



# **Future proofing programme: Review of the Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers**

## **Equality Impact Assessment**

October 2023



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## **Aims of the review**

The key aims of the Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers (the Codes) review are to:

- review the Codes by gathering evidence from sources such as Fitness to Practise intelligence, consultation and involvement
- develop revised Codes which reflect the expectations of the regulator, the workforce and people who use services
- explore ways to align the Codes with the health and social care standards
- work with other regulators to contribute to the streamlining and better alignment of professional codes
- reflect the shared language of the proposed getting it right for everyone care model
- drive high quality care and risk enablement and improve professional judgement
- make sure workers have the right Codes, tools and support to practice in a human rights way
- review the purpose of the employer codes ensuring they are more prominent, support scrutiny and regulation of services and ensure delivery of high quality care that reflects the national health and social care standards
- ensure the workforce feels employers are delivering their responsibilities under the Codes
- ensure the care experiences of people involved are heard.

The Promise states that we need to significantly re-organise and streamline professional codes, procedures and processes. This workstream will contribute to our activity to keep the Promise.

## **Why the review is needed**

The Codes of Practice Review aims to ensure that the Codes reflect the expectations of the SSSC as a regulator, the workforce, employers and people who use services. The Review will better align the Codes with the Health and Social Care Standards and support our commitments to The Promise and to the recommendations of the National Care Service consultation.

We opened the Register to social workers back in 2003 and since then we have gradually introduced registration to other categories of the workforce, including people working in early years and children's, adult and older people's social care services. We now have more than 170,000 people on our register.

As social work, social care and early years services and the way people access and use them have changed over the past 20 years, so too have the skills, knowledge and qualifications that the workforce need to be able to deliver the kind of high-quality care we want for Scotland.

## **How the review contributes to our strategic objectives and/or priorities**

The Strategic Plan for 2023-2026 sets out the way that our work aligns with the Government's [National Performance Framework](#). The Future Proofing Programme is particularly aligned to three outcomes.

- We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe.
- We grow up loved, safe and protected so that we realise our full potential.
- We have thriving and innovating businesses with quality jobs and fair work for everyone.

The review of the Codes contributes to our strategic themes and outcomes.

1. **Trusted**  
People who use services are protected by a regulated workforce that is fit to practise.
2. **Skilled**  
Our work supports the workforce to deliver high standards of professional practice.
3. **Confident**  
Our work enhances the confidence, competence and wellbeing of the workforce.
4. **Valued**  
The social work, social care and children and young people workforce is valued for the difference it makes to people's lives.

### **How the review of the Codes will meet our equality duties**

- We believe the Review will ensure that both the Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers are appropriate for the expectations of the sector in the modern setting.
- We believe the Review will have positive impacts on advancing equality of opportunity and in eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization.

### **Consultation**

The review of the Codes of Practice has been based on evidence from a wide range of sources, both internal and external. These include:

- desk based research, including learning from developments such as The Promise
- experience from other regulators
- internal focus groups that have looked at the needs of the Codes review from an organisational standpoint
- external engagement
- stakeholder feedback
- the Independent Review of Adult Social Care
- the Promise
- SSSC Integrated Working Research Report 2020  
<https://www.sssc.uk.com/knowledgebase/article/KA-02955/en-us>
- SSSC Workforce Skills Report 2021 <https://data.sssc.uk.com/data-publications/21-workforce-skills-report/272-workforce-skills-report-2020-2021>
- internal intelligence – Registration and FTP data
- review of other regulators' Codes of Practice

Further information on our internal and external engagement work, including findings and analysis is detailed below.

### **Internal engagement**

Our internal engagement involved staff members from across the SSSC including staff in the Regulation Directorate.

## External engagement

We have established a Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) to support the Future Proofing Programme. The advisory group includes several key stakeholders including Social Work Scotland, Scottish Care, COSLA, Scottish Government, the Promise and UNISON.

We have identified the following external organisations as key to making sure the review of the Codes meets its expectations:

- Office of the Chief Social Work Adviser
- Mental Health and Social Care Directorate
- Early Years Directorate
- Children and Families Directorate (The Promise)
- School Age Childcare Directorate
- Care Inspectorate
- NHS Education Scotland

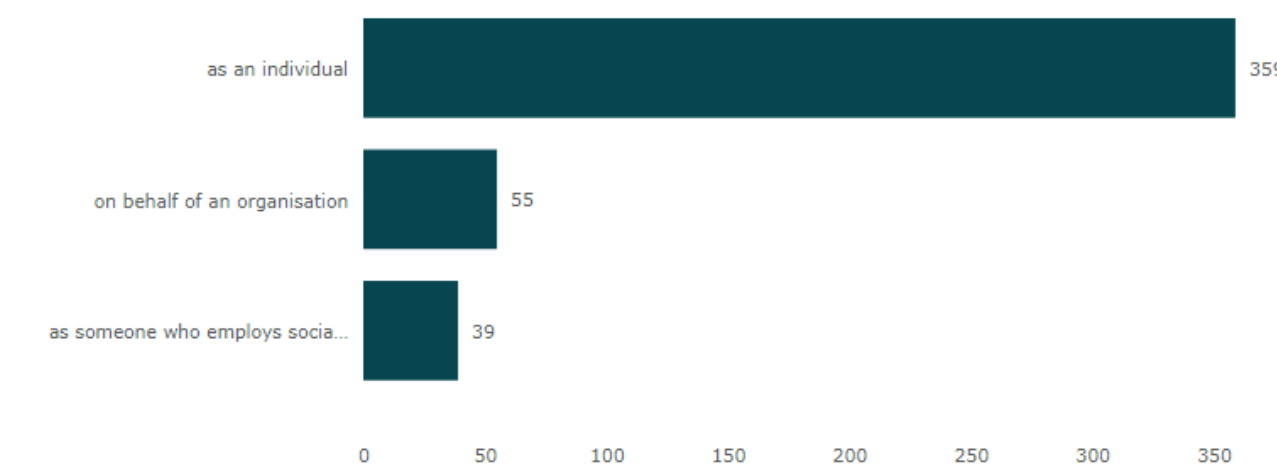
We launched a formal consultation on the proposed changes to the Codes of Practice in early 2023. We developed an engagement plan to ensure we engaged with all key stakeholders to inform the proposed changes, including members of the public and people who use services.

