



Framework for Public Funding of Advice in Scotland



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Aim

The framework will assist funders to assure themselves that they are working in line with good practice for funding of advice and representation services, whether external or in-house. The framework outlined below focuses on the best outcome for the client facing a problem and value for money for the public purse, by minimising duplication and overlap, encouraging referrals and a joined-up, strategic approach between funders and providers.

Advice will only be part of a solution that includes wider strategic approaches and support. It will only deliver optimal client outcomes when provided in tandem with other services. The framework therefore makes reference to [Single Outcome Agreements](#) and overarching [national outcomes](#).

Specification

- Set out the **funding approach**
- Use a precise **definition of duplication and overlap**, based on the definition of services funded
- Give clear definitions of the **advice services** that are being funded, covering area of law, type of assistance, client group and geographic area

Strategic approach

- Funding should encourage and enable advice providers to deliver services which **resolve problems people experience** and produce positive outcomes for service users
- Consider including requirement for funded service(s) to actively **engage and work in partnership** with stakeholders across the advice sector and beyond on strategic issues, where this will benefit clients
- Examine, with strategic partners, how to **balance long term funding with a need for flexibility**
- Link the funding into a specific local or national **strategy/action plan**
- Link the outcomes of the funded service(s) into **strategic local and national outcomes**

Strategic partners and joint-funding

- Avoid duplication by engaging with **strategic partners** directly or indirectly involved in providing, planning and funding of advice services
- Build **partnership links with other local and national funders** of advice
- Explore the potential for **match funding, joint-commissioning and pooling of resources** with other funders of advice
- Where appropriate, explore the potential for organisations delivering advice to form a consortium or partnership as part of a funding arrangement



- Take into account the availability of legal aid and the role of other solicitor providers, such as law centres. Discuss role of publicly funded solicitors with SLAB.

Needs assessment for planning purposes

- Engage with service users, advice providers and other stakeholders to **assess key priorities, needs and client outcomes**
- Review the current levels of **demand** for advice (using information from existing advice providers, e.g. number of clients, number of issues over a period of time)
- Assess the potential **unmet need for advice** (persons not accessing advice services even though they would benefit from it) and defining **target groups**
- Undertake an [Impact Assessment](#) to understand how changes might affect different groups

Service delivery

- Include requirement for [quality standards](#) into the funding agreement
- Understand how various **delivery models** help to achieve **different outcomes**
- Consider **access and visibility** of the funded service(s) and ways to improve this
- Set out the **customer journey** including **principles of triage** for the funded service(s) and **a referral process** to other services

Performance management

- Set out the **rationale** for gathering performance management information and how it will be used
- Clear **guidance for funded services** on measuring expected outcomes and the reporting requirements
- Where there are multiple funders of a service, develop and use **common core performance reporting** requirements agreed jointly by all funders
- Ensure there are **sufficient resources** in place to implement the monitoring process and any evaluation
- Support quality assurance and accreditation
- **Report outcomes** to strategic partners and feed back into local and national strategies

Improvement

- Consider **improvements** that could be made with the funded service(s) based on performance reports and outcomes
- Support **innovation** where needed and replicate **good practice** where available

The framework can be viewed on the [Scottish Legal Aid Board \(SLAB\) website](#).



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