

## **Transfer of Paramedic Education funding from Scottish Ambulance Service to SFC, from AY 2021-22**

- The current contract for the, Scottish Ambulance Service funded, Scottish Ambulance Academy at Glasgow Caledonian University to end in March 2020.
- Scottish Ambulance Service and NHS Education for Scotland are managing a commissioning process for universities to run a Paramedic Education programme, which will take place in 2019, with a view to a course commencing in 2021.
- SFC is anticipated to commence funding the new Paramedic Education programme(s) from AY 2021-22.
- Funding for the new Paramedic Education programme will be transferred from SG Health to SFC.

### **Recommendations**

- The Committee is invited to note this paper.

### **Financial implications**

- Funding for the new Paramedic Education programme will be transferred from SG Health to SFC, as such there will be no financial implications for the SFC programme budget.



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### **Purpose**

1. The purpose of this paper is to advise the committee of the proposed changes to Paramedic Education, and that SFC is expected to take over the funding of Paramedic Education from AY 2021-22.

### **Background**

2. Paramedic Education is currently delivered, under contract, by the Scottish Ambulance Academy at Glasgow Caledonian University and is directly funded by the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS). The course has approval for a maximum intake of 200 students each year. Students from the core Paramedic Education programme at the Scottish Ambulance Service graduate with a Diploma in Higher Education (DipHE), and are eligible to apply for registration as a paramedic with the Health Care Professions Council (HCPC).
3. In addition Glasgow Caledonian University runs a small Ordinary Degree Paramedics programme, with an annual intake of 50 students, which is funded through the use of core SFC funded places.
4. In March 2018 HCPC ratified the decision to change the qualification threshold for registration as a paramedic from a DipHE to an Honours degree. As a result, from 2021, new students entering Paramedic Education must embark on an Honours level qualification which is not currently provided by the Scottish Ambulance Academy.
5. The current contract between SAS and Glasgow Caledonian University for the provision of Paramedic Education, through the Scottish Ambulance Academy, is due to end in March 2020.
6. SAS and NHS Education for Scotland (NES) have been undertaking work to look at the paramedic workforce requirements for Scotland, and have concluded that the number of students undertaking Paramedic Education will be required to increase.
7. In response to the above factors the SAS and NES set up a joint steering group and working group (with representation from SFC on both groups) to look at the available options for Paramedic Education. The steering group has now agreed that a Business Case (available on request) should be put to the boards of both SAS and NES for approval, and shared with stakeholder groups for information.

## **Developing new courses**

8. The business case recommends that SAS and NES invite tenders in April/May 2019 from universities for a 3 year accelerated honours degree programme, which would be funded through SFC with funding being transferred from SAS. The intention would be for the successful tender(s) to be confirmed in November 2019 with contracts to be signed in January 2020.
9. In addition SAS and NES are exploring the option, with Skills Development Scotland, to develop a Graduate Apprenticeship route which would allow Ambulance Technicians to develop and become paramedics.

## **Outcome Agreements**

10. NES and SAS have indicated that they do not want to treat Paramedic Education as a controlled subject, and instead see the Outcome Agreement as the way in which annual recruitment targets should be managed. Although this will be a softer relationship than through making Paramedic Education a controlled subject it is likely that SAS would still require SFC to recover funding in the case of under or over recruitment.

## **Transitional arrangements**

11. In moving from an existing 2 year course to a 3 year accelerated course there will be a single year where there will be no significant output of graduates eligible to register as paramedics. In addition SAS and NES wish to begin to address the increasing workforce requirements prior to the commencement of the new programme. To that end it is proposed to extend the current Ambulance Academy contract to September 2022, and also to explore with SFC the possibility of Glasgow Caledonian University extending their Specialist Paramedic programme – with appropriate funding arrangements being put in place.

## **Memorandum of Understanding**

12. Prior to SFC taking over the funding of Paramedic Education we will require a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to be agreed with SAS/Scottish Government Health. The MoU would set out each organisation's responsibility with regards to setting intake targets, monitoring the new programme, recovery of funds in the event of over and under recruitment, and the annual transfer of funding for the programme.
13. In addition we would raise with SAS/Scottish Government Health the issue of top-slicing the funding provided to SFC to provide additional running costs to SFC to cover additional costs associated with the administration of Paramedic Education.

### **Risk assessment**

14. At this stage a risk assessment has not been carried out but it is anticipated that the main risk would be around the annual transfer of funding, and that the MoU would mitigate that risk.

### **Equality and diversity assessment**

15. An Equality Impact Assessment on the proposed changes to Paramedic Education has not been carried out. We anticipate that this would be undertaken jointly between SAS and NES with SFC providing input as required.

### **Financial implications**

16. There are no financial implications at this point.

### **Recommendations**

17. The Finance Committee is invited to note this paper.

### **Publication**

18. This paper will be published on the Council's website.

### **Further information**

19. Contact: Duncan Condie, Senior Funding Policy Officer, tel: 0131 313 6671, email: [dcondie@sfc.ac.uk](mailto:dcondie@sfc.ac.uk).