Our external consultation (April – July 2023) received 482 responses, with 47% of those responses being full responses to all questions. For our consultation to provide a confidence level of 99% with a 10% margin of error, we calculated that we would need a minimum of 166 full responses. We have met that level of response.

The majority of all respondents were individuals (Figure 1.)

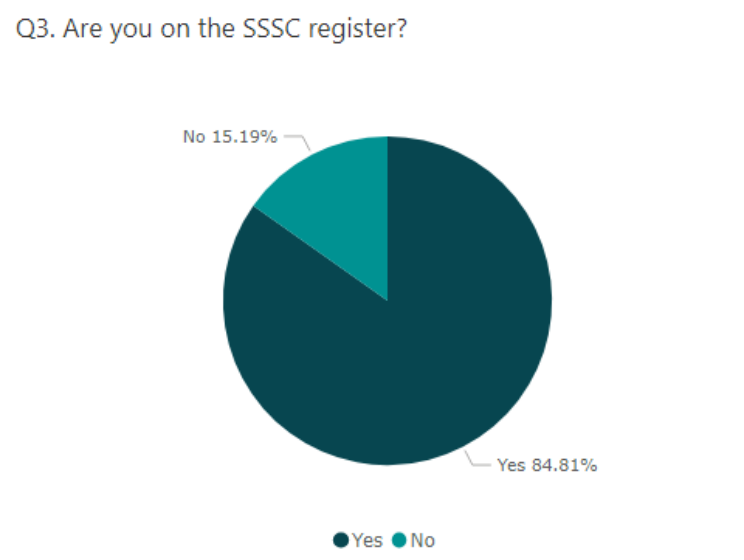
**Figure 1. Codes of Practice Survey responses (April – July 2023)**

Q2. Are you responding:



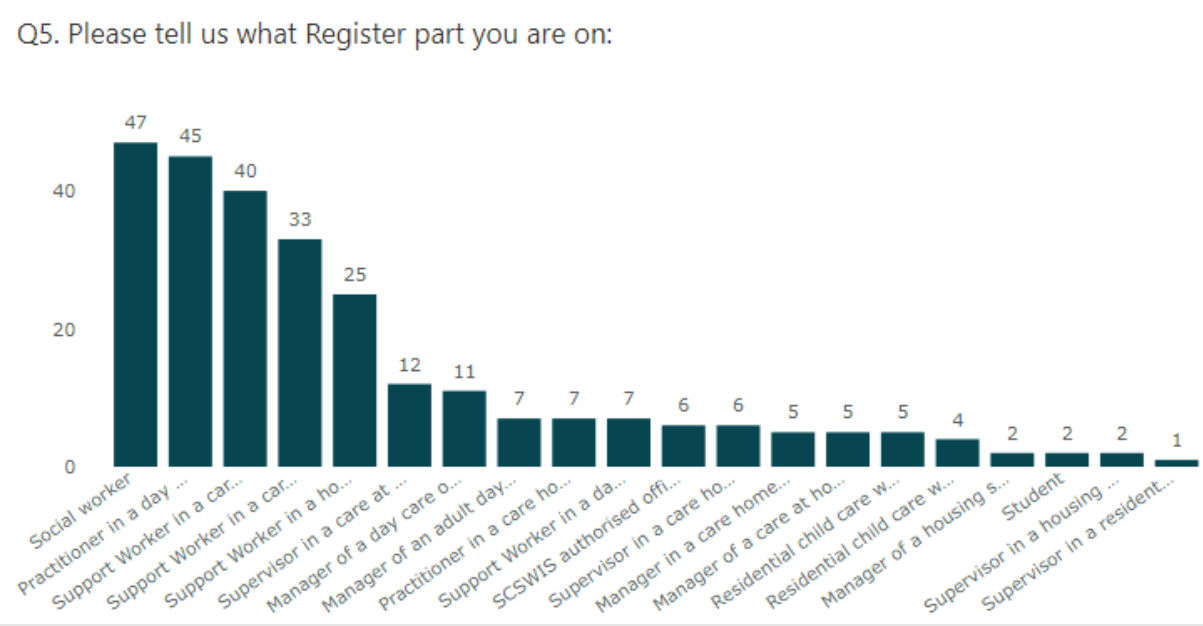
The vast majority, 84.81% of the 349 respondents who answered the relevant question, were registered with the SSSC (Figure 2.)

