



# Our plans for 2022-23

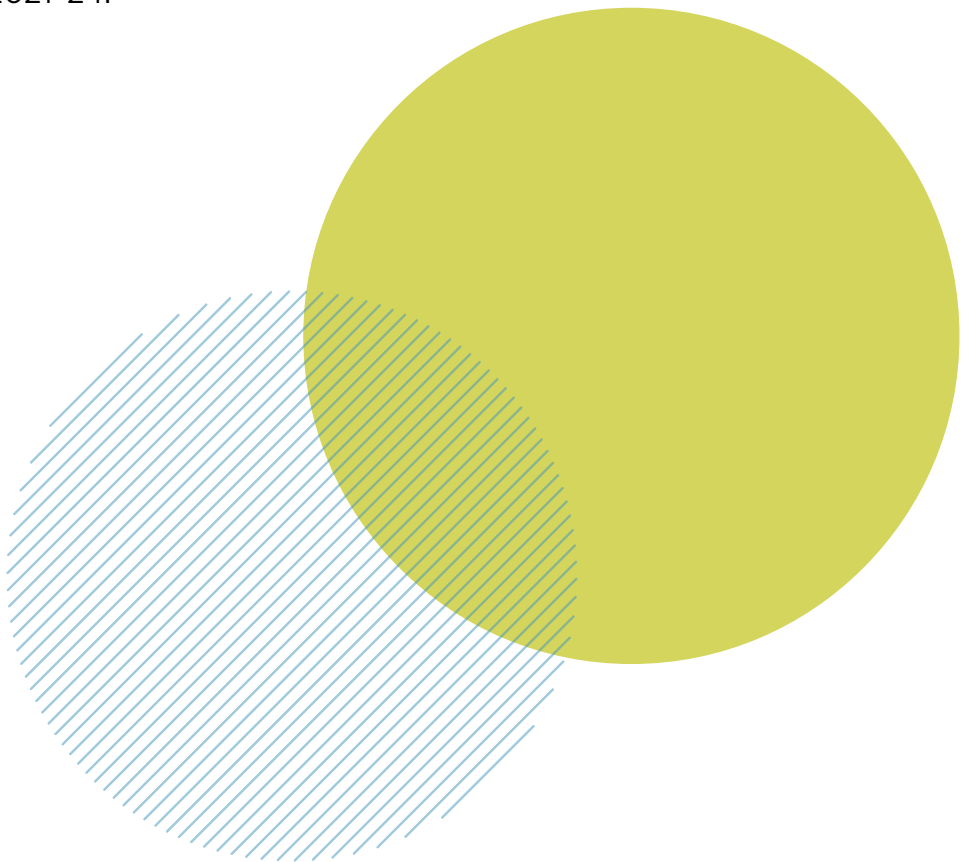


# Our plans for 2022-23

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This year we will continue to build on our work to help people, workers and organisations in social work and social care in Scotland to use knowledge and innovation to make positive change happen.

This plan is informed by what you told us and also reflects the aspirations set out in our strategy 2021-24.



# What you told us

In December 2021 we asked you about your needs and priorities and how you thought we could help. We identified **eight areas of need** – difficulties that get in the way of social work and social care supporting people to live their best lives. The eight areas are:

## Staffing

- Recruitment and retention
- Support and supervision
- Burnout
- Lack of career pathways
- Lack of finance and capacity for training

## Capacity

- A chronic lack of investment
- Short-termism
- Procurement reform
- Poor pay and conditions

## Processes

- Bureaucracy is out of control
- Budgets determine decisions
- Policy and processes can feel unsafe and driven by austerity

## Purpose

- The role of social work is unclear – lack of distinct identity
- Voices are unheard
- Difficulty securing an effective feedback loop to local and national government on what is working and not working about current reform initiatives

## System shock and recovery

- COVID-19 impact on staffing and the capacity to provide safe, effective support to people
- Moral injury experienced by workers unable to arrange or provide the support people needed during the pandemic

## Value

- Parity of esteem, resourcing and pay between social work and social care and the NHS
- Removal of competition and reform of procurement and commissioning

## Practice

- Develop better trauma-informed and relationship-based practice
- More time with people and less time on paperwork
- Reversing austerity driven approaches; reducing shame and improving effectiveness

## Policy

- Address the complex and fragmented policy environment that doesn't focus enough on implementation
- You described being overwhelmed with current initiatives and fearful of change
- The working and policy environment was seen to lack focus on learning, evaluation, and knowledge on what is working and how

# How Iriss can help

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You want us to focus most on:

- **Innovation** in social work and social care support, in particular change at whole system level
- Supporting teams to **improve practice**
- **Changing** social work processes

You also told us to:

- Think through the implications for social work and social care of the **National Care Service**
- Do more cross-organisational **collaboration**
- Develop more effective social work and social care **leadership**
- Make **commissioning and procurement** work better for people



## Support innovation and change

You said that we could help most effectively by supporting you to innovate and change your practice.

