



SSRG Scotland event: “Improving Outcomes: The Results – Based Accountability Approach”

This event took place on Monday 8th October at the CoSLA Conference Centre in Edinburgh, and was attended by 52 delegates from Scotland, England and Ireland! Thanks to Philip Brown from City of Edinburgh Council for his help in producing this report.



Colin Mair, Chief Executive, Improvement Agency

The aim of the day was to look at the context in which the outcome agenda is developing in Scotland, examine existing practice as identified by SWIA and the Care Commission and to share the ‘results – based accountability’ approach. The day was chaired by Paul Hambleton, SSRG Scotland Convener.

Mark McAteer was scheduled to give the first talk of the day, but was taken ill, so it fell to Colin Mair, the Chief Executive of the Improvement Service who at very short notice agreed to start the day. He filled the breach superbly and gave an overview of the current situation facing the public sector in Scotland. He also outlined what challenges and priorities are likely to lie ahead following the election of the new Scottish Government earlier in the year.

Two presentations followed from the regulators in Scotland, namely SWIA and the Care Commission. Gill Otley and Liz Norton respectively set out the role of these regulators, along with what they perceive their future role to be, especially in the light of the recently published Crerar Report. (see text box for more information)

Jacky Tiotto from the Department for Children, Schools and Families in England finished the morning session with an introduction to Results Based Accountability. She noted that there has been lots of structural change over the last few years, and there was very little to show for it initially – change takes time to happen. Helpfully clearing up the differences between outcomes, indicators and performance measures, she then moved on to describe from her own experience how, by working with stakeholders, areas of poor performance can be turned round – effectively turning the curve of the poor trend.

The afternoon session belonged to Mike Pinnock from Hull City Council who introduced the ideas of Mark Friedman to many in the audience.

Those who did not have to rush off to catch a train home stayed

“Jackie Tiotto’s contribution was very welcome – informative and refreshingly candid on the English experience”



Liz Norton, Director of Adult Services Regulation, Care Commission

to have a go at turning the curve themselves. Each group chose an area of poor performance and by role-playing the part of stakeholders worked together to establish a plan to improve performance.

The Crerar Report, published on 25th September 2007, considers how Scotland’s systems of regulation, audit, and inspection (‘external scrutiny’) and complaints handling for public services could be improved. It focuses on strategic issues rather than the operations of individual scrutiny regimes, and highlights systems-level issues about application, focus, direction, leadership and control of external scrutiny and complaints handling. www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/09/25120506/0