**Figure 2. Registered with SSSC, Codes of Practice Survey (April – July 2023)**



The most largely represented SSSC register groups to respond were Social Workers (47 responses), Practitioners in a day care of children service (45 responses) and Support Workers in a care at home service (40 responses).

**Figure 3. SSSC Register part, Codes of Practice Survey (April – July 2023)**



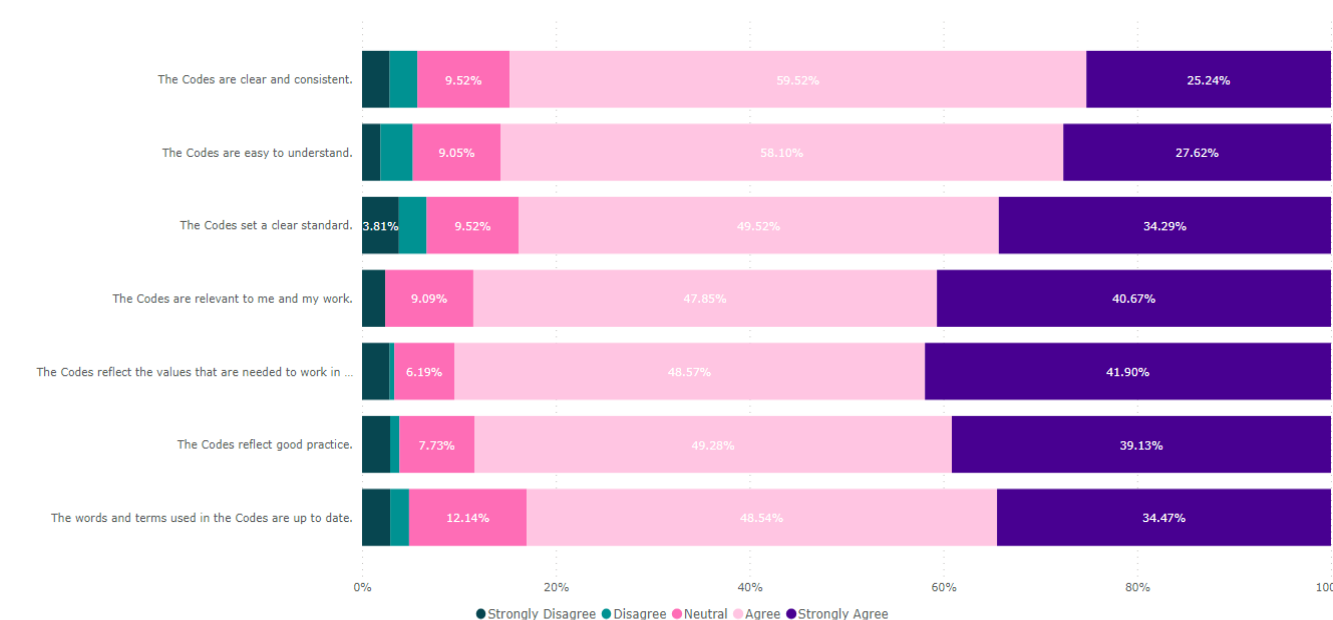
The external consultation was split into two sections, the first section focused on the revisions to the Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and the second section focused on the Codes of Practice for Employers of Social Service Workers.

## Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers

Our initial consultation focused on the impact that the proposed changes (see below) would have on encouraging certain behaviours, etc. Figure 4 shows how strongly respondents agreed with a series of statements about the proposed changes.

**Figure 4. Views on Codes, Codes of Practice Survey (April – July 2023)**

Q14. When looking at the revised Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers how do you feel about the following statements?



As can be seen, the overall response to the proposed changes was positive with a majority of respondents indicating that they agreed or strongly agreed with each of the statements. (see Table 1.)

**Table 1. Views on Codes of Practice Survey (April – July 2023)**

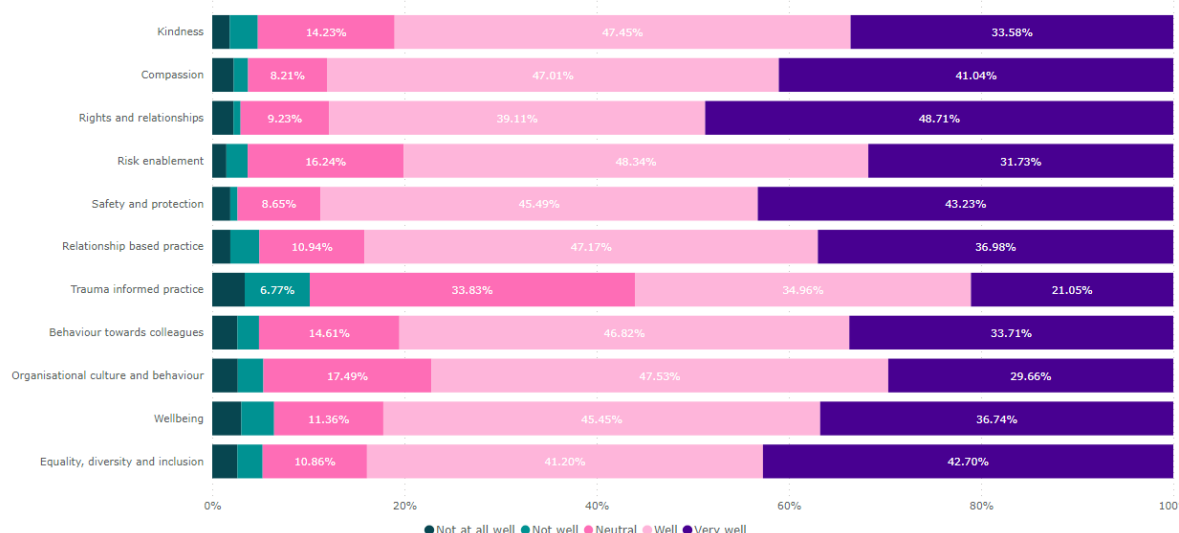
Behaviour	% of Agree or Strongly Agree responses
The Codes are clear and consistent	84.76
The Codes are easy to understand	85.72
The Codes set a clear standard	83.81
The Codes are relevant to me and my work	88.52
The Codes reflect the values that are needed to work in social services	90.47
The Codes reflect good practice	88.41
The words and terms used in the codes are up to date	83.01

