

NEWS RELEASE
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Empower individuals with more choice and better information

Self-directed support should be available to all, but forced on nobody says Northgate Public Services in a response to the Scottish Government's consultation on a Self-Directed Support Bill for Scotland.

Northgate says that the Bill, which proposes to consolidate existing legislation into one piece of statute, will provide clarification for individuals and create a firm basis upon which future developments in self-directed support can be built. However, the organisation also says that a number of changes need to be made to ensure greater outcomes.

Measures designed to increase the uptake of self-directed support, Northgate says, should be balanced by providing accurate information to ensure that individuals are able to make informed choices about how their needs can be best met.

The response also goes on to say that restrictions on who can access direct payments and self-directed support should be lifted to ensure maximum benefit from the payments as well as greater choice for the individual. This would, for example, allow payments to be made to carers to allow them to continue to provide care.

Russell Osborne, Managing Director of Citizen Solutions for Northgate Public Services, added: "The Scottish Government now has an opportunity to radically change the way care and support services are delivered in our local communities. Self-directed support can help the most vulnerable individuals receive the type of care they want, but they must receive guidance on how best to do this. These options must be accessible to all and available to use on a full range of services.

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For more information

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Notes to editors

1. Northgate Public Services is an innovative provider of transformation and improvement services to the public sector. It is committed to high quality public services that place individuals and their communities at their heart. Its knowledge and understanding of people's needs are core to its business, as too, is its depth and breadth across public services.
2. Northgate's task is to enhance public value through the intelligent use of people and technology; to understand why and what change is necessary; to provide new thinking leading to improved performance; and to link company rewards with positive outcomes for the communities for whom it works. It supports transformation through sustainable performance partnerships. In the UK, Northgate works with ninety five per cent of local authorities, every police force, and a large number of health organisations, housing associations, utilities and transport companies.