologists, particularly in rural areas.

1.2 In response to these concerns, the Minister increased the number of psychologists being trained and also the funding allocated for training. He also agreed that the Scottish Office, now the Scottish Executive, would review the provision of educational psychologists, in consultation with the BPS, ASPEP, EIS, the training providers and other interested parties, after the new arrangements had been in place for two years. The two-stage review took place during the period March-December, 2001. Mrs Eleanor Currie, Director of Education, East Renfrewshire Council, was appointed by the Ministers to Chair the Steering Group for the review. Dr Tommy MacKay was appointed as a consultant to support the Steering Group.

2. Staffing survey and key issues

Psychologists

2.1 At 31 August 2001, the total establishment for education authority psychological services across the 32 authorities was 379 posts. Of this number, a total of 354 psychologists was in post, leaving a shortfall of 25, all of these being at basic grade level. The establishment of 379 posts served a population of almost 1,260,000 children and young people in the 0-19 age range. The mean ratio of psychologists to 0-19 population was 1/3,269, with a range from 1/2,053 to 1/4,231.

2.2 Of the 396 psychologists occupying full-time or part-time substantive posts, 264 (67%) were aged 45 or over. Of these, 179 (45%) were aged 50 or over, while 55 (14%) were aged 55 or over. Only 89 psychologists (22%) were aged under 40.

2.3 There is evidence that special needs and disadvantage show a high correlation, not only in terms of lower educational achievement in general but in terms of severe needs arising from physical and mental disabilities. However, the survey data indicated that the poorer authorities on average have less favourable staffing ratios and also higher vacancy levels.

2.4 Currently the Scottish Executive does not gather data annually on staffing within psychological services. It is the view of the Steering Group that data on the staffing of local authority educational psychology services should be maintained and monitored on an annual basis nationally by the Scottish Executive.

3. The training of educational psychologists

3.1 The Universities of Dundee and Strathclyde, are the only two in Scotland which train educational psychologists. Courses are of two years' duration and lead to an MSc degree. At present, every two years one course admits 16 students, the other 18 students, so that each year SEED is funding 34 trainees. The Steering Group suggested raising the number admitted to courses to 24 each year, ensuring that 24 trainees would graduate each year. Both universities could accommodate such an increase in trainees. Dundee University indicated that in addition to taking 24 trainees in October 2002 it could also accommodate a further 12 trainees.

3.2 The Steering Group recommended that the Scottish Executive should review its advice on funding for trainee educational psychologists with a view to securing standardised arrangements across all local authorities.

4. Time for psychology

4.1 Evidence on work patterns of psychologists was gathered by means of questionnaires, interviews with key personnel, consideration of Best Value reviews and reports of time-sampling and other exercises conducted by services or reported in the literature.

4.2 Results indicated that psychologists spent too much time working on administrative tasks of a non-psychological nature. Average estimates were above 25% of total time and the range of estimates extended to over 70%. There was a need to ensure that psychologists are appropriately supported by administrative staff, have good access to information and communications technology (ICT) and generally do not take on tasks that can be carried out more effectively by others.

4.3 Of the 224 respondents to a questionnaire, 155 gave examples of specific activities which they believed should be core duties of services, but which had been diminished or discontinued because of workload issues. Of these the most recurrent theme related to therapeutic interventions with individual children or young people and with families. Over two-thirds of those providing examples believed that this core activity required additional time. The other theme highlighted by a majority of respondents was time for research, this being proposed by about half of the respondents.

5. Quality assurance

5.1 Every service was making use of quality indicators¹ developed specifically for psychological services through a project funded by SOEID in 1999. However, there is also need for a more formal framework to encourage effective self-evaluation, including peer evaluation. Such a framework would promote greater use of performance indicators and the production of standards and quality reports. In particular, the framework for self-evaluation should take account of the National Priorities for Education described in the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000. At the same time there is a role for HMIE in the inspection of educational psychology services as part of the inspection of education authority functions.

5.2 It is the view of the Steering Group that the interests of service users will be better safeguarded through a more formal arrangement in which chartering by the British Psychological Society is a requirement for employment as an educational psychologist. The Steering Group recommended that local authority psychological services should employ only Chartered Educational Psychologists for those appointed to posts after 1 August 2002.

6. Integrated services for children, young people and parents

6.1 Evidence gathered for the review highlighted a range of concerns expressed by children, young people and parents. The Steering Group recognised a need for education authorities and psychological services to assist parents in obtaining further psychological advice where it is required. It also noted the contribution which could be made by local consultation and mediation services in cases of disagreement.

6.2 In serving the needs of children, young people and parents, a key role of educational psychology services is to work effectively with other agencies. The main agencies which provide services to children and young people are education, health, social work and voluntary agencies. Voluntary agencies represent the interests of many parents whose children receive educational psychology services. In recent years a central theme in local authorities has been 'joined-up working', and this is particularly important for children and young people with special educational needs. Education authorities and psychological services should work with other agencies to review the contribution which educational psychologists can make in providing holistic services to children and young people in the settings of home, school and community. The Scottish Executive, local authorities and psychologists' organisations should also consider how educational and clinical child psychological services can develop more integrated training and working arrangements.

¹ Quality Assurance in Education Authority Psychological Services (TAWN MacKay, SOEID, 1999)

6.3 Voluntary organisations have reported a significant increase in referrals from minority groups including travelling people, and in particular minority ethnic families seeking advice, information and support. An analysis of minority ethnic referrals to the ISEA² Scotland telephone helpline pointed to cases where a number of barriers to having access to, and a working relationship with, council services including psychological services were encountered:

- unawareness of, or insensitivity to, the culture of the families;
- parents being informed that their child did not have special educational needs, that the main area of difficulty was lack of knowledge of English, and that they should speak more English at home; and
- lack of culturally relevant psychological assessment.

The Steering Group recommended that local authorities and psychological services should review the needs of minority ethnic groups, and other minority groups, in relation to the availability of appropriate psychological assessment, supported by information and translation services where required, and should ensure continuity and consistency of services.

7. Future demands

Legislative, regulatory and policy frameworks

7.1 Legislative changes, particularly those from the mid-1990s onwards, have changed the context within which educational psychologists work. The Children (Scotland) Act 1995 extended children's rights in a number of areas. The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 placed additional duties on education authorities which are relevant to both of these Acts and have implications for psychological services. First, school education must be directed to the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the child or young person to their fullest potential. Secondly, in providing school education, education authorities must have due regard to the views of children or young persons in decisions that significantly affect them, taking account of their age and maturity. Thirdly, education authorities must endeavour to secure improvement in the quality of the school education they provide, with a view to raising standards of education.

7.2 In addition to these requirements, the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 made provisions relating to promoting social inclusion in education. Section 15 of the Act required that educational provision for all pupils should be in mainstream schools, except where certain exceptional circumstances apply. These requirements promote the government's vision for social inclusion in Scotland, in which all children and young people, whatever their social or economic background, have the best possible start in life and go on to achieve their maximum potential. The approach is founded on four key principles of prevention, empowerment, inclusiveness and integration. These developments point to new roles that councils will expect psychological services to perform in the foreseeable future.

² Independent Special Education Advice

7.3 The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 also made provision for the Scottish Ministers to define national priorities in education and to define and publish measures of performance in respect of these priorities. The Education (National Priorities) (Scotland) Order 2000 defined these priorities as follows:

- to raise standards of educational attainment for all in schools, especially in the core skills of literacy and numeracy, and to achieve better levels in national measures of achievement including examination results;
- to support and develop the skills of teachers, the self-discipline of pupils and to enhance school environments so that they are conducive to teaching and learning;
- to promote equality and help every pupil benefit from education, with particular regard paid to pupils with disabilities and special educational needs, and to Gaelic and other lesser used languages;
- to work with parents to teach pupils respect for self and one another and their interdependence with other members of their neighbourhood and society and to teach them the duties and responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic society; and
- to equip pupils with the foundation skills, attitudes and expectations necessary to prosper in a changing society and to encourage creativity and ambition.

7.4 It is now necessary for psychologists to review their practices to ensure that their unique professional contribution to the learning process can be promoted and to ensure that they contribute to the achievement of the national priorities for education.

7.5 The changes envisaged in this report affirm the key role of psychological services as an integral and vital element in the local authority structure. At the same time the need for services to provide, and to be seen to be providing, independent professional assessment and advice based on the needs of children and young people is recognised. Clear indications flow from this report to inform the current deliberations of the SNCT regarding psychologists' salaries and conditions of service.

Summary of Recommendations

	Scottish Executive	HMIE	Local Authorities	BPS/EIS/ASPEP	Training Courses	Psychological Services
STAFFING AND RECRUITMENT						
Recommendation 1: In resourcing their psychological services, local authorities should review the account they take of the implications of socio-economic disadvantage.			✓			✓
Recommendation 2: The Scottish Executive should gather data on staffing in educational psychology services annually at the same time as, and in a form comparable to, the pilot collection for teacher vacancies and shortages.	✓		✓			
TRAINING						
Recommendation 3: In developing their curricula, training courses should examine ways of supporting the provision of more holistic psychological services to children, young people and families across the settings of school, home and community.					✓	✓
Recommendation 4: The British Psychological Society (BPS) Scottish Division of Educational Psychology, in consultation with other professional associations and training courses, should consider extending its accreditation of local authority psychological services for the probationary year to trainee placements in services. It should also consider the training and accreditation of practice tutors in psychological services.			✓	✓	✓	✓
Recommendation 5: All local authorities should promote traineeships in educational psychology.			✓		✓	✓
Recommendation 6: The Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED) should review its advice on funding for trainee educational psychologists with a view to securing standardised arrangements across all local authorities. Funding should be reviewed regularly by SEED, and trainees should be paid travelling expenses by local authorities while on placement. The requirement that sponsoring authorities make a contribution should be ended.	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓

Recommendations

Scottish Executive	HMIE	Local Authorities	BPS/EIS/ASPEP	Training Courses	Psychological Services
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TRAINING (continued)

Recommendation 7: The number of training places at Strathclyde and Dundee Universities should be increased to 24 in each, with review of the position in three years' time. In addition, the Scottish Executive should investigate further the option of enabling a further 12 trainees to be admitted to the Dundee course in 2002.

✓		✓		✓	
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Recommendation 8: Local authorities may wish to consider sponsoring trainees to attend training courses in England and Northern Ireland.

		✓		✓	
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Recommendation 9: A framework for the continuing professional development (CPD) of psychologists should be developed, similar in principle to the CPD framework being developed for teachers in Scotland. Consideration should be given to accreditation of the framework by the BPS.

✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
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Recommendation 10: Each psychologist should have an individual CPD plan derived from the council's local improvement plan, the service development plan, the outcomes of staff review and the individual's career aspirations.

		✓			✓
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Recommendation 11: Local authorities and service managers should support those psychologists who wish to follow a doctoral training programme, within the agreed CPD framework for psychological services.

		✓			✓
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TIME FOR PSYCHOLOGY

Recommendation 12: Each local authority should review its staged intervention procedure to ensure that schools, and not educational psychologists, play the central role in co-ordinating the process, and that the roles of support for learning staff in supporting assessment and intervention are clear.

		✓			✓
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Recommendations

	Scottish Executive	HMIE	Local Authorities	BPS/EIS/ASPEP	Training Courses	Psychological Services
TIME FOR PSYCHOLOGY (continued)						
Recommendation 13: A number of functions and tasks undertaken by psychological services or by individual psychologists should be reallocated to other services. These include servicing the Record of Needs process, making special transport arrangements and managing other support services such as educational home visitors and behaviour support teachers.			✓			✓
Recommendation 14: Local authorities and psychological services should review their professional support services to ensure that psychologists are not carrying out administrative tasks that can be undertaken by appropriately qualified administrative staff.			✓			✓
Recommendation 15: All psychological services should be resourced appropriately so that all staff have good access to information and communications technology (ICT), taking account of the training needs both of psychologists and of administrative and clerical staff, and of systems being developed across agencies.			✓			✓
Recommendation 16: The Scottish Executive, in consultation with local authorities and professional bodies, should take steps to disseminate good practice in the work of psychological services in relation to ways of working which enhance effectiveness.	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
QUALITY ASSURANCE						
Recommendation 17: Psychological services should, as part of their Performance Management System, ensure that all staff have annual staff reviews.			✓			✓
Recommendation 18: Good practice in the area of management, leadership and quality assurance should be identified and disseminated, and management courses for principal psychologists and those progressing to this position should be supported by local authorities.			✓			✓

Recommendations

QUALITY ASSURANCE (continued)

Recommendation 19: There should be a National Task Group, involving Directors of Education or their equivalent, psychologists and the Scottish Executive to develop the existing documentation on quality indicators into outcome/performance indicators to facilitate more rigorous self-evaluation which takes full account of the National Priorities for Education.

Recommendation 20: Educational psychology services should have a more formal framework of evaluation which incorporates self-evaluation, peer evaluation and inspection by HM Inspectorate of Education, and which, in particular, takes full account of the views of children, young people and parents.

Recommendation 21: Local authority psychological services should employ only Chartered Educational Psychologists for those appointed to posts after 1 August 2002. Temporary contracts to new appointments for those with conditional registration should be confirmed only if chartered status is achieved.

Recommendation 22: Local authorities should audit the accommodation available to educational psychologists to ensure that it is appropriate and includes the provision of rooms suitable for confidential consultations with clients, together with access suitable to the needs of all users including people with disabilities.

Recommendation 23: The National Task Group should also consider the implications of the Working Group Report: Review of Devolved School Management with a view to determining the applicability, to psychological services, of the arrangements recommended for schools.

Recommendation 24: Each local authority educational psychology service should be led by a principal psychologist with a clear delegated authority, including budget, within the development of devolved management arrangements for the educational psychology service.

Scottish Executive	HMIE	Local Authorities	BPS/EIS/ASPEP	Training Courses	Psychological Services
✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
✓	✓	✓			✓
		✓			✓
		✓			✓
✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
		✓			✓

Recommendations

	Scottish Executive	HMIE	Local Authorities	BPS/EIS/ASPEP	Training Courses	Psychological Services
QUALITY ASSURANCE (continued)						
Recommendation 25: Career progression within educational psychology should be considered further and should take account of staff review procedures, continuing professional development and job-sizing.			✓	✓		✓
Recommendation 26: Educational psychology should continue as presently organised within local council services.			✓			✓
INTEGRATED SERVICES						
Recommendation 27: Education authorities and psychological services should assist parents in obtaining further psychological advice or expertise in cases where it is required, and should consider the contribution which may be made by local consultation and mediation services in cases of disagreement.			✓			✓
Recommendation 28: Education authorities and psychological services should work with other agencies to review the contribution which educational psychologists can make in providing holistic services to children and young people in the settings of home, school and community.			✓			✓
Recommendation 29: The Scottish Executive, local authorities and psychologists' organisations should consider how educational and clinical child psychological services can develop more integrated training and working arrangements.	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Recommendation 30: Local authorities and psychological services should review the needs of minority ethnic groups, and other minority groups, in relation to the availability of appropriate psychological assessment, supported by information and translation services where required, ensuring continuity and consistency of services.			✓			✓
FUTURE DEMANDS						
Recommendation 31: The Steering Group invites the Scottish Executive to make this report available to the SNCT at the earliest opportunity to inform current negotiations.	✓					

1. Introduction

Background

1.1 In 1998, Mr Brian Wilson, the then Scottish Education and Industry Minister, met with representatives of the British Psychological Society (BPS), the Association of Scottish Principal Educational Psychologists (ASPEP), the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS) and Strathclyde and Dundee Universities, where training courses for educational psychologists in Scotland are based, to discuss their concerns about the future supply of educational psychology services. These concerns related to the:

- increasing gap between the supply and establishment of educational psychologists;
- age profile of educational psychologists with, as in teaching, supply problems likely to be exacerbated as the large numbers recruited when services expanded in the 1970s and 1980s reach retiral age; and
- difficulties recruiting educational psychologists, particularly in rural areas.