## Feedback on proposed changes from consultation

Our consultation focused on the impact that the proposed changes (see below) would have on encouraging several areas such as certain behaviours. Figure 5 shows how positively, or negatively respondents viewed the proposed changes as encouraging these behaviours.

**Figure 5. How Codes for workers reflect key terminology, Codes of Practice Survey (April – July 2023)**

Q8. How well do the revised Code of Practice for Social Service Workers encourage the following?



As can be seen, the overall response to the proposed changes was positive with a majority of respondents indicating that the proposed changes promoted each of the behaviours well or very well (see table 2.)

**Table 2. How Codes for workers reflect key terminology, , Codes of Practice Survey (April – July 2023)**

Behaviour	% of well or very well responses
Kindness	81.03
Compassion	88.05
Rights and relationships	87.82
Risk enablement	80.07
Safety and protection	88.72
Relationship based practice	84.15
Trauma informed practice	56.01
Behaviour toward colleagues	80.53
Organisational culture and behaviour	77.19
Wellbeing	82.19
Equality, diversity and inclusion	83.90

### Sample comments on the proposed changes to Codes for workers

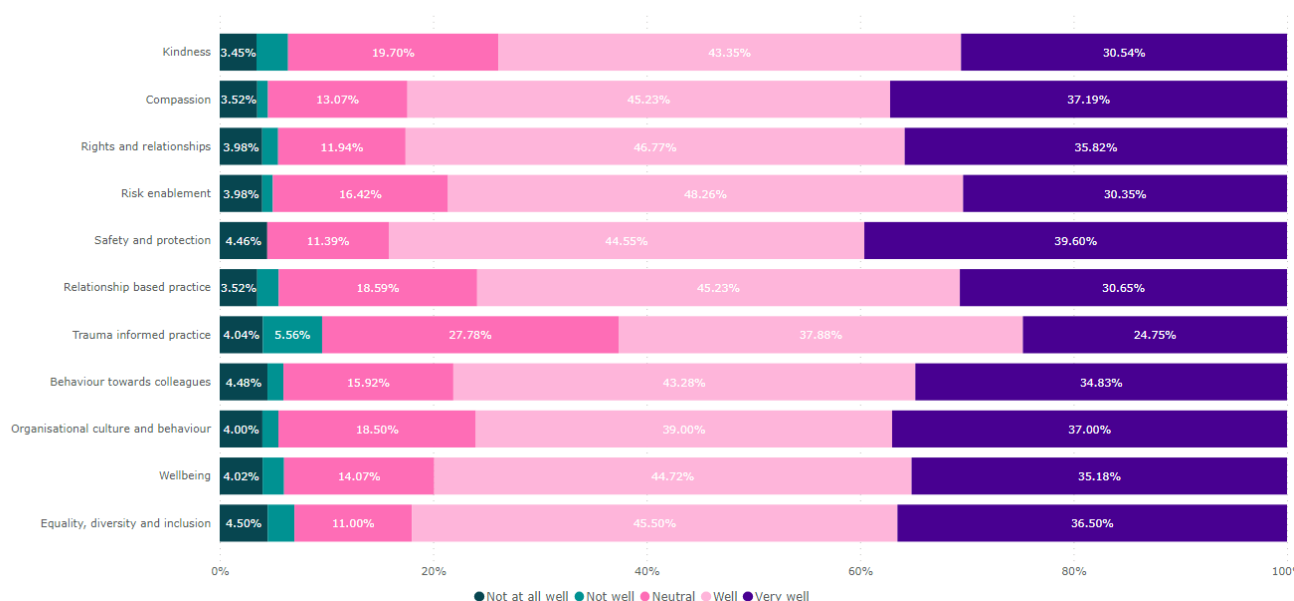
- "I think the revised codes are a lot easier to read and understood which will help individuals to follow them and understand how to follow them."
- "The word trauma, as far as I can see, is not used once in the document of updates although several of the points allude to this. Perhaps it would be helpful to state clearly about trauma informed practice for those less experienced workers."
- "I think this redraft is mostly excellent. It makes some serious shifts towards rights-based practice which focuses on wellbeing and outcome and in my opinion is a huge step forward from the existing code."



