



## INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD

<b>Report Title</b>	UNISON's Ethical Care Charter
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Judith Proctor
<b>Report Author</b>	Claire Wilson (Planning and Development Manager - ACC)
<b>Date of Report</b>	11/07/2016
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	30/08/2016

### 1: Purpose of the Report

The purpose of the report is to inform the Integration Joint Board of the principles of UNISON's Ethical Care Charter. It also provides the IJB with detail in terms of how the adoption of the Charter's principles might support the Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership (ACHSCP) in delivering the ambitions set out in its Strategic Plan, in partnership with its 3<sup>rd</sup> and Independent Sector Partners.

### 2: Summary of Key Information

#### 2.1 Background to the Ethical Care Charter

In October 2012 UNISON launched its Ethical Care Charter, and invited all Public Sector Commissioners for Care at Home to sign up to the Charter.

The Ethical Care Charter was created in response to the findings of a UNISON survey of homecare workers in summer of 2012, which included:

- 79.1% of respondents reported work is scheduled too tightly, resulting in either rushing a visit or leaving early to meet the next client on time.
- 57.8% of respondents not paid for travel time.
- Over half of respondents reported their terms and conditions had worsened over the past year.

The findings led them to describe homecare staff as a committed but poorly paid and treated workforce. The findings highlighted that poor terms and conditions could contribute towards lower standards of care for people in receipt of homecare



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services. One respondent summarised the conditions as:

*“People are being failed by a system which does not recognise importance of person-centred care”*

### 2.2 Objectives and Expectations of the Ethical Care Charter

The over-riding aim of the Charter is to establish a minimum baseline for the safety, quality and dignity of care by ensuring employment conditions which:

- a) Do not routinely short –change clients
- b) Ensure the recruitment and retention of a more stable workforce through more sustainable pay, conditions and training levels.

The Charter outlines a number of phased expectations in 3 stages. The key expectations are:

Stage 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time allocated to visits should match client needs.</li> <li>• Phase out of 15 minute contacts to ensure the dignity of the client.</li> <li>• Staff should be paid travel time.</li> <li>• Staff covered by an occupational sick pay scheme.</li> </ul>
Stage 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permanent contracts and not zero-hour contracts.</li> <li>• Regular training provided and the opportunity to meet colleagues to share best practice and limit isolation.</li> </ul>
Stage 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff to be paid at least the living wage.</li> </ul>

### 2.3 Expected Benefits from joining the Ethical Care Charter

The Ethical Care Charter provides clear guidelines to improve the safety, quality and dignity of care provided to people. As an Integration Joint Board (IJB), we are already committed to providing excellent quality care for the community and we recognise the important role of external providers in delivering this through commissioned services.

Supporting the principles set out in the Ethical Care Charter would align with the IJB’s core values of being a caring, person-centred and enabling Partnership, by supporting working practices which enable providers and carers the time and conditions to provide a dignified, person-centred service. It is anticipated that implementing the ethical charter will contribute to addressing current issues in the care at home market, by creating sustainable pay, conditions and training levels



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for the workforce. This in turn will help ensure the recruitment and retention of a stable workforce.

The IJB is a commissioning organisation and does not, on its own behalf procure services or enter into contracts with them. All Social Care Contracts are agreed and in place between Aberdeen City Council (ACC) and relevant provider organisations. The IJB does, however direct ACC (and NHS Grampian) in the delivery of such services and the scope and specifications to be delivered under them. Additionally, senior managers and officers within the IJB manage contracts with providers and are responsible for developing robust and productive working relationships with them. Given this role it is proposed that the IJB endorses the principles set out in the charter but does not seek at this time to sign up formally.

Aberdeen City Council (ACC) announced its intention to sign up to the Charter in conjunction with its largest care at home provider (Bon Accord Care - BAC) in the February 2015 Budget Statement.

### 3: Equalities, Financial, Workforce and Other Implications

#### 3.1 Equalities

Supporting the Ethical Care Charter would contribute greatly to a positive approach to fair work practices for carers.

#### 3.2 Financial

The Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership (ACH&SCP) commissions 100% of its care at home services externally. (80% from the independent sector, with the remaining 20% delivered through an arms-length external organisation – BAC).

Work is required by officers to determine if there is a potential financial impact resulting from application of the principles of the Charter as part of the work recommended in this paper. The level of this potential impact cannot be estimated at this time.

A commitment to paying the Living Wage is a significant commitment within the Ethical Care Charter. The financial implications of paying the living wage have already been examined at the Audit & Performance Systems Committee and are detailed in another paper for consideration by the IJB today.



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Payment of travelling time would require consideration of the existing funding conditions and may require a review of the existing contract. A review of the scheduling practices would be required for the removal of 15 minute visits.

### 3.3 Workforce

Whilst there are no direct implications for ACHSCP staff, this would help support partnership and fair working practice within 3<sup>rd</sup> and independent sectors. Adopting the principles of the Ethical Care Charter would have positive implications for the care at home work force, as outlined above.

## 4: Recommendations

The Integration Joint Board is asked to:

1. Support the principles as set out in the Ethical Care Charter.
2. Create a working group, to including representation from care at home providers, to consider the application of principles in ACHSCP's strategic commissioning work;
3. Direct the working group to assess the potential financial impacts of adopting the principles of the Ethical Care Charter; and
4. Agree to a further update on this to come to a future meeting of the IJB by the end of this financial year.



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5: Signatures	
	Judith Proctor (Chief Officer)
	Alex Stephen (Chief Finance Officer)