1.2 In response to these concerns, the Minister announced an increase in Scottish Office support for the training of educational psychologists. The number of places supported was increased from 24 to 30 in 1998-1999, and from 30 to 34 in 1999-2000. In addition, the level of funding available to educational psychology trainees was increased to £20,500 per year, with the Scottish Office increasing the level of its support to education authorities from £12,250 to £17,425 per trainee. Education authorities contribute the balance of £3,075.

The review of provision of educational psychologists

1.3 The Minister also agreed that the Scottish Office, now the Scottish Executive, would review the provision of educational psychologists, in consultation with the BPS, ASPEP, EIS, the training providers and other interested parties, after the new arrangements had been in place for two years. This commitment was reiterated in the Scottish Executive's *Programme of Action for Special Educational Needs* published in June 2000.

The terms of reference of the review

1.4 The Joint Forum, comprising a working group involving representatives of the Scottish Division of Educational Psychology (BPS), ASPEP and the EIS were consulted about the terms of the review and in 2000, Mr Sam Galbraith, the then Minister for Children and Education, approved the following terms of reference for the two-stage review.

Stage 1 (March –June 2001)

- establish current staffing position of educational psychologists across Scotland in terms of numbers, posts filled/vacant and staffing ratios;
- examine characteristics of current membership to identify future trends and problems, if any, relating to issues such as age profile and geographical imbalance, in particular;

- seek views of key stakeholders on issues impacting on supply and demand, including recruitment issues and training needs/provision – consultation to include national seminar; and
- report on findings.

Stage 2 (From July – October 2001)

- take forward findings from Stage 1;
- establish the nature and range of service delivery provided by educational psychologists;
- review the structures of the psychological services across Scotland and consider those which will best deliver effective and efficient, quality services, that meet the needs of service users;
- take full account of outcomes from other national reviews and initiatives, in particular the Records of Needs and Beattie reviews;³ and
- make recommendations on the supply and demand of educational psychologists to ensure that the service meets the present and future needs of Scottish children, parents and other education professionals.

1.5 Mrs Eleanor Currie, Director of Education, East Renfrewshire Council, was appointed by the Ministers to Chair the Steering Group for the review. The members of the Steering Group are listed in Appendix 1. Dr Tommy MacKay was appointed as a consultant to support the Steering Group.

1.6 The Steering Group met on eight occasions. It also formed itself into three subgroups to consider specific issues relating to the work of psychological services. The memberships of the subgroups are listed in Appendix 2. The subgroups focused on:

Training	Chaired by Mr Graeme King, SDEP ⁴
Time for Psychology	Chaired by Mr William Sadler, SSLA ⁵
Quality Assurance	Chaired by Mr Gordon Jeyes, ADES ⁶

³ See paragraph 1.17

⁴ Scottish Division of Educational Psychology, British Psychological Society

⁵ Scottish Support for Learning Association

⁶ Association of Directors of Education in Scotland

The work of the subgroups

Training

1.7 The work of the Training subgroup was supported by Mr James Boyle, Course Director of the post-graduate training course for educational psychology, University of Strathclyde. The remit of the subgroup was to prepare a report on the training of educational psychologists in Scotland which:

- provides details of training throughput and views on the adequacy of this;
- highlights strengths and weaknesses in the current system, including the need to ensure that local authorities support training placements;
- compares training with that available in other specialisms within psychology, such as the Doctorate in clinical psychology;
- reviews the role of continuing professional development;
- considers alternative training models; and
- makes recommendations for future training.

1.8 As well as considering information about the training courses, members of the subgroup also participated in a series of focus group interviews which were held in the University of Strathclyde on 30 August, 2001. The purpose of the focus groups was to obtain the views of relevant stakeholders regarding the training of educational psychologists in Scotland. Four focus groups were held:

- a group of 11 trainees currently undergoing training;
- a group of five course staff from the Universities of Dundee and Strathclyde educational psychology training programmes;
- a group of seven experienced educational psychologists who supervise trainees; and
- a group of seven newly trained educational psychologists, comprising two educational psychologists who had just completed their probationary year, and five newly-trained psychologists.

Time for Psychology

1.9 The title for this subgroup was taken from the title of a publication *Time for Teaching*,⁷ a report of a joint study, carried out by the Accounts Commission for Scotland and HM Inspectors of Schools, looking at administration in schools. The principal purpose of this report was to help schools and education authorities to improve value for money in the way they handled administrative tasks.

⁷ *Time for Teaching: Improving Administration in Schools* (SOEID, 1999)

1.10 Good administration is central to the smooth running of any organisation. Against the background of a shortfall in the supply of educational psychologists, it is important that those in post are not diverted away from tasks which are central to the practice of psychology. The remit for the Time for Psychology subgroup was to prepare a report which:

- considers the administrative tasks undertaken by psychologists⁸ and highlights those which could be dealt with more effectively in other ways;
- examines how information and communications technology (ICT) is being used and what potential there is for using it more effectively;
- provides examples of good practice illustrating good value for money because administrative tasks are undertaken effectively through a range of approaches including the use of ICT; and
- reviews the whole range of tasks undertaken by psychologists, highlighting those which might be more effectively dealt with by others, or in other ways.

1.11 The subgroup gathered evidence by reviewing current literature on the work of educational psychologists, including reports from individual services which had carried out time-sampling exercises with their staff. Questionnaires were also sent to all educational psychologists in Scotland and to members of the Scottish Support for Learning Association. In addition, members of the subgroup interviewed ten office managers in services across Scotland, and a number of psychologists. The subgroup also considered Best Value reports from six psychological services.

Quality Assurance

1.12 In 1997 a national seminar involving educational psychologists, members of the educational directorate from local authorities, and the Scottish Office Education and Industry Department (SOEID) was held to consider the results of a review of educational psychologists carried out by HM Inspectors of Schools over the period 1993-96. The seminar report *Education Authority Psychological Services: Future Directions*⁹ highlighted the need to develop performance indicators for services. A project funded by SOEID resulted in the publication of performance indicators in 1999 specifically for psychological services.¹⁰

⁸ Unless stated otherwise, the term psychologist used on its own in this report should be taken to refer to educational psychologist; similarly for the term psychologists

⁹ *Education Authority Psychological Services: Future Directions* (A Closs, SOEID, 1997)

¹⁰ *Quality Assurance in Education Authority Psychological Services* (TAWN MacKay, SOEID, 1999)

1.13 Effective quality assurance is essential if psychologists are to develop and maintain a high quality of service delivery to their client groups. The remit of the Quality Assurance subgroup was to produce a report which:

- describes what quality assurance procedures are used across services in Scotland to ensure best value;
- takes account of the role of HMIE;¹¹
- reports on the use of the performance indicators developed specifically for services; and
- highlights strengths and weaknesses in arrangements for quality assurance, and makes recommendations for improvements.

1.14 The Quality Assurance subgroup sent a questionnaire to all principal psychologists asking for information about management and quality assurance procedures within services. The subgroup also had access to the Best Value reports referred to above.

Other sources of evidence

1.15 The Steering Group commissioned Children in Scotland to collate the views of young people and parents about psychological services, from information already held through previous consultations about special educational needs. In addition, two consultations were held specifically about educational psychologists. One involved five children (aged 8-10 yrs), the other seven young people (aged 16-17 yrs). The Steering Group also received reports from services and individuals in response to the invitation to submit views.

1.16 A national seminar involving educational psychologists, members of local authority directorate and other key stakeholders such as training providers, voluntary organisations and parents was held on 25 June 2001, as part of the process of consultation.

1.17 The Steering Group was not able to take account of the implications of the consultation on the review of Records of Needs¹² on the work of psychologists since the Ministers' responses to the results of the consultation were not available at the time the final report was prepared. However, the Steering Group took evidence from Dr Cyril Hellier, one of three psychologists appointed to work part time over a three-year period on the implementation of the recommendation in the Beattie report¹³ relevant to psychological services (see paragraphs 7.14 to 7.16). The psychologists had been appointed to their posts only recently, and at the stage of writing this report the full implications of the implementation of the Beattie recommendation were not known.

¹¹ HM Inspectorate of Education

¹² *Assessing Our Children's Educational Needs: The Way Forward?* (Scottish Executive, 2001)

¹³ *Implementing Inclusiveness – Realising Potential: The Beattie Committee Report* (Scottish Executive, 1999). The report is available on; www.scotland.gov.uk/library2/doc04/bere-00.htm

Statutory background to local authority psychological services

1.18 Section 4 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 states that it is the duty of education authorities to provide a regional or islands authority psychological service in clinics or elsewhere and that the functions of that service shall include:

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

Education (Scotland) Act 1980 section 4.

The provision of psychological services

1.19 To meet their above statutory duties, all 32 local authorities in Scotland make provision for educational psychology services. These services are generally organised and managed within education departments, although they may form part of other council departments such as a children's services department.

1.20 Services vary considerably in size, from those staffed by two psychologists in island areas to large urban services where the number of psychologists may exceed 50. In most services there is separate provision of administrative staff and, in some cases, the services are also responsible for the management of other staff such as specialist teachers.

1.21 Almost all psychological services are managed by a principal psychologist, but in a small number of services this is not the title of the post held by the psychologist with responsibility for service management. A few principal psychologists also have wider departmental responsibilities extending beyond the management of the psychological service. In addition to a principal psychologist, services typically have a hierarchical promotion structure with senior and basic grade posts, while some also have one or more depute principals. Most commonly, service management is a responsibility held at principal and depute principal level, with seniors occupying a variety of specialist roles.

1.22 A range of accommodation is provided for services. Traditionally, services were located in separate accommodation, and until the mid-1970s a number of new, custom-built centres were provided. Many of these free-standing buildings are still in use. Most typically, however, a psychological service is now located within primary or secondary schools or in multi-purpose buildings housing a number of education services. In some cases, the principal psychologist, or indeed the service, is located within council or education headquarters, and in larger services there are generally several centres.

The role of the educational psychologist

1.23 Psychology is still a relatively young profession, and the role of the educational psychologist has undergone considerable development throughout its brief history. While significant development of the profession continues to take place, the essential functions of psychologists in carrying out their statutory duties are clearly established, and are detailed both in the general literature on educational psychology and in official documents. Most recently, the performance indicators for education authority psychological services¹⁴ have defined three main levels of work: the level of the individual child or family, the level of the school or establishment, and the level of the local authority. **In relation to each of these three levels of work psychologists have five core functions: consultation, assessment, intervention, training and research.**

1.24 In their practice, educational psychologists have moved away from a medical model, which perceived the problem to be inherent in the child, thereby requiring assessment, diagnosis and treatment, towards a model which perceives difficulties to arise from the interaction of children with their environment, curriculum, teachers and peers. The solution therefore lies not so much in treating the child as in adjusting the environment, teaching and other alterable variables in such a way as to remove any obstacles to successful learning and progress. It is closely related to the social model of disability, and it does not detract from the fact that some difficulties, such as autistic spectrum disorders, have a biological cause. This model requires the psychologist to work with and through others in a consultative, facilitative capacity, and gives much larger numbers of children access to psychological skills and knowledge. However, the role is sometimes misunderstood by those who continue to have expectations based on a medical model.

1.25 Psychologists carry out an extensive range of work. They work in partnership with children and young people aged 0-19 years, parents, educational establishments, education management and a range of agencies. Their work covers both mainstream and special sectors in relation to a full spectrum of issues relating to learning, behaviour and development. In addition, they frequently occupy a central role within a multi-disciplinary team from health, education and social work, and from the voluntary agencies. The breadth of this work gives psychological services a pivotal position in assisting the local authority in the development and implementation of policies to support children, young people and families, and in promoting social inclusion.

1.26 The core functions of consultation, assessment, intervention, training and research operate within an interactive context which can involve school or family settings. A central part of the psychologist's role is in assisting parents and teachers in supporting children and young people with difficulties. Assessment and intervention involve the use of a wide range of techniques and strategies with systems and individuals. For example, psychological

¹⁴ *Quality Assurance in Education Authority Psychological Services* (TAWN MacKay, SOEID, 1999)

services can be involved in developing parenting skills, classroom management strategies and staff training, and, through research, in the development of new methodologies for helping young people who experience problems in their education, behaviour or development.

1.27 A Professional Development Initiative for supporting the research function of services was established by the Scottish Office Education Department in 1986, and in 1995 this became the Professional Development Programme (PDP). The programme provides funding and support for groups of psychologists to undertake research and development tasks over a wide range of topics. Projects are normally completed within one year, and findings and staff development materials are disseminated to education authorities, psychological services and other bodies throughout Scotland and abroad. Topics in recent years have included assessment, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), critical incidents, New Community Schools and children's rights. These reports are universally valued and attest to the competence of psychologists in the research and development field. Authorities' use of their own educational psychologists in implementing and evaluating new initiatives and projects is increasing. This role has often been neglected because of other priorities, but as shortages are overcome it should be utilised to the full.

Range and source of referrals

1.28 Psychologists work with children and young people with a range of special educational needs including those arising from moderate, severe and complex learning difficulties, sensory impairments, physical disability, emotional and behavioural disorders, and language and communication disorders. During recent years, overall referral patterns have reflected an increased interest in, and concern with, the areas of specific learning difficulties, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, the autistic spectrum and child abuse.

1.29 While the majority of individual referrals of children and young people are made by schools, referrals may be made by a variety of agencies, and in some cases are made directly by parents. Not all children and young people with whom psychologists work necessarily have special educational needs. Older children and young people have a right to make a confidential self-referral, and this is treated in a way which takes account of age and maturity, and the nature of the problem referred.¹⁵ Nevertheless, since problems do not generally occur in isolation but within a family, social or educational context, the small group of self-referrals is normally guided towards a position in which parents and other agencies are involved.