- “I am of the opinion that changing the language from "you" to "I" will be less like preaching to workers, it should give a sense of professional pride and ownership. More like taking an oath or pledge, and that should make individuals more aware of working under codes in their day to day support to service users. The codes should stay at the forefront of their minds more.”
- “Having clearer guidance regarding profession boundaries, respecting others and relationships will enable me to ensure that I demonstrate this within my practice and give me more confidence to challenge as per the Code of Conduct and my own organisations policies colleagues who are not upholding these.”
- “The revised Code reflects the evolving social care and strengthens the expectations of the social care workers. It is encouraging to see an improved alignment between the codes, the Health and Social Care standards, Human Rights approach and Strength-based approach, which simplifies and reinforces the value of the standards by ensuring that compliance with the codes guides practise.”

**Figure 6. How Codes for employers reflect key terminology, Codes of Practice Survey (April – July 2023)**

Q11. How well do the revised Code of Practice for Employers of Social Service Workers encourage the following?



**Table 3. How Codes for employers reflect key terminology, Codes of Practice Survey (April – July 2023)**

Behaviour	% of well or very well responses
Kindness	73.89
Compassion	82.42
Rights and relationships	82.59
Risk enablement	78.61
Safety and protection	84.15
Relationship based practice	75.88
Trauma informed practice	62.63

Behaviour toward colleagues	78.11
Organisational culture and behaviour	76.00
Wellbeing	79.90
Equality, diversity and inclusion	82.00

### **Sample comments on proposed changes to Codes for Employers**

- "I like the addition of a code relating to employee wellbeing. Also in this section trauma is mentioned clearly which is far better in my opinion."
- "I feel the proposed changes will encourage collaboration and help create the expectation of working with and for people and I will ensure to refer to the codes to create a better understanding or personal responsibility."
- "I like that it is now 'I' as I hope this will ensure employers take more responsibility to follow and implement the codes especially around support for induction, training and continuous development, supervision."
- "The language decluttering and streamlining means that the codes are easier to remember and understand. As an employee it gives us the opportunity to reflect on practice and ensure best practice is always at the forefront of our minds especially when it comes to team meetings, management and treating colleagues and service users with respect and compassion."

### **Proposed Changes to the Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers**

A paper for the SSSC's Council (February 2024) will set out further detail on the proposed changes. Proposed changes include the following.

- Highlighting trauma-informed practice.
- Strengthening the codes on creating culture to support risk enablement.
- Strengthening approach to supervision.
- Identifying importance of wellbeing in the Employer Code.
- Support alignment with the Health and Social Care Standards and encourage a more 'empowering' tone, such as moving from 'people who use services' to 'individuals.'
- Referencing 'compassion' in Codes.

A new Code specifically to address professional boundaries is proposed in the workers Code 2.8: (I will) form open, positive relationships and maintain professional boundaries with individuals, colleagues or carers that respects their dignity, wellbeing and safety.

The draft Codes for Social Service Workers follow. These Codes are subject to approval by the SSSC's Future Proofing Programme Board and Council in February 2024. They are also subject to approval by the Office of the Chief Social Work Adviser (SSSC's Sponsor within Scottish Government) and the Scottish Government.

#### **1. I must protect and promote the rights and interests of individuals and carers. I will**

- 1.1 Work with kindness, compassion and respect and treat each individual as unique.
- 1.2 Respect and promote the rights and, where appropriate, the views, wishes and choices of individuals and carers.
- 1.3 Support the rights of individuals to have control over their lives and make informed choices about their care or support.

- 1.4 Work with individuals and carers to communicate using their preferred method and language.
- 1.5 Respect and maintain the dignity and privacy of individuals.
- 1.6 Promote diversity and respect all identities, values and cultures.

**2. I must build and maintain the trust and confidence of individuals and carers. I will**

- 2.1 Be truthful, open, honest and trustworthy.
- 2.2 Communicate in a respectful, open, accurate and straightforward way.
- 2.3 Respect confidential information and clearly explain policies about confidentiality to individuals and carers.
- 2.4 Be reliable and dependable.
- 2.5 Honour work commitments, agreements, and arrangements and, when it is not possible to do so, explain why to individuals, carers and my employer.
- 2.6 Declare issues that might create conflicts of interest and make sure they do not influence my judgement or practice.
- 2.7 Follow policies and procedures about exchanging gifts and money with individuals and carers.
- 2.8 Form open, positive relationships and maintain professional boundaries with individuals, colleagues or carers that respects their dignity, wellbeing and safety.

**3. I must promote the wellbeing and independence of individuals and carers while protecting them, as far as possible, from harm. I will**

- 3.1 Report allegations of harm, challenge and report any dangerous, abusive or discriminatory behaviour using established systems within appropriate timescales.
- 3.2 Follow practices, procedures and policies designed to keep me and other people safe at work.
- 3.3 Tell my employer, or the relevant authority, about any resourcing or operational matter that might get in the way of providing care or support.
- 3.4 Tell my employer, or a relevant authority, when a colleague's fitness to practise may be impaired.
- 3.5 Be open and honest with my employer, individuals and carers when practice has or may have caused harm or loss.
- 3.6 Cooperate with any investigations by my employer, the SSSC or a relevant authority into my fitness to practise or the fitness to practise of others. This may include attending hearings and providing witness statements, documents or other information within appropriate timescales.
- 3.7 Work with individuals and carers to give and receive feedback, raise concerns and complaints, take these seriously and act upon them.
- 3.8 Recognise and use responsibly the power and authority I have when working with individuals, carers and colleagues.

