

National Care Service (Scotland) Bill (Detailed) – Colleges Scotland Comments - August 2022

Introduction

Colleges Scotland is the collective voice for the college sector in Scotland, representing its interests and ensuring that colleges are at the heart of a world class education sector that is recognised, valued and available to all. Colleges Scotland, as the membership body, represents all 26 colleges in Scotland, which deliver both further education and around 24% of the provision of all higher education in Scotland.

As part of this, colleges across Scotland provide learners with the values and knowledge to start and progress a career in the care, social services or early education sectors. These courses are interactive and include visits from industry experts and work experience placements are an important part of some of the courses.

On behalf of the college sector in Scotland, we welcome the opportunity to provide our views to the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee around the Bill and associated proposals to establish a National Care Service.

Key Points

College Sector Role in Supporting National Care Service Expansion

As the Scottish Government takes forward the proposals for a National Care Service, it is crucial that the college sector is designated and recognised by the Scottish Government as a key partner of the delivery of this service in practice.

The college sector is the largest provider for the care workforce in Scotland and has evidenced with the Early Years and Childcare expansion its ability to pivot and respond to key policy drivers. As such it should be brought into early-level discussions to actively input into the design of the National Care Service, as evidence from other areas has shown the benefits when colleges have been included not just in the delivery, but in the design of courses.

We have noted that whilst the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee is leading on scrutiny of the Bill, the Education, Children and Young People Committee will be scrutinising specific provisions in the Bill which relate to its remit. We would be happy to engage with both Committees in their work on this legislation.