¹⁵ *Local Authority Psychological Services in Scotland: Staffing and Training of Educational Psychologists (ASPEP/BPS/EIS, 1997)*

Allocation of work

1.30 The way in which work is allocated within services varies according to the geography of the area served, population, distribution of educational establishments, number of staff and availability of specialist skills. The following models of work allocation may be encountered:

- area or establishment model: this is the most common model of service delivery, in which each psychologist is responsible for a geographical area or group of educational establishments and most or all of the other work arising within that catchment area;
- sectoral model: in this model a psychologist or team of psychologists will service a particular sector such as pre-school, primary, secondary or special school;
- specialist model: this model would generally apply to some but not all of the work of a service; each psychologist would have a specialist responsibility for work of a particular type, such as hearing impairment or autistic spectrum disorders; and
- referral model: under this arrangement, individual referrals are allocated to psychologists as they arise; it is a model which might operate where staffing or geography does not lend itself to providing a whole-school service.

The first two of these models are more likely to operate as full-scale approaches to service delivery, while the last two are more likely to guide particular aspects of work allocation.

1.31 All services aim to allocate work within the context of a commitment to equality of opportunity and equitable service delivery based on need. The two main factors which determine the time allocations given to educational establishments are population size and the socio-economic level of the children or young persons provided for.

2. Staffing survey and key issues

The context of recruitment issues

2.1 For several years educational psychology services have reported significant and often long-term difficulties in the recruitment and retention of staff. In March 1997, ASPEP established a database of staffing in services, covering size of staffing establishment, number of vacancies, ratio of psychologists to 0-19 population, additional temporary posts and age structure.

2.2 In September of the same year ASPEP, together with the BPS and the EIS, reported on staffing and training issues in the light of available data.¹⁶ This report highlighted a shortfall in supply of psychologists which was not being met by the numbers being trained. It also highlighted likely future difficulties in supply because of the age distribution among educational psychologists, with 57% of the profession aged 45 years or over. A similar situation had been reported by the Association of Educational Psychologists in England and Wales, pointing to long-term recruitment difficulties throughout the UK.

2.3 These figures were reported against a background of staffing ratios which had improved over a period of years, resulting in an average staffing ratio of 1/3,600 for the 0-19 population, with a range in mainland authorities from 1/3,000 to 1/4,600. At the same time the demand for psychological services had increased considerably (paragraphs 2.27 to 2.32).

2.4 In August each year since 1997, ASPEP has continued to collect statistics from all educational psychology services. These have shown that staffing establishments have increased further, with an average 0-19 ratio of 1/3,500 and 25 unfilled vacancies in August 2000.

Evidence gathered for the review

2.5 In June 2001 a questionnaire survey of staffing and recruitment issues was completed by the principal educational psychologists in the 32 education authority psychological services. The questionnaire covered then current staffing establishments and vacancies, staffing ratios, part-time appointments, temporary cover, additional posts, age structure, staff leaving and availability of trainee placements. The last-mentioned item is covered in Chapter 3, which deals with training issues (paragraph 3.19). The date selected for completion of the questionnaire was 31 August 2001, to allow comparability with the staffing data collected by ASPEP from 1997 to 2000. At the time when the questionnaire was completed, appointments had been offered to the 2001 cohort of trainee educational psychologists who were about to qualify. The data therefore represent an accurate and comprehensive picture of the staffing position in services at the beginning of session 2001-2002.

¹⁶ *Local Authority Psychological Services in Scotland: Staffing and Training of Educational Psychologists* (ASPEP/BPS/EIS, 1997)

Structure of services

2.6 In general, the structure of posts in psychological services remained similar to that which applied prior to local government reorganisation in 1996. That is, services had a hierarchical structure of principal, senior and basic grade posts, with depute, area and assistant principal posts in some authorities.

2.7 For the 32 services there were 41 psychologists at the level of principal or equivalent. In the cities of Glasgow and Edinburgh there was no authority principal psychologist, and in each case four areas operated largely autonomous services managed by area principals within the management framework of the councils. In Dumfries and Galloway the position was similar in having four area principals, as the authority principal psychologist was head of education (children's services) and was not counted in the staffing establishment of the service. Over Scotland as a whole the proportion of promoted posts was 41%.

Overall staffing position as at 31 August 2001

2.8 At 31 August 2001, the total establishment for education authority psychological services across the 32 authorities was 379 posts. Of this number, a total of 354 psychologists was in post, leaving a shortfall of 25, all of these being at basic grade level. There were vacancies in 19 authorities. The breakdown of posts by grade is shown in Appendix 3, Table 1.

2.9 These figures should be seen in the context of changing establishments over recent years. These have increased steadily as a reflection of the additional demands placed on educational psychologists. Within a relatively stable 0-19 population, establishments have increased from a total of 335 in 1997 to 379 in 2001. The comparative data for these years are shown in Appendix 3, Table 2.

Staffing ratios

2.10 The establishment of 379 posts served a population of almost 1,260,000 children and young people in the 0-19 age range. The mean ratio of psychologists to 0-19 population was 1/3,269, with a range from 1/2,053 to 1/4,231. The most favourable ratios were found in the three island councils which, together with four mainland authorities had ratios better than 1/3,000. Only one had a ratio less favourable than 1/4,000. Appendix 4 provides a full breakdown for the 32 authorities, including socio-economic data based on free school meal eligibility (FSE).

Part-time posts

2.11 A significant feature of educational psychology services is the high proportion of posts which are held on a part-time or job-share basis. The 354 substantive posts filled at 31 August 2001 were covered by 396 psychologists, of whom 102 (26%) were part time. Of these, 85 were basic grade psychologists. The breakdown is shown in Appendix 3, Table 3. While seven authorities had no part-time staff, in nine cases the proportion was over 40%. In one large service the proportion of part-time staff was 64%.

Temporary cover for unfilled vacancies

2.12 Of the 25 unfilled substantive posts in psychological services, only seven of these were being covered by temporary staff, leaving a total of 18 posts uncovered either by substantive or by temporary staff at 31 August 2001. Altogether, 28 psychologists were covering the seven posts in question. These were mainly part-time staff from the same service, or psychologists who had taken early retirement. Despite the very large number of part-time staff who now work in psychological services, it is clear that only a small proportion of them are available to provide cover for vacancies. A full breakdown is shown in Appendix 3, Table 4.

Additional posts

2.13 Twelve authorities had additional temporary posts for educational psychologists. These came to a total of 7.5 posts, and in most cases they represented less than 1 FTE (range 0.2 FTE to 1.5 FTE). These posts were mainly for special projects, and included alternatives to exclusion, Sure Start, New Community School work and projects relating to autistic spectrum disorders. In other cases they allowed enhancement of the establishment or the buying in of specialist services. For some authorities, the question of creating additional temporary posts for psychologists was an academic one at a time of recruitment difficulties when it was known that a post would either remain unfilled or would have the effect of depleting the existing staff of the service. Also, as these posts were time limited the difficulty in recruiting for them was greater than for other posts. As one authority commented:

'Although we could have created posts for early intervention, New Community School projects etc., the difficulty / inability to recruit new staff has prevented us from doing so.'

A total of six of the available 7.5 posts was being covered by 16 psychologists, most frequently part-time staff in the same service. The breakdown is shown in Appendix 3, Table 5.

Other relevant posts

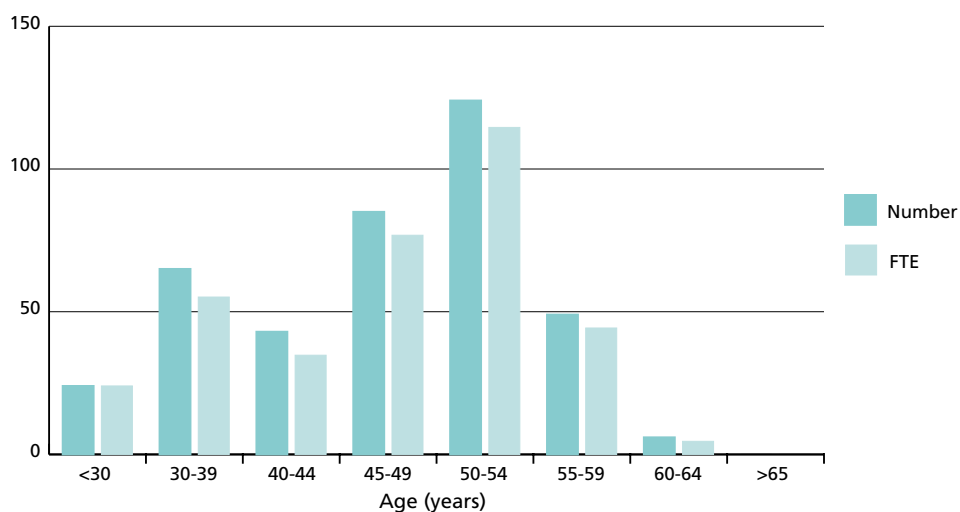
2.14 Information was collected on two other types of post relating to the work of psychological services. The first was 'psychology-related' posts – that is, staff employed because they were psychology graduates, such as assistant psychologists or research assistants. Five authorities had a total of 5.8 posts in this category and, in general, they were either for specially-funded projects such as early intervention or to support the research work of services. The second was 'psychology-relevant' posts – that is, staff such as recording officers whose work was not of a psychological nature but was work that psychologists often have to do. Only three authorities noted posts of this type. In one authority, three area managers for support for learning were responsible for managing the Record of Needs process. In two other authorities, reference was made to a recording officer, but in one case it was noted that this post did not involve taking on any of the work previously carried out by psychologists.

Age structure

2.15 The age structure of psychological services at August 2001 is largely a reflection of the rapid expansion following the Education (Scotland) Act 1969, when legislation for child guidance services changed from being enabling to being mandatory. New staff were recruited from the four Scottish university training courses which developed to meet this demand.

2.16 Of the 396 psychologists occupying full-time or part-time substantive posts, 264 (67%) were aged 45 or over. This compares with 57% in this age group only four years earlier in 1997. Of these, 179 (45%) were aged 50 or over, while 55 (14%) were aged 55 or over. It is to be noted that the trend has been for a large number in the age group aged 50 and over to take early retirement. Only 89 psychologists (22%) were aged under 40. Figure 1 shows the breakdown of ages in terms both of numbers and of FTE.

Figure 1 Age structure (years)



Staff leaving or changing post

2.17 Information was collected on numbers of staff leaving services or changing posts within their services during the year 31 August 2000 to 31 August 2001, together with reasons for leaving. This is shown in Appendix 3, Table 6. The figures here are a snapshot for one year only, and may therefore be more fluid than the relatively stable data relating to such factors as staffing establishments and age structure. A total of 33 staff (30 FTE) left the post which they occupied during the year. About half of these (16 staff, 14 FTE) remained within Scottish educational psychology services. The number moving to a promoted post within Scotland was 12. This represents only 3% of the 396 staff in post. Altogether, 17 staff (16 FTE) left Scottish services during the year, five of these being for retirement.

Recruitment difficulties

2.18 During the year beginning 31 August 2000, 20 of the 32 authorities reported having difficulty in filling vacancies, with 19 authorities still having vacancies at 31 August 2001. While all services acknowledged the general shortage of psychologists as the underlying reason for recruitment difficulties, several noted additional reasons relating to their own circumstances. In 11 cases the additional difficulties of a remote or rural area were highlighted. For some services this was an enduring problem, with vacancies which could not be filled either on a substantive or a temporary basis. In very small and remote services, these difficulties can be particularly acute. In one authority only one of three psychologists' posts had been filled.

2.19 Eight authorities noted additional reasons for difficulties in recruitment. These included the difficulty of filling part-time posts. An authority with a 0.5 FTE post may be unable to fill it even when recruits are available, as newly qualified psychologists normally look for full-time posts. Finally, the additional difficulties created by the demand for temporary cover for maternity leave were a further factor.

Key issues

2.20 The data obtained through this survey, and through the extensive discussions with principal psychologists which supported the survey, raise a number of key issues for the future provision of educational psychology services. These issues are to a large degree inter-dependent and include general recruitment, distribution of staff across authorities, age structure of services, the increasing demand for psychologists, trends within the profession and part-time working. Each of these areas is expanded briefly below.

General recruitment

2.21 The recruitment shortfall of 25 posts has been running at a significant and relatively stable level since 1999. The impact of a shortfall at this level is considerable, and is frequently reported by services as the single most significant difficulty they face in planning and managing service delivery. It is exacerbated by additional factors. First, the lack of temporary cover for unfilled vacancies means that similar difficulties are experienced when services attempt to cover maternity leave, short-term secondments or long-term sickness leave. Secondly, even in authorities which are fully staffed the increased demand for psychological services, stemming from many sources, has put services under considerable pressure. Those authorities which are understaffed may therefore find that the impact of unfilled vacancies seems quite disproportionate to what might be predicted in simple percentage terms.

Distribution of staff across authorities

2.22 Two separate factors are relevant to a consideration of the issues arising when distribution of staff across authorities is examined. First, there is the issue of whether the distribution of vacancies is uneven and is to the disadvantage of one type of authority (for example, rural or remote compared with urban or central). Secondly, there is the issue of whether there are significant differences in actual staffing establishments in terms of capacity to meet the needs of the population in relation to its demographic characteristics.

2.23 Regarding the first of these issues, the distribution of vacancies across authorities as at 31 August 2001 does not in fact show evidence of any trend in terms of type or location of authority. This suggests that the difficulties faced by rural and remote authorities in securing and retaining staff are not of a significantly different level from the general difficulties faced by all authorities. Certainly, some rural services noted that they had been fortunate in recruiting staff in 2001 compared with former experience. Also, there will no doubt be individual instances where a rural authority has been unable to attract someone to a remote area, and the difficulties faced by Shetland as the most remote area of all are recognised.

2.24 In relation to the differences across authorities in actual staffing establishments, the significant identifiable issue arising from the survey data is socio-economic disadvantage. There is a vast literature covering the effects of socio-economic disadvantage on all aspects of adjustment, development and achievement, much of it published in relation to the specific Scottish context of special educational needs. There is abundant evidence that special needs and disadvantage show a high correlation, not only in terms of lower educational achievement in general but in terms of severe needs arising from physical and mental disabilities. Within psychological services it has been common practice therefore to skew resources to establishments and areas with higher levels of disadvantage. However, the survey data indicated that the factor of socio-economic disadvantage in fact correlates unfavourably both with staffing ratios and with vacancies. That is, when authorities are ranked in terms of recognised poverty indicators, the poorer authorities on average have less favourable staffing ratios and also higher vacancy levels (see Appendix 4).

Recommendation 1: In resourcing their psychological services, local authorities should review the account they take of the implications of socio-economic disadvantage.

Age structure of services

2.25 The age structure of staff across services is the single most important factor to be considered in relation to future supply and demand issues. With 45% of psychologists aged 50 or over, and only 22% aged under 40, it is clear that a very large proportion of the current staffing will leave within the next ten years, and that this pattern will continue for a considerable time thereafter.