**4. I must recognise that individuals have the right to take risks and will work with them to understand and manage those risks. I will**

- 4.1 Work with individuals to make informed choices about potential and actual risks to themselves or others.
- 4.2 Follow risk assessment policies and procedures to assess whether the behaviour of individuals presents a risk of harm to themselves or others.

- 4.3 Take necessary steps to reduce the risks of individuals harming themselves or others.
  - 4.4 Make sure that individuals, relevant colleagues and agencies are informed about the findings and implications of risk assessments.
- 5. I must be accountable for the quality of my work and take responsibility for maintaining and improving my knowledge and skills. I will**
- 5.1 Meet relevant standards of practice and work in a lawful, safe and effective way.
  - 5.2 Maintain clear, accurate and up-to-date records in line with policies and procedures relating to my work.
  - 5.3 Tell my employer or the relevant authority about any personal circumstances or experiences that may affect my ability to do my job competently and safely and tell the SSSC about anything that may affect my fitness to practise.
  - 5.4 Ask for support from my employer or the relevant authority if I do not feel able to, or well enough prepared to, carry out any part of my work or if I am unsure about how to proceed.
  - 5.5 Prepare for and engage in supervision to reflect on my development, learning needs and practice.
  - 5.6 Maintain my continuous professional learning to improve my knowledge and skills and contribute to the learning and development of others.
  - 5.7 Cooperate and work inclusively and openly with colleagues and others and treat them with respect.
  - 5.8 Work in a way that is informed by an understanding of the impact that trauma may have on individuals, carers and colleagues.
  - 5.9 Be responsible for the work that I delegate to others.
  - 5.10 Respect the roles and expertise of colleagues from other professions, who may follow different professional codes, and work in partnership with them.
  - 5.10.1 Recognise and respect the roles, expertise and experience of carers, families and relevant others and work in partnership with them as appropriate.
  - 5.11 Invite and listen to feedback from individuals, carers and others and use this to improve my practice.
- 6. I must uphold public trust and confidence. I will not**
- 6.1 Abuse, harm, neglect or exploit individuals, carers or colleagues.
  - 6.2 Abuse the trust of individuals, carers or colleagues, or misuse the information I hold about them and their personal circumstances.
  - 6.3 Form unprofessional or harmful relationships with individuals, carers or colleagues.
  - 6.4 Discriminate against individuals, carers or colleagues.
  - 6.5 Condone any discrimination by individuals, carers or colleagues.
  - 6.6 Put myself or other people at unnecessary risk.
  - 6.7 Behave, while in or outside work, in a way that would bring my suitability to work in social services into question.

## **Proposed Changes to the Codes of Practice for Social Service Employers**

The draft Codes for Social Service Employers follow. These Codes are subject to approval by the SSSC's Future Proofing Programme Board and Council in February 2024. They are also subject to approval by the Office of the Chief Social Work Adviser (SSSC's Sponsor within Scottish Government) and the Scottish Government. The revised Codes follow.

### **1. Make sure people you recruit are suitable to be social service workers and that they understand their roles and responsibilities. I will**

- 1.1. Use thorough and safe recruitment processes to make sure that people with appropriate attitudes and values, and the potential to gain the necessary knowledge and skills to enter the workforce.
- 1.2. Follow relevant safe recruitment guidance to check criminal records, registers and gaps in employment as part of assessing whether a person can carry out the duties of the job.
- 1.3. Request and provide accurate and appropriate information or references relating to a person's suitability to work in a specified role.
- 1.4. Give workers clear information about their roles and responsibilities, relevant legislation, and the policies and procedures they must follow in their work.
- 1.5. Provide clear information to workers about line management, communication and support.

### **2. Maintain a culture and have systems in place to support social service workers to meet their Code of Practice. I will**

- 2.1. Lead, manage and supervise workers in a way that promotes kind and compassionate practice.
- 2.2. Lead in a way which values diversity, inclusion and equality and upholds individual rights.
- 2.3. Lead workers in a way that makes sure individuals and carers, where appropriate, are involved in decisions about their care or support.
- 2.4. Lead workers to continuously improve their practice and professional development, whilst ensuring their fitness to practise.
  - 2.4.1. Promote an open culture where workers are supported to discuss ethical practice and professional boundaries.
  - 2.4.2. Have systems in place to seek and use feedback from individuals, carers and others to shape and improve services and practice.
- 2.5. Have systems in place for workers to report resourcing or operational difficulties that might have an impact on care or support and work to address such problems with relevant authorities where necessary.
- 2.6. Enable a culture which supports workers to whistleblow when they feel that working practices are discriminatory, inappropriate or unsafe for any reason and take appropriate action to respond to concerns.
- 2.7. Support workers to meet the standards in their Code of Practice and not require them to do anything that might prevent that from happening.
- 2.8. Support workers employed from other professions to meet their own professional codes.
- 2.9. Report workers whose fitness to practice may be impaired to the relevant authority.

