



Care experienced news update report

Introduction

1. This paper updates CEGG on what has happened since the December meeting.

Recommendation

2. CEGG is asked to note the developments in this paper.

Care Experienced Student Bursary

3. Colleges are continuing to allocate the higher rate FE Care Experienced Student Bursary of £8,100pa throughout 2018-19. Data received so far indicates that the amount being allocated in bursary has increased from about £2m to over £9m in this academic year.
4. We mentioned last time that we had been notified that the increased rate of funding allocated to CE students had led to a decision by some Local Authorities to reduce the amount of help they give young CE students with housing costs. It is our understanding that Deputy First Minister John Swinney is addressing this issue with Local Authorities.
5. SFC continue to receive information from some colleges that some social workers have expressed concern that the amount of funding being allocated under the CE Bursary is too high and is causing money management difficulties for the students. However, we are also receiving some positive feedback which is recognising the transformational effect that the increased bursary is having on the lives of young people. We intend to hold a workshop seminar to receive more feedback from across the colleges in this regard, looking back at the experiences of the 2018-19 year, and with a view to sharing best practice.
6. The FE CE Student Bursary is due to continue at £8,100 pa for 2019-20.

Corporate parenting e-module

Colleges

7. Who Cares? and CDN have developed a corporate parenting e-module for college staff. We've heard that 200 people have now undertaken the module. Feedback is very positive (90% reported increased knowledge of care experience and corporate parenting) with 42% saying the case studies are particularly impactful. The module survey requests a commitment to an action to achieve measurable changes, and some of the have responses have been quite "bold and ambitious".

8. They are planning more video stories from care experienced (CE) students. To ensure CE students' participation is meaningful, Who Cares? is going to facilitate a development workshop for students who have experienced journeys through HE. There will be alternative ways students can contribute if they aren't comfortable speaking to camera e.g. audio stories with animation, drama students speaking the CE person's words, text case studies.

Universities

9. The Open University in Scotland has led a working group develop the HEI equivalent which will on OpenLearn Create platform – Moodle-based. The resource is being developed collaboratively, then can be customised by each institution and embedded. There are three CEGG members on the working group: Dan, Peter and Nick.
10. The aim of the module is to provide an effective learning opportunity for staff at all levels in higher education so that they will understand what corporate parenting is and how it is relevant to their role. It will be easy to use, engaging, enjoyable, centred on lived experience, and not like other compulsory e-learning. Staff who undertake the module will have empathy for care experienced students.
11. The draft learning outcomes on completion:
 - an understanding of what corporate parenting means for you, your institution, *and collaboration with other corporate parents*
 - an insight into the impact of care experience on the learner journey;
 - reflected on your own practice and how you can contribute to better outcomes for care experienced learners;
 - a clearer understanding of your role in supporting care experienced learners, *from pre-entry to graduation and into employment*; and
 - confidence in your ability to provide a more informed response when engaging with a care experienced learner.
12. The module will be ready at the beginning of AY 2019-20. A couple of institutions will pilot, with roll out to all HEIs planned for November or December 2019.

A Blueprint for Fairness in the Glasgow Region publication

13. SFC funded this [research project](#) which is a response from the Glasgow region to the Commission on Widening Access (CoWA), and specifically Recommendation 4 of its final report that states '*Universities, colleges, local authorities, schools, SFC funded access programmes and early years providers should work together to deliver a coordinated approach to access which removes duplication and provides a coherent and comprehensive offer to learners*'.

14. As the CoWA report featured care experienced widely '*... goal of equal access of accessing higher education for those from deprived backgrounds or with a care experience*', it is unsurprising that there are many mentions of care experienced in the research report. The backdrop is the ambition set out by the First Minister is that 20% of new entrants to HE in 2030 should come from 20% most deprived areas in Scotland.
15. The first reference is in regards to the role of mentors who provide role-models as they are often from similar backgrounds to participants and provide reassurance that accessing HE is achievable and, more generally, in the choice of HE as a post-school destination. Mentors, through programmes for example with MCR Pathways, can also fulfil a stable role for a care experienced young person or can help fill gaps in knowledge and understanding of processes and possibilities for young people whose families have not had experience of HE themselves.
16. Quote from WA Provider, Focus Group in support for applications/admissions: "What we all do is a very individualised approach to potential applicants for example care experienced. This is key to be able to redress the balance and give them additional skills that could help their university application... and once they get there... to set up interviews, academics, shadowing, possible work experience placements, just access to additional opportunities'.
17. Collaboration: one essential component of stakeholders working together was as Corporate Parents to CE young people. A number of WA teams stressed how important this collaboration was and the extent that they have built up close relationships with other agencies to provide a collective partnership in this area. "*We're a corporate parent for every young person in Scotland, we're not just a corporate parent for our own. So, a collective responsibility.*"
18. Individual providers and other organisations did not view themselves as competitors. "A network of contacts I have across Scotland, across the UK. Sometimes it's teachers, social workers, it can be key workers, it can be other HEI's. The brilliant thing that we all do with CE young people is that we're not competitive over it".

Launch of The Hub for SUCCESS

19. The Hub launched on 12 February at Edinburgh Napier University. The Hub involves Edinburgh's universities, college and the local authority with the aim of tackling the trend of care experienced people leaving school at a young age. They have research which indicates 73% of those with experience of care leave school at 16 or younger compared to 27% of all school leavers. They are also trying to improve retention rates at university and success rates at college.
20. They have an excellent website, well worth a look: <https://hubforsuccess.org/>

Care Day 2019

21. This took place on 15 February 2019 which was a national (UK) opportunity to celebrate the lives and voices of CE people. It was well supported by colleges and universities throughout Scotland.
22. The highlight perhaps was the traditional Carelith however the First Minister also took part in a Q&A session with Chair of Independent Care Review and the audience to explore public perceptions and the importance of challenging stigma with care experienced people. *“As the chief corporate parent in the country, it’s important that I am your advocate and defender. I love all of you. Together we can make this country better for all our young people. We can do it in Scotland and be a beacon for the rest of the world.”*
23. SFC marked the occasion with a fundraising coffee morning with proceeds (£170) to Who Cares? annual summer camp and support in this year’s Kilkwalk which is taking place in cities across Scotland throughout the year: Glasgow (28 April), Aberdeen (2 June), Dundee (18 August) and Edinburgh (15 September).
24. Vonnie Sandlan, SFC Assistant Director, also wrote a [blog](#) about what Care Day and her association with Who Cares? Scotland mean to her. It is well worth a read.
25. The first [Care Day](#) took place in 2015 to commemorate the anniversary of the Scottish Parliament passing the Children and Young People Bill. Care Day 2020 will hopefully coincide with the publication of the recommendations from the Independent Care Review.

State of the Nation’s Foster Care 2019

26. This [report](#) from the Fostering Network was published last month. The report is based on a survey of more than 4,000 foster carers. It starts by stating *“three-quarters of looked after children in the UK are being cared for by foster families. This means that improving the outcomes of children in care must start with improving foster care.”*
27. The report shows that many foster carers do not feel treated as an equal and valued member of the social care team looking after fostered children, nor do they feel adequately supported, practically or financially. The report outlines a range of recommendations aimed at government investment and legislative change, as well as local practice issues.

Recommendation

28. CEGG is asked to note the developments in this paper.

Further information

29. Nick Stansfeld, nstansfeld@sfc.ac.uk.