2.26 In 1997, and again in 2001, ASPEP considered the longer-term implications of these age trends. Their conclusion was that if the current pattern of supply and demand continues, even with a modest interpretation of increased demand, there would be a vast number of vacancies in services by the year 2015 (in the order of about 70 to 80 posts). These predictions are supported by the evidence gathered for this review. Unless there is a substantial increase in training places there will be significant numbers of vacancies during the next ten years.

Increasing demand on, and for, psychologists

2.27 There is a considerable literature to support the reasons for the significantly increased demands for psychological services, together with extensive direct evidence in terms both of legislation and of official reports. These demands require detailed consideration in their own right, but they are introduced briefly here in relation to four main areas.

2.28 First, there has been a steady increase over a period of many years in the expectations of parents of children and young people with special educational needs regarding the range and extent of psychological services that should be available to them. These expectations are reflected and supported in many official documents such as the performance indicators for educational psychology services, the Manual of Good Practice in Special Educational Needs and Circular 4/96. All of this has led to an increase in levels of accountability for psychologists, and in the extent of work carried out in such areas as assessment, reviews, meetings with parents and written reports.

2.29 Secondly, there has been a number of political initiatives in relation to such areas as children's rights and social inclusion. This has been supported by legislation and reports which have had a major impact on the current and future expectations of psychologists. Included in this category are the Children (Scotland) Act 1995, the legislation on social inclusion in education and the Beattie Report.

2.30 Thirdly, there has been a recognition that educational psychology has a contribution to make to the education and well-being of all children and young people, and not only to those with special educational needs. Thus, the contribution of psychologists to early intervention and raising achievement has been increasingly recognised. An important part of their role is to give advice, support and training to teaching staff, as well as wider involvement in projects and research.

2.31 Fourthly, there has been an objective increase in the problems dealt with by educational psychologists. This has been documented in relation to many areas such as emotional and behavioural disorders, coping with trauma, general mental health issues, and suicide and self-harm.

2.32 These increased demands have clear implications for the future supply of qualified psychologists in a context in which education authorities have increased the staffing of psychological services year on year, together with additional temporary posts for special projects such as early intervention and alternatives to exclusion.

Trends within the profession

2.33 The relative position of educational psychologists in terms of salaries and conditions of service compared with other staff in education services, and in terms of training in relation to other branches of psychology, has deteriorated over recent years. This has become an increasing concern of service managers in their attempts to recruit and retain staff (see recommendation 31).

2.34 The recent salary settlement for teachers has implications for educational psychology services in relation to attracting appropriately qualified psychology graduates from teaching (the main source of recruitment) and retaining them within educational psychology in future years. The survey data raise implications also in terms of current promotion structures. The age structure of services has allowed for very little opportunity of promotion, and this is reflected in the fact that in the year to 31 August 2001 only 3% of the profession achieved promotion either within their existing service or by moving to another service. However, this is not to suggest that there should necessarily be an increase in the opportunities for 'promotion'. Alternative service structures may be desirable which reward psychologists for remaining in 'main grade' posts while continuing to pursue personal and professional development (see paragraph 5.16).

2.35 In terms of other branches of psychology, the nearest comparison for educational psychology is clinical psychology. The comparison here has now been unfavourable for educational psychology for a number of years not only as regards training but also in terms of remuneration, especially at the higher end of the scale where the differentials in favour of clinical psychology are considerable. The top of the principal psychologist scale is now some 30%-40% higher for clinical psychologists, without greater levels of responsibility. There is evidence that the most highly qualified psychology graduates are now more likely to opt for clinical rather than educational psychology training, and this again will have implications for the future of services.

Part-time staffing and gender issues

2.36 It was not the purpose of the current survey to gather new information on gender balance within educational psychology. There has for some time been general evidence of the pattern here, namely, that the proportion of women is considerably higher than men and that this trend is increasing. Indeed, in many of the training courses during the past decade there has been only one male trainee.

2.37 Gender issues within professions are always complex, and underlying factors are not considered here. However, two factors must be noted at this stage. First, in terms of implications for effective working, educational psychology is a profession which at times includes work which is gender specific. That is, there are times when it is appropriate that particular work should be dealt with either by a male or a female colleague. This may arise, for example, in individual consultations with young people of either gender, especially where there are issues such as child sexual abuse. It is recognised that in very small services it may be impracticable to expect a gender balance. Nevertheless, the general point is one which requires to be noted.

2.38 The second factor touches directly on recruitment issues. Data on work patterns of men and women within the professions are well established, and point to the fact that a larger number of women must be trained in order to supply the same number of full-time equivalent posts. In addition to maternity leave requiring temporary cover, there is an increased level of part-time working. This is very much reflected in the very high percentage of part-time psychologists reported in this survey (26%), with the highest rate of full-time work being in the under 30 age group, and the lowest rates in the 30-44 age groups. A part-time psychologist still requires a full-time training, and the predicted future supply levels must therefore take account of the gender factor.

Database

2.39 Currently the Scottish Executive does not gather data annually on staffing within psychological services. It is the view of the Steering Group that data on the staffing of local authority educational psychology services should be maintained and monitored on an annual basis nationally by the Scottish Executive. A *pro forma* has been prepared for this purpose in a format comparable to that used for teachers.

Recommendation 2: The Scottish Executive should gather data on staffing in educational psychology services annually at the same time as, and in a form comparable to, the pilot collection for teacher vacancies and shortages.

3. The training of educational psychologists

Background

3.1 Professional training in educational psychology in the UK, comprising both academic teaching and practical components, is provided by universities and is accredited by the BPS. Sixteen educational psychology programmes in the UK are accredited and offer training leading to eligibility for registration as a Chartered Educational Psychologist. Fourteen of the programmes are in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and offer one-year full-time courses leading to a Master's degree (generally an MSc, but in some cases an MEd or an MA). Two of the programmes are in Scotland, at the universities of Dundee and Strathclyde, and are of two years' duration, again leading to an MSc degree.

3.2 Applicants to programmes in England, Wales and Northern Ireland must have an Honours degree in psychology (or equivalent) which meets the BPS requirements for the Graduate Basis for Registration, and must also have a teaching qualification (for example, a PGCE or BEd) as well as at least two years' teaching experience. Applicants to the programmes in Scotland are required to meet the above academic requirements but are not required to have a teaching qualification, although in practice 80% of applicants to the Dundee programme and around 50% of applicants to the Strathclyde programme come from such a background. However, applicants must have 1-2 years' experience of work with children, young people or families, which can be in fields such as research, work as special needs auxiliaries or classroom assistants, social work, teaching, community education, further education and counselling.

3.3 The aim of both Scottish programmes is to train educational psychologists to work at all systemic levels from individual casework, whole-class, whole-school, and policy and development levels, across the 0-19 years age range. Practitioner skills are developed principally by means of practical placements. Trainees spend two days per week on placements and have additional block placements. Both programmes require trainees to undertake placements in at least two different psychological services. Assessment in both courses is continuous and is by means of essays, case studies, practice-based assignments linked to the teaching content of the programmes, intervention reports and a practice workfile. Trainees are required to complete projects (including a collaborative project in Year 1 in both programmes and a 15,000 word intervention project in Year 2 of the Strathclyde programme) and, in the case of the Dundee programme, a research thesis of 15,000 words. The trainee's professional practice while on placement with psychological services and other agencies is assessed. There are no final examinations.

3.4 On satisfactory completion of the course and appointment to work in a psychological service in Scotland, a supervised, probationary year (two years for those with a one-year MSc from courses elsewhere in the UK) in a BPS accredited psychological service (each service's accreditation is reviewed every five years) leads to eligibility for Chartered Educational Psychologist status.

3.5 Psychology in the UK, in common with other professions offering services to the public at this level, faces demands for regulation. A legislative framework is currently being developed in England and Wales and only psychologists who have achieved the qualifications for chartering will be entitled to use the terms 'psychologist' or 'educational psychologist'. Scottish psychology is subject to similar discussions. This context has implications for training and recruitment in relation to educational psychology services, as not all services are accredited to supervise probationer psychologists. New trainees tend no longer to accept posts in such services as achieving chartered status is much more complex.

Views on current training programmes

3.6 Psychologists interviewed (see paragraph 1.8) were generally satisfied with the structure, organisation and standard of training offered by the two-year programmes. Trainees and newly-trained psychologists were very positive generally about the organisation of the courses, involving two days placement in a psychological service and two days in the university. Trainees felt that these experiences maximised the support available from university tutors, practice tutors and fellow-trainees:

'Two days university and two days practice placement was beneficial... you could get ideas and then go out and try them.' (a newly-trained psychologist)

'Two days on placement and two days in the university ties things in.' (a trainee)

'It's not university – theory, and outside – practice, rather it is always mixed – the implications of theory are always stressed.' (a university tutor)

3.7 There was a broad consensus amongst trainees, university tutors and practice tutors that more account should be taken of the commonalities between different branches of applied psychology such as clinical psychology and occupational psychology, and that closer links should be developed between them. It was also recognised that the increased demands on the services of educational psychologists include the need for higher levels of skills, so that a wide range of effective psychological services might be provided to children, young people and families across the settings of home, school and community. The evidence from parents, children and young people strongly supported the need for holistic services which would offer breadth, continuity and consistency (paragraphs 6.2 to 6.9).

Recommendation 3: In developing their curricula, training courses should examine ways of supporting the provision of more holistic psychological services to children, young people and families across the settings of home, school and community.

Support for training from local authorities and psychological services

3.8 Newly-trained psychologists noted that they had experienced 'dramatic variation' in support from psychological services. Some felt that this variation was the result of different attitudes both to training and to new people coming into the service, and to differences in the resources given to support trainees and newly-trained psychologists. The following comments are illustrative of the range of views expressed:

'If the psychological service feels that support should come from the practice tutor and not from the service [as a whole] then there are problems.'

'It should be a service responsibility to support trainees.'

Practice tutors also felt that placement supervision of trainees should be a responsibility of service teams, rather than individuals.

Implementation of ASPEP Minimum Standards for Trainee placements

3.9 The Association of Scottish Principal Educational Psychologists published in 1998 a document entitled *Minimum Standards for Psychological Service Placements*, which had been developed through consultation with practice tutors, trainees, course staff and principal psychologists. The minimum standards describe the steps to be taken to prepare the trainees and service for the trainee's placement, the responsibilities of practice tutors and psychological service staff, the responsibilities of the university course staff and the trainees, and the links between the service and university course staff.

3.10 Adherence to the minimum standards is undoubtedly important to ensure that the trainee's placement is a worthwhile and rewarding one. Since a trainee may fail the course solely on the basis of an unsatisfactory placement performance, it is also important that practice tutors follow the steps outlined in the minimum standards if on placement there are concerns about the trainee's performance. However, while the minimum standards do provide advice about evaluating a trainee's performance, there are no in-built quality assurance measures which allow trainees to comment on the quality of the supervision they have received.

3.11 One of the university tutors had evaluated the implementation of the minimum standards by means of questionnaires completed across two years of training by a cohort of Dundee trainees and a cohort of Strathclyde trainees. Trainees on both courses were positive regarding the standards but concern was expressed by some about lack of access to principal psychologists and members of the psychological services management teams, and about travel arrangements. However, the tutor also indicated that:

'Some psychologists may be unaware that the standards exist.'

However, another tutor noted that:

'Some course tutors have used the minimum standards in discussion with principal psychologists to improve support within services for trainees.'

3.12 The supervision of trainee psychologists is an important and responsible task for psychological services. The practice tutors should be chosen carefully, should be valued and respected for their own practice as psychologists, and should themselves be subject to periodic review. There was a general view among those interviewed that the accreditation system currently in place for the probationary year should be extended to include the provision of trainee placements, taking account of the above minimum standards. Resource implications of this would require to be considered.

Recommendation 4: The BPS Scottish Division of Educational Psychology, in consultation with other professional associations and training courses, should consider extending its accreditation of local authority psychological services for the probationary year to trainee placements in services. It should also consider the training and accreditation of practice tutors in psychological services.

3.13 There was a number of services which did not provide training opportunities for trainee psychologists and this puts additional burdens on those that do. Some trainees were reluctant to train in the more remote areas, and difficulties were experienced by smaller services in making staff available to supervise trainees. However, the Steering Group felt that all local authorities should, in principle, support traineeships and that with flexibility and cross-service co-operation, all services could play a role in supporting traineeships.

Recommendation 5: All local authorities should promote traineeships in educational psychology.

Funding arrangements for trainees

3.14 The Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED) provides education authorities with advice about how to fund trainees. However, the advice is open to wide interpretation and it was clear from trainees and university tutors that there were considerable disparities in funding arrangements across authorities. Despite the existing SEED advice, tutors confirmed that there is little consistency in practice regarding whether trainees:

- have a contract of employment with a sponsoring authority;
- are paid a monthly salary or are given a *de facto* 'grant' paid twice-yearly or annually, with implications for income tax status; and
- are paid travel expenses while on placement.

3.15 Trainees commented that:

'There is a disparity between services regarding whether trainees are employees or not.'

'[Things are] complex if you are in a service other than the funding authority; the university and ASPEP have a role to resolve the situation and to make uniform arrangements.'

'If you are not an employee, you get no travel expenses, for example in a Year 2 Placement.'

3.16 University tutors confirmed that funding has proved problematic and that:

'...an inordinate amount of time is spent on funding issues in university meetings with trainees.'

3.17 There was general agreement that the funding arrangements needed to be reviewed and that clearer advice required to be provided by SEED. The Steering Group felt that the funding should be reviewed regularly to take account of inflation, that trainees should be paid travelling expenses by local authorities while on placement and that the contribution paid by sponsoring authorities should be ended.

Recommendation 6: SEED should review its advice on funding for trainee educational psychologists with a view to securing standardised arrangements across all local authorities. Funding should be reviewed regularly by SEED, and trainees should be paid travelling expenses by local authorities while on placement. The requirement that sponsoring authorities make a contribution should be ended.

The possible options for increasing the numbers of trainee psychologists

3.18 University tutors reported that there was no evidence of a fall in the numbers applying to training programmes in Scotland and it was felt that trainees brought to the programmes a good range of experience of work with children, young people and families. However, there was concern about the impact of the agreement *A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century* upon the number of applications from teachers on the one hand, and upon the relative attractiveness of doctoral training in clinical psychology to Honours psychology graduates on the other. The joint nature of training and the good partnership between the universities and psychological services was noted but concern was expressed about the increased demands on services that would result from expansion of training, and whether services could cope with supervising more trainees.

Capacity to support training placements

3.19 Although newly qualified psychologists enter the profession from only one of the two courses each year, all of the trainees on the courses require placements both in their first and in their second year. The staffing survey questionnaire (paragraph 2.5) asked services to indicate how many trainee placements they could offer. The total number was 60. While this is higher than either the current requirement or the number needed even with a higher intake to the two courses, two factors should be noted. First, the figures quoted were seen as being a maximum, and could be lower in circumstances affecting services such as long-term staff illness or difficulty in covering vacant posts. Secondly, the two university courses are already experiencing difficulty in obtaining trainee placements, and sometimes the offer of a placement may be in an area where it is not practicable for the trainee to take it up. Nevertheless, a willingness to offer 60 placements throughout the country indicates a high commitment by services to pre-service training.