Some asked us to identify workers who want to make change locally and support them through coaching and facilitation. Others identified a gap in Scotland for new ideas, ways of thinking and practical support for change. They wanted Iriss to promote practical ideas for areas of work that are difficult, for example, assessment processes, and to create team and organisational cultures that drive good practice.

*“Getting people to stop talking about change and start doing it.”*

People saw this as particularly important to the development of the National Care Service (NCS.) They wanted Iriss to make sure that supported people and worker experience and ideas were linked into any higher level policy changes in this area.

## Improve connections and facilitate networks

Some described Iriss as an ‘honest intermediary’ between the sometimes competing interests of organisations, sectors and representative bodies. Iriss’ role was viewed primarily as a facilitator that ensured collaboration and co-production in both practice and policy.

## Improve knowledge-informed practice

You requested more sharing of innovation in practice – webinars, seminars and spaces for open and frank discussion. In particular, we were asked to offer safe space for leaders at all levels to innovate without fear of being wrong.

*“Keep doing what you do well, promoting open discussion, safe spaces, innovative ideas about practice and sharing information.”*

## Research, data and information

You asked that we assist in reducing the gap between academic findings and the realities of practice, and help to facilitate and showcase actual practice change. In particular, we were asked to highlight evidence in areas where the evidence base is unclear, vague, contested or weak.

*“Bring evidence into the otherwise nebulous/vague world of words that is social care policy and systems change.”*





# **Our workplan**



## Spark

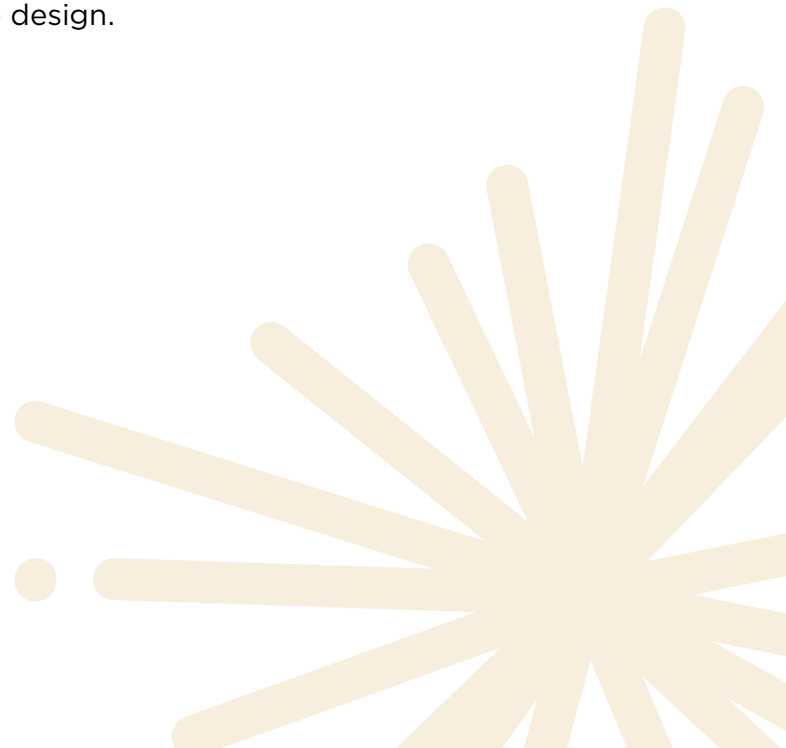
We support people, workers and organisations to innovate and explore different ways of working.

# Innovation and change

You tell us that the system you are working in often stops you from doing your best work and so we want to address that. Bureaucracy, poor processes, poor commissioning and procurement practice, and finance driven decision-making are just some examples of parts of the system you would like us to help you change.

This year we will:

- Increase our activity and involvement amongst the sector, and make this engaged project and partnership working the core of our activity as an organisation.
- Work with a number of local statutory, third, and independent sector delivery partners, as well as national partners, on projects focusing on the areas of: service redesign, process change, organisational collaboration, and job design.