### **3. Provide learning and development opportunities to enable workers to strengthen and maintain their skills, knowledge and practice. I will**

- 3.1. Provide good quality accessible induction and learning and development opportunities to support workers to carry out their role safely and effectively.
- 3.2. Support and prepare workers for new and changing roles, responsibilities, and developments in practice including digital.
- 3.3. Contribute to education and learning, providing effective workplace placements, assessments and practice learning opportunities.
- 3.4. Support workers who need to be registered with the SSSC to meet and maintain their conditions for registration and the requirement for continuous professional learning and development.
- 3.5. Make sure that all newly qualified social workers are provided with the required level of professional learning and development during the mandatory supported year to fully meet their continuous professional learning requirements.
- 3.6. Respond appropriately to workers who need support because they do not feel able, or well enough prepared, to carry out their work.
- 3.7. Provide effective and regular supervision that enables workers to develop and improve practice through reflection and feedback.

#### **4. Maintain a culture that supports safety and protection whilst respecting the rights of individuals to take risks. I will**

- 4.1. Have written policies and procedures in place to protect individuals, carers, workers and others from harm.
- 4.2. Put into action and monitor written policies and procedures, particularly about reporting allegations of exploitation, discrimination, harm, neglect or abuse to the relevant authority within appropriate timescales.
- 4.3. Make sure workers know and understand signs of exploitation, discrimination, harm, neglect and abuse and the action they must take.
- 4.4. Make sure that workers understand bullying, harassment or any form of discrimination is not acceptable and take action to deal with such behaviour.
- 4.5. Have procedures in place for a worker to report when a colleague's fitness to practice may be impaired.
- 4.6. Have procedures in place for a worker to report when practice has caused or may have caused harm or loss.
- 4.7. Deal with reports and allegations from workers promptly, effectively and openly.
- 4.8. Promote a culture that values everyone's safety and where violence, threats and abuse are not acceptable. Have policies and procedures in place for reducing and managing such incidents.
- 4.9. Be aware of the impact trauma, including vicarious trauma, may have on workers. Support workers who experience such trauma.
- 4.10. Be aware of the impact abusive behaviour may have on workers. Support workers who experience such behaviour.
- 4.11. Have policies and procedures in place that promote the health, safety, wellbeing and equality of workers and respect inclusion and diversity.
- 4.12. Support workers whose fitness to practice may be impaired and provide clear guidance about any restrictions on their work.
- 4.13. Report to the relevant authorities where practice has or may have caused harm or loss.
- 4.14. Have risk assessment policies and procedures in place.

## **5. Publicise and promote the Code of Practice for Social Service Employers and the Code of Practice for Social Service Workers to individuals and carers and cooperate with SSSC proceedings. I will**

- 5.1. Follow the Code of Practice for Social Service Employers and tell workers about my responsibility to comply with it.
- 5.2. Inform workers about the Code of Practice for Social Service Workers and work with them to understand their responsibilities to comply with it.
- 5.3. Promote the importance and connection between the Code of Practice and other relevant frameworks and standards.
- 5.4. Inform individuals and carers of the Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers and provide details of how to raise issues relating to the Codes.
- 5.5. Take account of the Code of Practice for Social Service Workers when making any decision that relates to a worker's fitness to practice.
- 5.6. Follow guidance on making a referral to the SSSC about a worker whose fitness to practice may be impaired. If appropriate, tell the worker that you have made a referral.
- 5.7. Cooperate promptly with SSSC investigations and those of other authorities, including providing documents, attending hearings and responding to the findings and decisions.
- 5.8. Enable and support workers to cooperate with SSSC investigations and those of other authorities.
- 5.9. Take appropriate action on any SSSC findings about a worker's fitness to practice, including supporting a worker to meet any conditions on their registration.
- 5.10. Take appropriate action on the findings of other standard setting bodies to improve the service provided to individuals and carers.

## **Impact on protected characteristics**

This section contains the impact of the new Codes on protected characteristics. We cover points about discrimination and equality under race, although many of these points are equally relevant to other protected characteristics.

### **Age**

- We do not believe that the proposed changes to the Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers are likely to have any negative impacts on the basis of age.
- The Scottish Social Services Council Register 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023 shows that the overall average age of all workers on our register is 44 years and 6 months, with a median age of 44. The register part with the lowest average age is Students. This register part had an average age of 37.86 years old during this period. Beside Students, which we would expect to be the youngest register part, the next youngest register parts were support workers in day care of children services (38.87) and practitioners in day care of children services (40.95). The oldest register part during this period was SCSWIS Authorised Officers at an average age of 58.08 years old. Other register parts with higher average ages than the overall average are managers of care home services for adults (54.74), managers of residential child care services (52.72), managers of housing support services (52.40) and social workers (51.50).
- Our snapshot report highlights that if there were to be age related negative impacts as a result of these proposed changes, these would be most obviously felt by the register parts listed above.



- In general, we believe that the proposed changes are likely to have positive impacts on the basis of age.

### **Disability**

- We do not believe that the proposed changes to the Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers are likely to have any negative impacts on the basis of disability, either on the registered workforce or on the users of services in Scotland.
- We believe that the proposed changes will allow social service workers who identify as having a disability to feel more supported in their role as a result of the focus on wellbeing in paragraph 2. We also believe staff will feel more confident using the Codes of Practice as a result of the updated, more accessible language.
- We believe the updated Codes will have a positive impact on people who use social services who identify as having a disability as a result of the increased focus on wellbeing and rights-based care that the revised Codes represent.