3.20 The Steering Group considered four options for increasing the number of psychologists training: an annual intake of trainees to one or both courses, increasing the numbers attending the Scottish courses, enabling trainees to attend universities outwith Scotland and distance learning.

Annual intake of trainees to one or both of the Scottish training courses

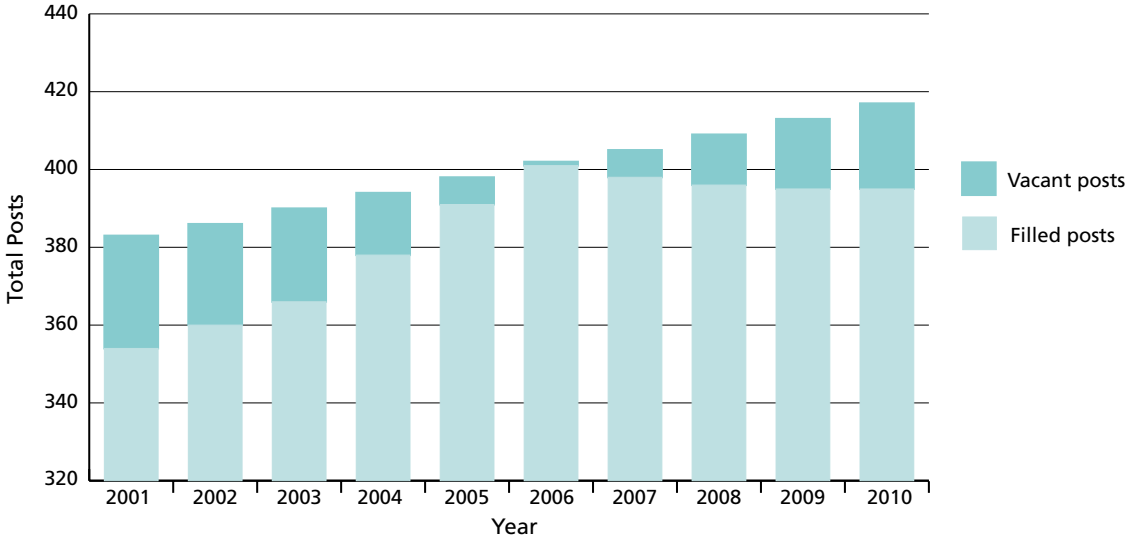
3.21 The Steering Group considered the option of an annual intake of trainees to one or both of the training courses. However, an annual intake to both courses would over a period lead to an over-supply of educational psychologists and would be very expensive to fund. It would also make additional demands on psychological services regarding the provision of trainee placements. The Steering Group felt that an annual intake to training courses was not a viable option at this time.

Increasing the numbers attending the Scottish courses

3.22 The most straightforward option would be to increase the number admitted to each course bi-annually. At present, every two years one course admits 16 students, the other 18 students, so that each year SEED is funding 34 trainees. The Steering Group suggests raising the number admitted to courses to 24 each year, ensuring that 24 trainees would graduate each year. Both universities could accommodate such an increase in trainees. Dundee University indicated that in addition to taking 24 trainees in October 2002 it could also accommodate a further 12 trainees.

3.23 Figure 3.1 shows a prediction of staffing trends over ten years as from the end of 2001 using the best available evidence, based on 24 training places becoming available as from September 2002. The factors considered in arriving at the figures are: estimated age of trainees at time of intake; annual gain and loss of psychologists to Scottish services; part-time working; age profile of services; and an assumed growth rate of 10% over ten years.

Figure 3.1 Ten-year staffing predictions based on 24 annual training places and 10% growth



3.24 The assumption of a growth rate of 10% would lead to psychological services being fully staffed by 2006 on the basis of increasing the intake of trainee psychologists to 24 for each course. The situation deteriorates after 2006.

3.25 As these figures assume that current trends will continue over the next ten years they are very approximate, and a number of factors must be taken into account in interpreting their significance. First, the Steering Group took the view that despite a potential shortfall in staffing after 2006, an increase to more than 24 places on each course would be less sustainable by services, and could also risk a surplus if supply and demand did not follow anticipated patterns. However, the option of admitting a further 12 trainees to the Dundee course for the two-year course covering 2002-2004 should be considered further. The current proposal allows for further adjustments in later years as required. Secondly, the number of psychologists available for filling vacancies on a temporary basis is likely to remain at least at current levels, allowing modest shortfalls to be addressed.

3.26 It should also be noted that these figures do not take account of benefits arising from the more effective use of psychologists’ time (paragraphs 4.15 to 4.25). These efficiency savings will lead to a notional, but unquantifiable, ‘virtual’ increase in psychologists’ FTE.

Enabling trainees to attend universities outwith Scotland

3.27 One education authority already funds trainee educational psychologists to attend the one-year course at the University of Newcastle. The courses most accessible to Scottish trainees are at the Universities of Newcastle, Sheffield and Belfast. The Steering Group recommends that the Scottish Executive should provide funding for trainees to attend these courses.

Distance learning

3.28 The Steering Group discussed the BPS Diploma in Educational Psychology as a possible training route, but it was noted that the revised diploma had not attracted interest in Scotland in recent years, and in any event, was not supported by distance learning or by any academic institution. The university tutors felt that distance learning would not be a viable means of delivering the core curriculum for professional training in educational psychology in view of the high development costs, relatively small market, likely attrition rates and the nature of training specified by the BPS accreditation criteria, which services would find difficult to support without collaboration with accredited training programme tutors. On the basis of the evidence available, the Steering Group reached the view that, in the immediate future at least, distance learning was not a viable training option.

Recommendation 7: The number of training places at Strathclyde and Dundee Universities should be increased to 24 in each, with review of the position in three years' time. In addition, the Scottish Executive should investigate further the option of enabling a further 12 trainees to be admitted to the Dundee course in 2002.

Recommendation 8: Local authorities may wish to consider sponsoring trainees to attend training courses in England and Northern Ireland.

Continuing professional development

3.29 The report of the national CPD working group for educational psychology, entitled *Professional Educational Psychology: Towards a National Framework for Continuing Professional Development*, was considered by the Steering Group. This working group was set up in 1999 and reported in 2000. According to the psychologists' representatives on the Steering Group the report and its recommendations have the broad support of educational psychologists in Scotland.

3.30 The Steering Group supported the recommendation in the report that all psychologists should have an individual CPD plan agreed with their service manager, and that this should be set in the context of a national framework for CPD, similar in principle to that being developed for teachers in Scotland. This plan should take good account of the need for psychologists to have joint training experiences with other professionals. Consideration should be given to accreditation of the framework by the BPS.

Recommendation 9: A framework for the continuing professional development of psychologists should be developed, similar in principle to the CPD framework being developed for teachers in Scotland. Consideration should be given to accreditation of the framework by the BPS.

Recommendation 10: Each psychologist should have an individual CPD plan derived from the council's local improvement plan, the service development plan, the outcomes of staff review and the individual's career aspirations.

3.31 The report recommended that there should be a national body to accredit training courses at a national level to ensure their quality and relevance, and to establish a register of national CPD providers. It was noted that the BPS has made CPD a mandatory requirement for chartered psychologists holding their practising certificates and that the Society would consult further on CPD guidelines to be followed. The Steering Group was not convinced of the need for a national body to accredit courses. The onus for ensuring that courses are relevant and of appropriate quality should rest with the psychologists themselves and with their local authorities.

3.32 The report recommended that a minimum of 12 days annually should be set aside for CPD activities. The Steering Group noted that this was more than that provided for teachers (ten days). However, given that psychologists work more days per year than teachers, the 12 day allocation is reasonable.

3.33 The Steering Group considered the report's recommendation that there should be a progression pathway towards doctoral training, which should be viewed as the standard qualification for educational psychologists, and which should be funded jointly by the Scottish Executive, local authorities and psychologists themselves. On this particular issue, the Steering Group had received representation from other psychologists questioning the need for doctoral training and whether such training would have any impact on the quality of services provided by psychologists. However, doctoral training could, in principle, follow equivalent approaches to the Chartered Teacher programme, to ensure that such training would have an impact on service delivery.

3.34 The Steering Group was not able to recommend that the extra costs of funding doctoral training should be met by the Scottish Executive or by local authorities, and noted that this view was consistent with the position of teachers, who were not being funded to achieve Chartered Teacher status. Educational psychologists currently possess an Honours degree in psychology and a post-graduate degree to Master's level. The Steering Group was aware that clinical psychologists are trained to doctoral level and that this might encourage psychologists to choose careers in clinical rather than educational psychology. The Steering Group felt that those educational psychologists who did wish to pursue training to the doctoral qualification should be encouraged to do so. One way to achieve this would be by linking increments on the psychologists' pay scale (eg faster progression through the pay scale) to the successful completion of doctoral training.

Recommendation 11: Local authorities and service managers should support those psychologists who wish to follow a doctoral training programme, within the agreed CPD framework for psychological services.

4. Time for psychology

4.1 As detailed in paragraphs 1.9 to 1.11, the focus of the Time for Psychology subgroup was to examine the tasks undertaken by educational psychologists which diverted time from work of a psychological nature and which might be done more efficiently through other methods, through better provision and use of ICT, by admin/clerical staff or by staff in other services. Evidence was gathered by means of questionnaires, interviews with key personnel, consideration of Best Value reviews and reports of time-sampling and other exercises conducted by services or reported in the literature.

Questionnaires

4.2 The Scottish Support for Learning Association was asked to represent the views of its members. Members were invited to complete a questionnaire covering the role of psychological services, tasks undertaken by educational psychologists and issues relating to staffing levels, training, recruitment, quality assurance and future demands on provision of services.

4.3 Approximately 60 responses were received. This represented, roughly, a 25% response rate across a wide cross-section of individual staff and support teams including heads of service, support for learning teachers, senior school management, classroom and subject teachers, community education staff and voluntary services staff.

4.4 Questionnaires were sent to the educational psychologists in all services. These covered tasks which take time from psychology, estimates of the time spent on administrative and other tasks, and core psychological activities which have been diminished or discontinued because of workload issues. A total of 224 returns was received. This represented 57% of all educational psychologists, and included responses from all 32 authorities. All principal psychologists also responded to a separate questionnaire.

Interviews with key personnel

4.5 Follow-up interviews were conducted with admin/clerical staff and psychologists in five services across Scotland. These represented a cross-section of urban and rural areas. The interviews were semi-structured and elicited evidence on how clerical staff support the work of services, together with a breakdown of administrative tasks carried out by psychologists and clerical staff respectively.

Other evidence

4.6 Best Value reviews were submitted by five services and a number of others provided data from exercises designed to measure the time spent by psychologists on a variety of different tasks and areas of work. In addition, time-sampling data, both published and unpublished and systematically collected over most of the last two decades, were examined.¹⁷

¹⁷ *Time-sampling: an analysis of the work of educational psychologists* (TAWN MacKay & WSS Reynolds, SALGEP, 1983); *How do educational psychologists spend their time?* (TAWN MacKay & CA Vassie, BPS, 1998)

What do psychologists do?

4.7 Although the functions of psychological services are defined by statute, and fully detailed in the performance indicators under the headings of consultation, assessment, intervention, training and research, these descriptions do not answer questions about the time and priority given to different activities. A number of services, however, have analysed their own workload according to the percentage of time spent on different categories of activity.

4.8 Analysis of workload has been carried out systematically in the time-sampling studies cited, in which the work of one psychological service in central Scotland was tracked at specified periods between 1982 and 1998. The service selected was in many ways typical in terms of size, urban/rural mix, overall approach to work allocation and characteristics of staff, most of whom also had experience of working in a number of other services. However, psychological services can differ considerably in their philosophy and approach, and a number have adopted explicit policies on matters such as assessment methodologies.

4.9 In terms of sources of referral, the majority of time was devoted to school referrals. These remained stable at around 70% of all time spent on referrals throughout the period in question, with parental referrals declining from 15% to 4%. Direct work with children and young people, whether in assessment or intervention, represented a consistently low proportion of total time spent, being 15% in 1982 and 13% in 1998. Of that time, about two-thirds related to assessment and one-third to intervention.

4.10 The single largest category in terms of time spent was on meetings and consultation in relation to casework, this occupying just under and just over one-third in 1982 and 1998 respectively. The smallest categories were for provision of training and for research, both occupying around 1% of time in both years.

Service delivery

4.11 Principal psychologists were asked to rate their involvement in the five core functions of consultation, assessment, intervention, training and research as being 'just about right', 'too little' or 'too much'. It was clear from the responses that most principal psychologists construed this question in relative and not absolute terms. That is, within the terms of their existing resources they considered how the available time was allocated across the five core functions. Thus it was possible for the same service both to report that it was not adequately staffed to carry out its functions and also to indicate that the allocation of time across these functions was just about right. One respondent noted that their surveys showed that users 'want more of everything' and that this question was therefore too simplistic. The function most frequently rated as being given too little time was research, followed by training and then intervention. The only function fairly frequently rated as having too much time was assessment. Services frequently commented that in periods of staff shortages and other pressures on time it is the other functions that are minimised, with too much time having to be spent on assessment functions. The breakdown is shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Involvement in core functions (N=36)

	Just about right	Too little	Too much
Consultation	24	11	1
Assessment	20	2	14
Intervention	17	17	2
Training	14	20	2
Research	5	30	1

4.12 All services reported that they provided ongoing, regular service to all council schools, and almost all felt that they provided regular advice and support to education service management and that they had the opportunity to contribute effectively to council policy and initiatives. Most also felt that they provided advice and support to relevant council working groups.

What is expected from psychologists?

4.13 Research conducted with a variety of service users, together with the response to the support for learning questionnaires, indicates that psychologists are frequently expected to be 'all things to all people'. The traditional roles of assessment and intervention are in high demand, but a wider involvement in training, research and policy is also expected.¹⁸

4.14 At times there is a mismatch of expectations amongst both professionals and parents, and this may lead to potential areas of conflict. Parents wish to have more information about the services available and want to see greater consistency and shorter waiting times. As noted in the learning support questionnaires:

'Many parents are still looking for formal assessment or "magic wands" rather than a staged approach.'

A way of providing enhanced awareness of psychologists' duties is needed. The Matrix in Appendix 5 provides a useful illustration of the core functions of educational psychologists, and the levels across which they work.