## Reflect

We create the conditions for knowledge-based practice and decision making.

# Practice support

You believe it is important that our current problems are not inadvertently baked into the developing National Care Service (NCS), but that new ideas and thinking are critical to making the NCS a success.

This year we will:

- Continue to explore and support the use of Human Learning Systems – an approach that starts with the belief that public service exists to support human freedom and flourishing – to reform public services for the better.
- Support people to use our course on ethical commissioning to build their skills, confidence and knowledge in commissioning for people and purpose.
- Run a series of workshops to identify, share and analyse new and innovative ideas for what social work and social care could look like within the NCS.
- Continue to develop and promote our learning and training materials in key areas of Adult Support and Protection (ASP). These include learning and development for workers conducting large-scale investigations; convening case conferences and involving people and their families effectively in the adult support and protection process.
- Create new resources in priority areas in response to the upcoming joint inspection report. This will include further work on large-scale investigations (LSI) and the use of chronologies (a way of setting out key events in a timeline) to support good understanding and decision making within the ASP process.





## Illuminate

We work with people, organisations and groups of organisations to make better use of the data and information they collect.

# Better use of data

Building on sector need in data and information, this year we will:

- Work with the Scottish Association of Social Work (SASW) to synthesise a range of recent surveys and other data to build an understanding of what will help social workers develop the future role of social work.
- Trial our new evidence offer, responding to areas of work where the evidence is lacking, partial or highly contested.
- Continue our work supporting Adult Support and Protection colleagues to make best use of the data and information they collect through the development of a minimum dataset, and provide analysis support for existing reporting. In addition, we will host the National Adult Protection Coordinator role on behalf of the Scottish Government, integrating the role into our wider work.
- Compile and collate a summary of the Chief Social Worker Officer annual reports.



## Kindle

We bring different types of knowledge together, making it accessible and useable for workers.

# Find and use evidence

You told us that you use Iriss' resources for practice improvement and for planning. You also said that there was more we could do to make our resources relevant and easy to use.

This year we will:

- Share and communicate innovation and change, and practice ideas through our Iriss.fm podcast.
- Provide evidence for practice development and planning through our Evidence Search and Summary Service.
- Provide an overview of the evidence available on priority areas of policy and practice through our Insights series.
- Make use of Iriss' legacy of evidence products, bringing them together to identify key themes, messages and actions for innovation and change in social work and social care.
- Bring together interested and skilled people to develop a strategy for innovation in social work and social care, setting out the conditions we need to put in place for high-quality practice and innovation to flourish.



## Stream

We work with people, workers and organisations to make use of digital for learning, development and innovation.

# Digital support

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We will continue to create websites and other digital resources for teams and organisations and ensure that Iriss has the digital tools to deliver its work. Alongside this, we will make sure that our own online products and resources are as engaging and accessible as possible.

This year we will review our digital offer and develop it for the sector.

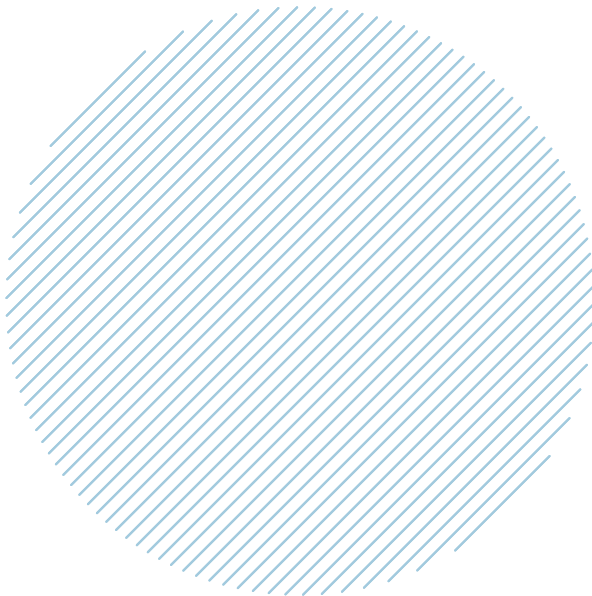


# We want to hear from you

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Are you interested in something you've read in this year's plan? Or would you like to partner with us on a piece of work? Get in touch:

**[enquiries@iriss.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@iriss.org.uk)**





Scottish Government  
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