### **Gender reassignment**

- We do not believe that the proposed changes to the Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers are likely to have any negative impacts on the basis of gender reassignment, either on the registered workforce or on the users of services in Scotland.
- We believe that the proposed changes will ensure workers are able to feel supported in their role and confident in bringing forward concerns relating to their gender reassignment.
- We believe the updated Codes will have a positive impact on people who use social service on the basis of their gender reassignment as a result of the increased focus on wellbeing and rights-based care that the revised codes represents.

### **Marriage and civil partnership**

- We do not believe that the proposed changes to the Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers are likely to have any negative impacts on the basis of marriage or civil partnership, either on the registered workforce or on the users of services in Scotland.

### **Pregnancy and maternity**

- We do not believe that the proposed changes to the Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers are likely to have any negative impacts on the basis of pregnancy or maternity, either on the registered workforce or on the users of services in Scotland.
- We believe that the proposed changes will allow social service workers who are going through pregnancy or maternity to feel more supported in their role as a result of the focus on wellbeing in the Codes.

### **Race**

- The Scottish Social Services Council Register 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023 shows that the majority of the social services workforce in Scotland is white (66.26%). However, there are significant numbers of workers from other ethnic backgrounds employed in the sector. We want to make sure that any proposed changes do not disproportionately affect any of our registered workers on the basis of their race.



- We believe that the revised provisions in the Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers will have a positive impact on people working in the sector and people accessing social services on the basis of their race. These include the following: 'Report allegations of harm, challenge and report any dangerous, abusive or discriminatory behaviour using established systems within appropriate timescales' and 'Discriminate against individuals, carers or colleagues.' And 'I will not Condone any discrimination by individuals, carers or colleagues.'
- We also believe that the revised text for the Codes of Practice for Social Service Employers will operate in such a way as to have a positive impact on people working in, and also people accessing, social services.

### **Religion/belief**

- We do not believe that the proposed changes to the Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers are likely to have any negative impacts on the basis of religion, belief or lack of belief, either on the registered workforce or on the users of services in Scotland.

### **Sex**

- The Scottish Social Service Sector: Report on 2022 Workforce Data shows that 83% of social service staff are female, 15% are male and 2% is unknown. This figure relates to individuals working across all social services, not just those subject to SSSC registration, but this does give some indication of the overall makeup of the sector. Given that the majority of the sector is female, any negative impact arising from the application of the proposed changes to the codes of practice is likely to be more immediately experienced by female staff.
- We do not believe that the sex of anyone subject to the Codes of Practice or of anyone accessing social services will be a factor in how the Codes operate in relation to them. The Codes are broadly framed and promote inclusion and anti-discrimination approaches to practice. For this reason we believe that any impact on people on the basis of their sex is likely to be positive.

### **Sexual orientation**

- We do not believe that the proposed changes to the Codes likely to have any negative impacts on the basis of sexual orientation, either on the registered workforce or on the users of services in Scotland.

### **Other areas of impact**

#### **Groups living in island communities**

- The proposed changes to the Codes of Practice will apply to all workers and employers in Scotland regardless of their location. We are aware that the needs of staff and users of services in island communities may differ from the needs of similar individuals on the mainland. However, given the nature of regulation, the Codes of Practice need to be consistent across all settings.
- We believe the proposed changes to the Codes of Practice will have a neutral impact on promoting good relations among and between island communities.
- We believe the proposed changes to the Codes of Practice will have a positive impact on advancing equality of opportunity between people in island communities and those who are not and eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization.

- The proposed changes will strengthen a human rights-based approach to practice within social services and will promote the recognition of individuals' needs in their experience of their own care.

### **Children's rights and wellbeing**

- We believe the proposed changes to the Codes of Practice will have a positive impact on children's rights and wellbeing by promoting rights-based and trauma informed practices. We will develop an accessible and child-friendly version of the Codes.

### **Health and wellbeing and health inequalities**

- The review of the Codes will support delivery of The Promise to ensure the care experiences of people involved are heard along with other recommendations that are relevant to the SSSC such as the Promise. These include a need to significantly re-organise and streamline professional codes, procedures and processes. This workstream will contribute to our activity to keep the Promise. The review will strengthen a human rights-based approach to practice within social services.

### **Economic and social sustainability**

- We believe the overall impact of the proposed changes to the Codes of Practice in relation to economic and social sustainability will be neutral, or potentially positive.

The review of the Codes and the focus on meeting the needs of people who use service and their carers contributes to wider priorities such as:

- removing disadvantage of inequality
- advancing opportunities for individuals
- fostering good relations and sustainability of communities.

### **Care experienced children, young people and adults**

- The review of the Codes will ensure the social services workforce working with care experienced children, young people and adults have the right skills, knowledge and values for the role to ensure they deliver high quality care and support. It will also do the following.
  - Promote the well-being of children and young people.
  - Promote the interests of eligible children and young people.
  - Provide opportunities to eligible children and young people.
- The Promise is clear that regulators must significantly re-organise and streamline professional codes, procedures and processes. This objective is one of the drivers behind the review of the Codes and contributes to our activity to keep the Promise.