¹⁸ *Meeting the needs of pupils with learning difficulties: what do primary and secondary schools expect of their educational psychologists?* (Educational Research, 36, 187-196, TAWN MacKay & JM Boyle, 1994); *Psychological service delivery to primary schools: do head teachers want research?* (Educational Psychology in Practice, 13, 165-169, TAWN MacKay, 1997)

Time spent on administrative tasks

4.15 In every profession a certain amount of time will necessarily be spent on tasks which are of an administrative nature. However, in the case of educational psychologists all of the evidence suggested that the proportion of available time spent on these and other non-psychological tasks is unacceptably high. The 'Time for Psychology' questionnaires indicated that administrative tasks very frequently occupied 'much more time than was desirable'. While many respondents indicated that it was too difficult to estimate accurately, average estimates were above 25% of total time. The range of estimates extended to over 70%.

4.16 The view that time spent on administrative tasks is excessive was supported by the data available from the time-sampling studies. These studies indicate that psychologists' estimates of time spent on different aspects of work differ significantly from actual time spent. However, these variations tend to be systematic and in the case of administrative work are underestimates. Thus, while psychologists in these studies consistently overestimated the amount of time spent in direct work with children and young people, they consistently underestimated the time on 'admin and paperwork'. This was estimated at 17% in 1982 and at 21% in 1998, while the actual time spent in both years was around 30%. While this category is not identical with the non-psychological activities being considered in the current questionnaires, there is a great deal of overlap and it may be reasonable to expect that the current 25% is an underestimate.

4.17 In assessing the importance of various proposals for increasing the time available for psychological work, psychologists rated removal of inappropriate tasks from services as the most important. This was followed by enhanced admin/clerical support and use and provision of ICT, with use of different methods of working being rated last. The responses to these areas are expanded below.

Removal of tasks from psychological service

4.18 Removal of tasks from the psychological service to other parts of the system was viewed as being important or crucial by 83% of the psychologists who responded. Some respondents commented that steps had already been taken in their service or authority to ensure that the psychological service was not responsible for inappropriate activities:

'A number of admin tasks have already been removed from the service to other departments – for example, Record of Needs admin, transport and finance, through negotiation with senior managers.'

4.19 Two types of activity above all others were identified as tasks which should be removed from the psychological service. First, out of 130 psychologists who provided examples, 120 highlighted the administration of the Records of Needs. Secondly, 83 of the respondents indicated that they spent time dealing with transport arrangements for special educational needs. One example is the following:

'Currently involved in planning and organising transport for pupils with special needs – very time consuming.'

4.20 The evidence gathered both through the questionnaires and through the semi-structured interviews also identified key tasks for which ownership and responsibility would more appropriately rest with schools. In particular, there should be more fully inclusive practices and a more consistent approach to staged intervention, managed, in its initial stages, by the school but supported by psychological services. This includes calling, chairing and reporting on meetings and reviews. The role of support for learning staff in relation to supporting the assessment and intervention process also needs to be reviewed. These views are consistent with the recommendations of the report *For Scotland's Children*.¹⁹

4.21 Psychological services often manage other support services including, for example, behaviour support, autism support and the pre-school home visiting service. While close collaboration between psychologists and these services is essential, and the needs of small authorities in managing their overall resources efficiently are recognised, management functions could generally be organised in other ways. Some tasks delegated by the directorate could be undertaken by others within the department such as advisers and senior support for learning staff. This has implications for the staffing of these parts of the service and this requires to be reviewed.

Recommendation 12: Each local authority should review its staged intervention procedure to ensure that schools, and not educational psychologists, play the central role in co-ordinating the process, and that the roles of support for learning staff in supporting assessment and intervention are clear.

Recommendation 13: A number of functions and tasks undertaken by psychological services or by individual psychologists should be reallocated to other services. These include servicing the Record of Needs process, making special transport arrangements and managing other support services such as educational home visitors and behaviour support teachers.

¹⁹ *For Scotland's Children: Better Integrated Children's Services* (Scottish Executive, 2001)

Administrative and clerical support

4.22 Enhanced administrative and clerical support was viewed as being important or crucial by 79% of respondents. Tasks commonly carried out by psychologists were filing, preparing routine letters, organisation of meetings and taking minutes. These were typified in the following response:

'Filing of everyday case notes. Filing and preparation of routine letters. Organisation of meetings – invitations / phone calls / venue etc.'

4.23 The extent to which psychologists were undertaking routine clerical and administrative tasks was borne out consistently in the semi-structured interviews with psychologists and with office staff. In most cases psychologists carried the main responsibility for filing, making appointments and arranging meetings. Practice in these matters, however, varied significantly not only across but 'also within services'. The interviews in two different centres in one service indicated that in the one case psychologists had virtually no involvement in these administrative tasks while in the other case it was the clerical staff who had virtually no involvement, as almost everything was undertaken by the psychologist. In the former example there were dedicated clerical staff while in the latter the clerical support was shared with other council services.

Recommendation 14: Local authorities and psychological services should review their professional support services to ensure that psychologists are not carrying out administrative tasks that can be undertaken by appropriately qualified administrative staff.

Use and provision of ICT

4.24 Both better use and better provision of ICT were also rated as being important or crucial by just under 80% of respondents. The most frequent examples related to maintenance of the service database, followed by administration of the Record of Needs. The principal psychologists of eight services responded that their service did not have an e-mail address, although in some of these cases staff had been provided with technology which gave them access to e-mail using an individual address. Nevertheless, there were psychologists who still lacked this facility altogether.

Recommendation 15: All psychological services should be resourced appropriately so that all staff have good access to information and communications technology (ICT), taking account of the training needs both of psychologists and of administrative and clerical staff, and of systems being developed across agencies.

Different methods of working

4.25 Some 67% of respondents rated as important or crucial the need to consider more effective ways of working. Several examples were proposed by respondents of ways in which different methods of working could enhance effectiveness. One respondent noted:

'Office procedures within psychological services have developed haphazardly. If we look at procedures within the private sector or even the medical profession we could learn much. There is an over-reliance on paper and hard copies. E-mail is hardly ever used.'

The most frequent example proposed was use of a dictaphone, indicating very patchy use of this most basic facility for dictating work for typing. Some respondents noted the introduction of digital dictaphones that can be connected directly to computers in order to input text into word processing programmes, thus obviating the need for audio-typing. Many respondents provided examples of good practice in their service which might be used by others. The most frequent responses in this category related to high quality office management and standardised letters and *pro formas*.

Recommendation 16: The Scottish Executive, in consultation with local authorities and professional bodies, should take steps to disseminate good practice in the work of psychological services in relation to ways of working which enhance effectiveness.

Core activities for which there is insufficient time

4.26 Of the 224 respondents to the 'Time for Psychology' questionnaire, 155 gave examples of specific activities which they believed should be core duties of services, but which had been diminished or discontinued because of workload issues. Of these the most recurrent theme related to therapeutic interventions with individual children or young people and with families. Over two-thirds of those providing examples believed that this core activity required additional time. The other theme highlighted by a majority of respondents was time for research, this being proposed by about half of the respondents.

4.27 In one or two services, appointments had been made of assistant psychologists or equivalent posts, and it was noted that these posts could make a significant contribution to the overall work of psychologists, including contributing to the research programme. The post holders were graduates in psychology, some of whom might later wish to undertake training to become educational psychologists. This model is adopted in other branches of psychology, in particular clinical psychology. However, at this stage the Steering Group was not in a position to make recommendations about the employment of assistant psychologists.

5. Quality assurance

The context of the review

5.1 Although the current review of psychological services arose within the context of supply and demand issues relating to recruitment and retention of staff, the terms of reference for Stage 2 of the review raised a number of quality assurance issues. These included reviewing the structure of services and considering those which best deliver effective and efficient quality services which meet the needs of service users.

5.2 As detailed in paragraphs 1.12 to 1.14, the focus of the Quality Assurance subgroup was to describe what quality assurance procedures are used across services to ensure best value, to take account of the role of HMIE, to report on the use of the performance indicators developed specifically for services, to highlight strengths and weaknesses in arrangements for Quality Assurance and to make recommendations. Evidence was gathered by means of questionnaires sent to all principal psychologists, and the subgroup also had access to Best Value reports available from five services.

Questionnaires

5.3 Questionnaires were sent to the principal educational psychologists in all services. These covered quality assurance issues under the headings of the four key areas outlined in the performance indicators: management, leadership and quality assurance; resources; ethos; and service delivery. The response rate from services was 100%. Of the 32 authorities, 30 sent a single return for the whole service, while Glasgow and Edinburgh sent separate returns for their different areas, two of the areas in the latter case sending a combined return. This made a total of 37 returns.

Management, leadership and quality assurance

5.4 At the time when the questionnaires were issued, the performance indicators had been available to services for just under two years. Although referred to here as 'performance indicators', the indicators are really 'quality indicators' since they focus on service quality rather than on the performance outcomes of services. In every service, use was being made of the indicators, and over half of the services had used them extensively. In many of these cases the indicators had been adopted as the basis for service evaluation, planning and development.

5.5 The 15 services which responded that they had used the performance indicators, but not extensively, included the three smallest services in the country, and in one of these there was only one member of staff in post out of an establishment of three. This service and some others highlighted recruitment difficulties as an obstacle to the overall development planning process including the use of the indicators. Some others, although not having made extensive use of the indicators as yet, noted that they too had used them as the basis on which they were currently evaluating and developing their services. Overall, the results indicated that in the two years since the performance indicators were published they have gained very wide acceptance and use within educational psychology services, with a majority of services using them extensively.

5.6 More than three-quarters of all services responded that they had: well-defined aims, and documentation to explain these; a coherent service plan linked to council policies; a staff review process for all members of staff; and a coherent CPD process reflecting individual, service and council needs. In almost all other cases these items were in preparation. Nevertheless, all services should provide all staff with annual reviews. Only 14 services (38%) produced an annual standards and quality report, while six other services noted that this was in preparation.

Recommendation 17: Psychological services should, as part of their Performance Management System, ensure that all staff have annual staff reviews.

5.7 Formal structures involving performance indicators, service planning, staff review, CPD and annual reports on standards and quality are still relatively recent developments within education services, and within public services in general. The results of the current survey indicate that psychological services have undergone considerable developments in these areas. Nevertheless, there is a need for dissemination of good practice in the whole area of management, leadership and quality assurance. There is also need for a more formal framework to encourage effective self-evaluation, including peer evaluation. Such a framework would promote greater use of performance indicators and the production of standards and quality reports. In particular, the framework for self-evaluation should take account of the National Priorities for Education described in the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000. These priorities are discussed in more detail in Chapter 7 below (paragraphs 7.3 to 7.13). At the same time there is a role for HMIE in the inspection of educational psychology services as part of the inspection of education authority functions. Any framework for evaluation would be incomplete if it failed to take account of the views and priorities expressed by children, young people and parents.

Recommendation 18: Good practice in the area of management, leadership and quality assurance should be identified and disseminated, and management courses for principal psychologists and those progressing to this position should be supported by local authorities.

Recommendation 19: There should be a National Task Group, involving Directors of Education or their equivalent, psychologists and the Scottish Executive to develop the existing documentation on quality indicators into outcome/performance indicators to facilitate more rigorous self-evaluation which takes full account of the National Priorities for Education.

Recommendation 20: Educational psychology services should have a more formal framework of evaluation which incorporates self-evaluation, peer evaluation and inspection by HMIE, and which, in particular, takes full account of the views of children, young people and parents.

Resources

Staffing

5.8 Approximately half of the services felt that their staffing (apart from current vacancies) was 'just adequate' to deliver the requirements of the council both in terms of psychologists' posts (54%) and in terms of administrative and clerical support (47%). About one-third viewed provision in these areas as being inadequate, with a small number in each case holding the view that staffing was 'very adequate'. While it has been noted that staffing establishments for educational psychology services in Scotland have increased each year since local government reorganisation in 1996, it has also been recognised that services face constantly increasing demands for higher levels of service delivery. The issue of ensuring adequate staffing of services to meet both current and future demand is therefore one which requires to be kept under ongoing review.

5.9 The Steering Group has taken account of the changing context of accountability in public services, and of the move towards regulation of professions providing direct services to the public, including psychology. It is recognised that for many years Scottish educational psychology services have employed psychologists only if they are chartered, eligible for chartering or proceeding towards eligibility following professional training. However, this general approach does not take account of situations where newly-trained psychologists are employed but subsequently fail to attain eligibility for chartering. In addition, while eligibility ensures that psychologists have appropriate qualifications, it does not ensure the maintenance of competence or a requirement to undertake CPD. It is the view of the Steering Group that the interests of service users will be better safeguarded through a more formal arrangement in which chartering is a requirement for employment as an educational psychologist.

Recommendation 21: Local authority psychological services should employ only Chartered Educational Psychologists for those appointed to posts after 1 August 2002. Temporary contracts to new appointments for those with conditional registration should be confirmed only if chartered status is achieved.

Accommodation

5.10 A very similar pattern, as for staffing, emerged in relation to the accommodation provided for services, with around half viewing this as 'just adequate'. The most frequent comment made by those who viewed it as inadequate was the lack of interview rooms in which confidential work could be carried out with individuals and families. Some services reported that their accommodation offered no disabled access, a factor of particular significance for a service dealing extensively with a population who have special needs. The requirement for psychologists to conduct confidential interviews with clients, not only in schools and in homes but also in the neutral environment of the psychological service, is central to good professional practice.

Recommendation 22: Local authorities should audit the accommodation available to educational psychologists to ensure that it is appropriate and includes the provision of rooms suitable for confidential consultations with clients, together with access suitable to the needs of all users including people with disabilities.

Devolved management

5.11 Two-thirds of services lacked any system of devolved management comparable to the arrangements in schools for devolved management of resources. While many services had limited responsibility for certain budgets such as CPD and supplies, it was clear that most principal psychologists did not have the same level of responsibility for their resources as other education managers, and many were uncertain regarding the extent of the budget allocated to their service. The Steering Group noted that the findings of the report of the Working Group on Devolved School Management²⁰ would be applicable to psychological services.

Recommendation 23: The National Task Group should also consider the implications of the Working Group Report: Review of Devolved School Management with a view to determining the applicability, to psychological services, of the arrangements recommended for schools.

Service structure

5.12 The questionnaires also considered issues both of service structure and of the way in which the principal psychologist was supported. Two-thirds of principal psychologists responded both that their service structure was appropriate for taking forward service aims and also that they themselves were appropriately managed and supported.

5.13 Regarding structure, two issues were highlighted. First, there was strong support for the almost universal structure in Scottish authorities in which the psychological service is managed by a principal psychologist. One or two services in particular had for a period experienced other structures following local government reorganisation in 1996, but these alternatives had not, in the views of the respondents, proved effective. Secondly, frequent reference was made to the issue of the senior post, to the difficulties experienced by some services in using the senior role as part of an effective structure and to the lack of career progression for the majority of educational psychologists.

5.14 Regarding support for principal psychologists, several respondents referred to the competing and, at times, conflicting demands of being manager of the psychological service but also having departmental duties in other areas. Conflicts between statutory duties, such as the requirement to provide services to the Reporter to the Children's Hearings, and the demands of education service managers were also raised.

²⁰ *Review of Devolved School Management: Working Group Report* (Scottish Executive, 2001)

5.15 In considering structures for psychological services, it is the view of the Steering Group that consistency should not be confused with quality, that service outcomes should be the focus and not organisational arrangements and that, as with other education services, it is possible to have unity of purpose within a diversity of practice. Nevertheless, it is also acknowledged that some issues of structure are of significance to the remit of this review. It is the view of the Steering Group that the psychological service in each authority should have a coherent structure managed by a principal psychologist. This is necessary to ensure effective service delivery, building on existing good practice and on the experience of services in exploring alternative structural arrangements.

Recommendation 24: Each local authority educational psychology service should be led by a principal psychologist with a clear delegated authority, including budget, within the development of devolved management arrangements for the educational psychology service.

5.16 Also, in terms of enhancing recruitment and retention of staff there is a need to explore career progression within the profession. As noted in paragraph 2.6, a common structure within psychological services is to have a principal psychologist and senior and basic grade posts. Such a structure can create the expectation that the 'basic grade' post occupies a junior place in services and that psychologists can only develop their career by securing promotion. However, the Steering Group is of the view that the 'basic grade' post should instead be the 'main grade' post and that psychologists working at this level should be valued and rewarded appropriately for being good practitioners, rather than feeling that they have to climb a career ladder to gain recognition. Specific duties within services could then be allocated through appropriate job-sizing procedures where psychologists are allocated time for specific tasks.

Recommendation 25: Career progression within educational psychology should be considered further and should take account of staff review procedures, continuing professional development and job-sizing.

Location of services within local councils

5.17 In considering the management of, and support for, principal psychologists, and other organisational arrangements for psychological services, there has been general agreement throughout the consultation process that, despite a number of difficulties, it is appropriate that educational psychology should continue as presently organised within local council services. It is the view of the Steering Group that such arrangements should continue.

5.18 The Steering Group was aware that some held the view that there should be a national psychological service, responsible to the Scottish Executive and independent of local councils. However, councils are at the cutting edge of service delivery and of promoting inclusion, and educational psychologists have a key role to play in helping councils to achieve their objectives. The presence of psychological services within councils reinforces their influence in these important areas. The Steering Group is of the view that educational psychology services should remain within local authorities.

Recommendation 26: Educational psychology should continue as presently organised within local council services.

Ethos

5.19 Principal psychologists were asked if they had obtained structured feedback from service users by means of questionnaires or other structured approaches. All but one of the services had obtained feedback from schools, with the proportions for other users being 73% in the case of parents, 49% for other agencies and 30% for children and young people. The results are summarised in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Services obtaining structured feedback from users (N=37)

	Yes	No
Children and young people	11	30
Parents	27	10
Educational establishments	36	1
Other agencies	18	19

5.20 The evidence made available during this survey, together with both the published and the unpublished evidence relating to Scottish services throughout the past 10 years or so, has produced consistent results regarding the satisfaction of users with the services they have received. All categories of users have reported very high levels of satisfaction with psychological services, but parents and schools in particular have consistently indicated that psychologists do not have sufficient time to deliver either the breadth or the intensity of services they require. This has applied both to those services experiencing staff shortages and those which have been fully staffed. Thus, difficulties have been highlighted not only in relation to recruitment problems but also in relation to the capacity of services to meet the expectations of users even when there are no such problems.

6. Integrated services for children, young people and parents

Expectations of high quality services

6.1 The views and expectations of children, young people and parents in relation to the provision of high quality services are of central importance (see paragraph 5.7, recommendation 20). Children and young people have a right to express their views on all important issues which affect them, and to have these views taken into account. Parents occupy a key role which has been recognised throughout the entire statutory period of educational psychology from 1946. This is reflected in the statutory functions of services: 'the giving of advice to parents'. Their central role has also been acknowledged in the national priorities, and in resulting proposals for the further development of psychological services (paragraphs 7.10 to 7.11).

Concerns of children, young people and parents

6.2 Evidence gathered for the review highlighted a range of concerns expressed by children, young people and parents. Most of this was obtained from the study carried out by Children in Scotland. In the case of children and young people these concerns included:

- lack of clarity about the role of the psychologist;
- lack of support to participate actively in the decision-making process, including the decision whether to undertake psychological assessment; and
- the difficulties caused by a lack of holistic services.

6.3 Several issues were raised by parents. These included:

- the importance of continuity of psychologists;
- the need for more effective inter-agency working and for a more holistic approach being taken towards the child's needs;
- the need of families for more support and information than they receive at present;
- concern about the time spent on paperwork and bureaucracy rather than on intervention and prevention;
- concern about the 'independence' of decision-making by psychologists as employees of the local authority;
- concern about the lack of availability of a second opinion in cases of disagreement;
- inconsistencies in service delivery and in specialist expertise; and
- the length of time waiting to see a psychologist.

6.4 Many of the issues raised by children, young people and parents have appeared throughout this report. These highlight the need to foster and disseminate good practice in a number of areas which are already generally recognised by psychological services. They also emphasise the levels of support young people and families need from psychologists. At present, many needs which have a good evidence base in terms of the effectiveness of psychological interventions are relatively unsupported. They range from dealing effectively with the sleeping, eating and toileting problems of children and young people with autism, to supporting cognitive rehabilitation for those with brain injuries. This points to the need for holistic services in which the educational psychologist will seek to address the psychological needs of the whole child or young person across a variety of contexts in home, school and community, and for the time required to undertake this, in co-operation with other services where necessary.

6.5 As well as general issues of good practice, the specific concerns of parents about the independence of psychological advice, about the need for a second opinion in cases of disagreement and about having adequate access to specialist psychological expertise where it is not locally available, require to be acknowledged. The contribution which may be made by local consultation and mediation services should be considered. In addition, the Scottish Executive has funded a pilot mediation project run by Enquire in five areas to assist both parents and education authorities in cases where disagreements cannot be resolved. Initiatives of this kind, together with a flexible approach by authorities in helping to resolve these concerns when they arise may assist in addressing this area.

Recommendation 27: Education authorities and psychological services should assist parents in obtaining further psychological advice or expertise in cases where it is required, and should consider the contribution which may be made by local consultation and mediation services in cases of disagreement.

Other agencies

6.6 In serving the needs of children, young people and parents, a key role of educational psychology services is to work effectively with other agencies. The main agencies which provide services to children and young people are education, health, social work and voluntary agencies. Voluntary agencies represent the interests of many parents whose children receive educational psychology services. Education, health and social work generally have separate budgets and differing modes of service delivery, and often local authority boundaries are not co-terminous with those of health boards.

6.7 In recent years a central theme in local authorities has been ‘joined-up working’, and this is particularly important for children and young people with special educational needs. In relation to health services, this theme was endorsed in the White Paper *Towards a Healthier Scotland*,²¹ which proposed ‘work across agencies to help children at risk’. It was also a central focus in the *Framework for Mental Health Services in Scotland*.²² The emphasis was on improving working relations among agencies and on promoting common understanding and co-ordinated responses to the mental health needs of vulnerable individuals and groups.

6.8 Some of the obstacles to effective inter-agency working were identified in the report *For Scotland’s Children: Better Integrated Children’s Services*.²³ These included difficulties in sharing information between agencies, lack of co-ordination across services and a shortage of skills in working with families. The report set out an action plan to co-ordinate assessment and intervention and to establish joint children’s service plans.

6.9 The Steering Group identified a number of issues for educational psychology services in working more closely with other agencies:

- in the pre-school sector, the interface between educational psychology and other agencies is good, but there is a need for long-term planning and for better sharing of information across agencies, through an agreed *pro forma* for assessing children;
- in the school sector, the process of dealing with the Record of Needs process can present psychologists with problems as they are seen as being responsible for providing resources, some of which may be recommended by personnel from other agencies who do not have budgetary responsibilities for education;
- the interface between educational and clinical psychology is variable across the country, and sometimes children and young people are seen by both psychologists in circumstances which can be confusing to them and their parents and wasteful of scarce resources; and
- educational psychologists need to re-examine their role in relation to other professionals both within education services and across agencies, so that effective working with others may be enhanced.

Recommendation 28: Education authorities and psychological services should work with other agencies to review the contribution which educational psychologists can make in providing holistic services to children and young people in the settings of home, school and community.

Recommendation 29: The Scottish Executive, local authorities and psychologists’ organisations should consider how educational and clinical child psychological services can develop more integrated training and working arrangements.

²¹ *Towards a Healthier Scotland: A White Paper on Health* (Scottish Office, 1999)

²² *Framework for Mental Health Services in Scotland* (Scottish Office Department of Health, 1997)

²³ *For Scotland’s Children: Better Integrated Children’s Services* (Scottish Executive, 2001)

Minority groups

6.10 Voluntary organisations have reported a significant increase in referrals from minority groups including travelling people, and in particular minority ethnic families seeking advice, information and support. An analysis of minority ethnic referrals to the ISEA²⁴ Scotland telephone helpline pointed to cases where a number of barriers to having access to, and a working relationship with, council services including psychological services were encountered:

- unawareness of, or insensitivity to, the culture of the families;
- parents being informed that their child did not have special educational needs, that the main area of difficulty was lack of knowledge of English, and that they should speak more English at home;
- lack of culturally relevant psychological assessment;
- information being unavailable in the parents' language;
- lack of translation services at meetings with the psychologist, particularly in small or rural authorities; and
- in cases where a translation service was supplied this was usually by an employee of the education department, normally a teacher of English as an additional language; parents who were in dispute with the department felt that an independent translator would have been more acceptable.

6.11 In relation to asylum seekers and refugees, the voluntary organisations felt that families in this group may not be given appropriate information on how to obtain access to educational psychology services, and also that professionals involved with these groups may not be adequately supported.

6.12 An increase in referrals was also reported from families in the armed forces. A key issue for armed forces personnel, in relation to having access to an educational psychologist, arose from uncertainty as to where and when the families might be posted, and the length of time it takes to receive psychological services. Many families had experienced the service being delayed in anticipation of their being posted elsewhere. Sometimes after lengthy assessment procedures the family had to commence the whole process again in a different local authority, and information was not always transferred from one authority to another. This has led to the needs of the child or young person not being identified and addressed at the right time.

Recommendation 30: Local authorities and psychological services should review the needs of minority ethnic groups, and other minority groups, in relation to the availability of appropriate psychological assessment, supported by information and translation services where required, and should ensure continuity and consistency of services.

²⁴ Independent Special Education Advice

7. Future demands

Legislative, regulatory and policy frameworks

7.1 Section 4 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 places a duty on education authorities to provide a psychological service with a wide range of functions relating to children and young people aged 0-19 years with special educational needs (paragraph 1:18). The Children (Scotland) Act 1995 extended children's rights in a number of areas. The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 placed additional duties on education authorities which are relevant to both of these Acts and have implications for psychological services. First, school education must be directed to the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the child or young person to their fullest potential. Secondly, in providing school education, education authorities must have due regard to the views of children or young persons in decisions that significantly affect them, taking account of their age and maturity. Thirdly, education authorities must endeavour to secure improvement in the quality of the school education they provide, with a view to raising standards of education.

7.2 In addition to these requirements, the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 made provisions relating to promoting social inclusion in education. Section 15 of the Act required that educational provision for all pupils should be in mainstream schools. Other provision might be made where placement in mainstream would not suit the aptitude or ability of the child, would be incompatible with providing efficient education to other pupils or would incur unreasonable public expenditure. However, such circumstances would be exceptional. These requirements promote the government's vision for social inclusion in Scotland, in which all children and young people, whatever their social or economic background, have the best possible start in life and go on to achieve their maximum potential. The approach is founded on four key principles of prevention, empowerment, inclusiveness and integration. These developments point to new roles that councils will expect psychological services to perform in the foreseeable future.

7.3 The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 also made provision for the Scottish Ministers to define national priorities in education and to define and publish measures of performance in respect of these priorities. The Education (National Priorities) (Scotland) Order 2000 defined these priorities as follows:

- to raise standards of educational attainment for all in schools, especially in the core skills of literacy and numeracy, and to achieve better levels in national measures of achievement including examination results;
- to support and develop the skills of teachers, the self-discipline of pupils and to enhance school environments so that they are conducive to teaching and learning;
- to promote equality and help every pupil benefit from education, with particular regard paid to pupils with disabilities and special educational needs, and to Gaelic and other lesser used languages;

- to work with parents to teach pupils respect for self and one another and their interdependence with other members of their neighbourhood and society and to teach them the duties and responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic society; and
- to equip pupils with the foundation skills, attitudes and expectations necessary to prosper in a changing society and to encourage creativity and ambition.

National priorities

7.4 In terms of raising achievement and attainment, educational psychologists have made significant contributions through the Excellence Fund to the government-sponsored projects in early intervention; they have assisted schools and special establishments with target-setting; they have initiated projects to promote literacy and numeracy attainment among low-achieving pupils in disadvantaged areas; they have conducted corroborative research in relation to the 5-14 programme and other areas of assessment; and the new developments around learning style and emotional literacy have been promoted by psychological services.

7.5 To carry forward the first priority, the following will be expected of educational psychology services:

- a more focused contribution to raising achievement in both literacy and numeracy, and in other areas of the curriculum including personal and social development;
- further scrutiny of the 5-14 levels as a basis for target-setting and the establishment of corroborative assessment techniques;
- comprehensive development of the implications of learning style to promote more holistic models of how and why children and young people learn; and
- coherent advice to schools on the degree of curricular flexibility required to address the needs of individual learners.

7.6 The task of enhancing school environments has been supported by psychological services in a number of ways. The consultative role has created opportunities for psychologists to discuss with head teachers and school management aspects of policy development, for example, in relation to school discipline, positive behaviour approaches, anti-bullying strategies, circle time and playground management. As a result schools have undertaken projects and initiated policy changes which have improved school ethos, attendance and discipline.

7.7 To carry forward the second priority the following will be expected of educational psychology services:

- taking forward the recommendations of the Discipline Task Group,²⁵ by supporting schools in maintaining young people with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties in mainstream, promoting multi-disciplinary decision making, and researching and disseminating flexible support provision;
- working with schools to develop holistic policies for integrating existing support structures; and
- providing continuing professional development opportunities for teaching staff and new ancillary staff in relation to multi-disciplinary working, the needs of looked after and accommodated children, promoting positive behaviour and relating to parents and carers.

7.8 Psychologists have traditionally had a lead role in advising schools and other agencies on the provision and monitoring of children and young people with special educational needs. Their role is increasingly one of promoting equality of opportunity for all pupils. The New Community Schools initiatives have invariably involved educational psychologists from the start, and their co-ordinating role with other agencies has been a major advantage in these projects. The psychologists' promotion of the entitlement model for addressing the needs of all pupils, especially those with additional needs, is part of the equality agenda. The development of staged intervention approaches in many authorities has been largely led by psychological services.

7.9 The inclusion agenda promoted by the 2000 Act will have major repercussions for all schools and for large numbers of children and young people. Educational psychologists have already contributed much to this development in terms of organising inclusive provision for children and young people with disabilities or with social and emotional difficulties, and promoting the return of children and young people from outwith local provision. Educational provision for looked after children has become a priority, as are children and young people who cannot attend school. Psychologists participate in council working groups contributing to and implementing policies and procedures for inclusion, improving attendance and reducing temporary exclusions from school. They also have had a major role in staff development for classroom teachers, specialist teachers, and classroom assistants in all aspects of special needs, in preparation for increased mainstream inclusion. Lastly, such support for schools makes a major contribution to a reduction in teacher stress. The role of psychological services in helping schools to deal with critical incidents and their aftermath is also recognised.

²⁵ *Better Behaviour, Better Learning* (SEED, 2001)

7.10 To carry forward the third priority the following will be expected of educational psychology services:

- disseminating the success strategies identified in New Community Schools pilot projects to all schools;
- embedding the effective practice of staged intervention in all schools, and promoting resource allocation processes to ensure equity of provision;
- ensuring that any processes which may replace or alter the present Recording process are implemented uniformly for the benefit of all children and young people who may require access to them, and are designed to involve the children and young people and their parents and carers in a meaningful way; and
- contributing to more effective monitoring and support arrangements for looked after and accommodated children and young people, especially in relation to their mental health needs and their school achievement.

7.11 Working with parents and families has always been an important feature of educational psychologists' work. As well as engaging with parents' forums and SEN parents' networks, psychologists have led parental involvement projects and have initiated parenting skills workshops. By methods such as these, the school's ability and willingness to engage with parents and consult them on school developments have been enhanced. These areas of work can reduce conflict between councils and parents/parent groups and there is therefore less likelihood of appeals and litigation. Projects to involve pupils and students more in their own learning, and in supporting the learning of other pupils, have been introduced by psychologists. Peer tutoring in reading and mathematics, and buddy systems both in primary and secondary schools, have increased pupils' sense of responsibility and interdependence.

7.12 To carry forward the fourth priority the following will be expected of educational psychology services:

- contributing to the national development programme on parenting skills recommended by the Discipline Task Group, and other initiatives such as local family support strategies;
- supporting projects for the greater involvement of parents and carers in wider aspects of school curricula, such as fostering personal and social development and citizenship;
- contributing to the development of individualised educational programmes; and
- dissemination of the major implications of work on emotional literacy, to equip all children and young people with the language and emotional skills to deal effectively with relationships, to be co-operative, to show respect and to exercise responsibilities.

7.13 The need for all children and young people to make progress and to achieve everything of which they are capable is a major challenge. For those whose basic skills develop more gradually, the need for careful monitoring and intensive help is manifest. Psychologists are making a significant contribution to the development of individual programmes for all children and young people who require them, and to the processes which ensure that their curricula are appropriate. New safeguards are being built into the transition process for young people from school into college or the world of work, in line with the Beattie proposals.

7.14 To carry forward the fifth priority the following will be expected of educational psychology services:

- advising on the piloting and implementation of a comprehensive assessment and review process regarding the future needs assessment aspect of the Record of Needs system, and extending the scope of the exercise to all vulnerable young people, including those disaffected or disadvantaged by the school system; and
- an extended role, as envisaged by Beattie, in supporting such young people, their carers and training providers, into post-school training and the world of work, up to the age of 24.

Beattie Report

7.15 The Advisory Committee on Post-School Education and Training of Young People with Special Needs was appointed in April 1998 by Brian Wilson, the then Scottish Education and Industry Minister, to examine the range of needs among young people who require additional support to participate in post-school education and training. The Committee published its report *Implementing Inclusiveness – Realising Potential* in September 1999.²⁶ The report is often referred to as ‘The Beattie Committee Report’ after the Committee’s chairman, Mr Robert Beattie.

7.16 One of the recommendations of the Beattie Committee was that ...

‘... the Scottish Executive, in co-operation with the Association of Scottish Principal Educational Psychologists, the British Psychological Society and CoSLA,²⁷ should develop a specification for psychological services for 16-24 year olds... They should also review staffing levels and training requirements for psychological services in Scotland in light of this new emphasis and extension of role.’ (The Beattie Committee Report, paragraph 6.46).

²⁶ *Implementing Inclusiveness – Realising Potential: The Beattie Committee Report* (Scottish Executive, 1999)

²⁷ Convention of Scottish Local Authorities

7.17 This recommendation is now being taken forward. Three part-time psychologists (with a total time commitment of one full-time equivalent psychologist) were appointed in August 2001 and they are due to complete their work by March 2004. At the time of writing this report it is not possible to predict what the implications of this initiative will be in terms of future staffing and training requirements. However, if the initiative proves to be successful then there will be a demand for educational psychologists to work in the post-school sector. There will then clearly be a need to train more educational psychologists in addition to what has already been recommended.

Educational psychology in the new millennium

7.18 Major changes have been achieved in psychological services in the last 10 years against a backdrop of uncertainty and shortage. Following the reorganisation of local government in 1996, psychological services experienced considerable upheaval and dislocation. The modal size of services reduced from over 20 to under 10, and it was unclear whether in these circumstances the same level and scope of service could continue to be delivered. There were shortfalls in staffing, with some services never fully staffed, in resources, in accommodation and in technology. The operational models adopted by some councils made professional support and effective service delivery very difficult to sustain. Nevertheless, many psychological services have adjusted well to the new reality and have earned a valued place in new councils. Because councils themselves are smaller, psychological services are more visible and have contributed more fully and effectively to the corporate activities of councils, as well as performing their traditional roles in support of children and young people, parents and schools. The recommendations in this report will enable these advances to be achieved in every psychological service in the country.

7.19 It is now necessary for psychologists to review their practices to ensure that their unique professional contribution to the learning process can be promoted. Clearly, new arrangements for management of services will require to be considered to ensure that the most effective use of professional time is made available to inform the local authority and its staff in its two principal roles of raising attainment and promoting social inclusion. At council level, action to achieve these aims must be coherent and comprehensive when viewed from the perspective of the individual, the family and the community. This requires all agencies to work together effectively within a comprehensive policy framework. Psychological services have a key role to play in the development of inter-agency working, and this is likely to be further enhanced by the community leadership role of councils in the community planning process. Psychologists' skills in dealing with vulnerable children and young people, their knowledge of preventative and early intervention approaches, their familiarity with research and development methods and solution-focused measures will be fully utilised in the Government's vision for social inclusion in Scotland.

7.20 As the educational landscape has changed throughout the last century educational psychology has adapted and evolved to meet the new requirements. It has influenced schools and local authorities at the level of policy making, and psychologists' skills and knowledge have been accessible to larger numbers of children and young people. The role and responsibilities of psychologists have expanded vastly, and the statutory functions of services in terms of age range covered and duties to be carried out have been increased systematically in several Acts from 1981 onwards. Educational psychologists have been able to play a key role in seeking the optimal arrangements in each locality for the integration of services for children and young people.

7.21 The changes envisaged in this report affirm the key role of psychological services as an integral and vital element in the local authority structure. At the same time the need for services to provide, and to be seen to be providing, independent professional assessment and advice based on the needs of children and young people is recognised. Issues of staffing, training, recruitment and resourcing have been positively addressed. The vital need for psychologists to have access through a coherent, planned CPD framework to leading edge knowledge and skills is highlighted, as well as the crucial role psychologists will continue to have in staff development and advice to schools from this knowledge base. Clear indications flow from this report to inform the current deliberations of the SNCT regarding psychologists' salaries and conditions of service.

Recommendation 31: The Steering Group invites the Scottish Executive to make this report available to the SNCT at the earliest opportunity to inform current negotiations.

Appendix 1: Members of Steering Group

Eleanor Currie	(Chair) Director of Education, East Renfrewshire Council
Oonagh Aitken*	CoSLA (Convention of Scottish Local Authorities)
Patricia Cairns	Headteacher – Firhill High School, Edinburgh
Lorraine Dilworth	Parent – ISEA (Independent Special Education Advice)
Fergal Doherty	EIS (Educational Institute of Scotland)
Jane Hook	Parent – Chair of Scottish Society for Autism
Dr Patricia Jackson	Consultant Paediatrician – Community Child Health, Edinburgh
Gordon Jeyes	ADES (Association of Directors of Education in Scotland)
Graeme King	BPS-SDEP (British Psychological Society – Scottish Division of Educational Psychology)
Dr Ian Liddle	ASPEP (Association of Scottish Principal Educational Psychologists)
Gerry McGeoch	ADSW (Association of Directors of Social Work)
Bill Sadler	SSLA (Scottish Support for Learning Association)
Dr Kay Tisdall	Children in Scotland
Marie Wallace	Headteacher – Drummore Primary School, Glasgow

* Resigned from post prior to completion of the report.

Consultant:	Dr Tommy MacKay, Psychology Consultancy Services
Secretariat:	Dr Mike Gibson Sandra Manning Fergus Millan David Miller

Appendix 2: Members of subgroups

Training

Graeme King (Chair)
Lorraine Dilworth
Kay Tisdall
Marie Wallace
Jim Boyle (support consultant)
Tommy MacKay (support consultant)
David Miller (Scottish Executive link)

Time for Psychology

Bill Sadler (Chair)
Patricia Cairns
Ian Liddle
Gerry McGeoch
Tommy MacKay (support consultant)
Sandra Manning (Scottish Executive link)

Quality Assurance

Gordon Jeyes (Chair)
Oonagh Aitken
Fergal Doherty
Jane Hook
Patricia Jackson
Tommy MacKay (support consultant)
Mike Gibson (Scottish Executive link)

Appendix 3: Staffing of educational psychology services in Scotland

Table 1 Educational psychologists (substantive posts, FTE)

FTE	Authority Principal (or Glasgow/Edinburgh/ Dumfries & Galloway Area Principal)	Depute or Assistant Principal (or Area Principal, not Glasgow/Edinburgh/ Dumfries & Galloway)	Senior	Basic Grade	TOTAL
Current establishment	41	11	106	221	379
Staffing at 31.8.01	41	11	106	196	354
Unfilled vacancies at 31.8.01	0	0	0	25	25

Table 2 Staffing establishments and vacancies (1997-2001)

Year	Establishment	Vacancies (FTE)	Vacancies (%)
1997	335	13	3.9%
1998	350	16	4.6%
1999	367	28	7.6%
2000	370	25	6.8%
2001	379	25	6.6%

Table 3 Part-time staff including job-shares (substantive posts)

Numbers	Principal	Depute or Assistant Principal	Senior	Basic Grade	TOTAL
Number of part-time staff at this grade	2	0	15	85	102

Table 4 Temporary cover for unfilled vacancies

Position at 31.8.01 Cover provided by:	No. of staff in this category	Total temporary cover (FTE)
A member of part-time staff from the same service	16	2.5
A member of part-time staff from another service	0	0.5
A psychologist who is over retirement age (65)	2	0.5
A psychologist (under 65) who has taken early retirement/redundancy	8	2.8
A psychologist not in the above categories	2	0.6
TOTAL	28	6.9

Table 5 Cover for additional temporary posts (12 authorities)

Position at 31.8.01 Cover provided by:	No. of staff in this category	Total temporary cover (FTE)
A member of part-time staff from the same service	8	2.5
A member of part-time staff from another service	1	0.1
A psychologist who is over retirement age (65)	1	0.1
A psychologist (under 65) who has taken early retirement/redundancy	4	1.9
A psychologist not in the above categories	2	1.4
TOTAL	16	6.0

Table 6 Staff leaving or changing post

Reason for leaving	Number	FTE
To take up a promoted post in the same service	2	2
To take up a promoted post in another Scottish service	10	8
To take up a post at the same level in another Scottish service	4	4
To take up an educational psychology post outwith Scotland	5	4
To other types of work	2	2
Retirement or early retirement	5	5
Other reasons	5	5
TOTAL	33	30

Appendix 4: Ratio of psychologists to 0-19 population and eligibility for free school meals (FSE) by education authority

Education authority	0-19 ratio 1/...	FSE %
Scotland	3269	19.5
Aberdeen City	3988	13.0
Aberdeenshire	3346	6.6
Angus	3788	10.2
Argyll & Bute	3122	12.3
Clackmannanshire	2690	22.6
Dumfries & Galloway	3433	10.8
Dundee City	3317	26.1
East Ayrshire	3547	21.6
East Dunbartonshire	3268	9.6
East Lothian	2896	13.0
East Renfrewshire	2706	9.2
Edinburgh, City of	3356	22.5
Eilean Siar	2209	11.5
Falkirk	3362	19.1
Fife	3302	16.8
Glasgow City	2851	41.3
Highland	3761	15.2
Inverclyde	3583	23.5
Midlothian	3454	15.6
Moray	3020	9.4
North Ayrshire	3146	25.1
North Lanarkshire	3543	24.6
Orkney Islands	2431	14.3
Perth & Kinross	4231	7.6
Renfrewshire	3445	23.4
Scottish Borders	3751	8.0
Shetland Islands	2053	7.4
South Ayrshire	3369	15.6
South Lanarkshire	3907	20.0
Stirling	3280	15.1
West Dunbartonshire	3169	27.3
West Lothian	3275	14.9

Appendix 5: Examples of the current role of the educational psychologist: an illustrative matrix

CORE FUNCTIONS					
LEVEL	CONSULTATION	ASSESSMENT	INTERVENTION	TRAINING	RESEARCH
Child and family	Individual discussions Contribution to IEPs Home visits Parents meetings Review meetings, as appropriate	Overall assessment in context Standardised assessment instruments Identifying special needs	Behaviour management programmes Individual and family therapy Working with small groups (eg self-harm, social skills, anger management)	Talks to groups of children (eg anti-bullying groups) Parenting skills	Single case studies Interactive video research with families (SPIN)
School or establishment	Joint working with staff Advice on programmes for children and young people Contribution to strategic planning Policy advice for schools, children's homes Review meetings, as appropriate	Contribution to school assessment policy and procedure	Contribution to whole-establishment interventions (eg anti-bullying programmes, playground behaviour, discipline, raising achievement) Contribution to special exam arrangements Contribution to curricular innovation/initiatives Joint working with class/subject teacher/LST Supporting inclusion Supporting special college placements	Staff training Disseminating evidence-based practice	Design, implementation and evaluation of action research in single establishments and groups of schools
EA/Council	Contribution to strategic planning	Contribution to authority assessment policy and procedure Contribution to Best Value reviews	Contribution to establishing authority-wide interventions (eg anti-bullying initiatives, alternatives to exclusion, promoting social inclusion, resource allocation)	Authority-wide training in all areas relevant to psychology Input to multi-disciplinary conferences	Design, implementation and evaluation of authority-wide action research (eg early intervention, raising achievement) Informing evidence-based policy and practice