



PRESS RELEASE  
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### **Child-centred services for *all* children**

The provision of child and family-centred public services has focused predominantly on meeting the needs of Scotland's most vulnerable children.

A major national conference will today (Thursday, 4 November) explore how the concept can be extended to Scotland's universal services, such as health and education – to ensure that the educational, physical, and emotional needs of every individual child are met.

*All* professionals – in education, social work, health and the voluntary sector – are having to work together more closely to provide a more integrated package of support for all children.

The two-day conference 'Joining up children's services' has been organised by Children in Scotland in association with Aberdeen City Council. It will bring together professionals from across different sectors to look at some of the innovative work that is already being done in Scotland to join up children's services, and to discuss what more needs to be done to ensure that real integration is achieved.

Bronwen Cohen, chief executive of Children in Scotland, said: "To date, services have predominantly been joined up around the needs of the most vulnerable children in Scotland. The challenge now is to have child and family-centred services for all children. This is likely to require further re-shaping of services, including reform of funding structures and of the workforce."

Speakers include Keir Bloomer, chief executive of Clackmannanshire Council, Malcolm Wright, chief executive of NHS Education for Scotland and Kjell Lillestol, childhood policy co-ordinator for the Porsgrunn Kommune in Norway.

## **Examples of good practice in Scotland.**

The following will host visits or hold workshops on Thursday, November 4:

### *The Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital*

The new hospital, built at a cost of £24.5m, has been designed to increase inter-agency working and improve patients' experience. As well as acute paediatrics, the hospital also includes departments such as community child health, child and family mental health, child protection services, a university child health department and the full range of paediatric therapy departments.

### *Integrated transport scheme*

Transport is still considered almost exclusively in the context of environment and infrastructure, such as public transport provision and roads. It is rarely planned strategically in the context of children's services. However, Aberdeen City Council is merging transport provision for social work and education to make arrangements more child-centred. From April 2005, transport arranged for social services and transport arranged for education will be organised and co-ordinated by the same unit.

### *An integrated electronic children's services record*

The pilot integrated children's services record delivers an electronic summary care record for children in Aberdeen, with a focus on children with complex needs. It provides key data for disciplines within health, social work and education, taking agreed items of information from agency systems into a central store to create the integrated record.

## **Ends**

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## **Notes for editors**

1. Joining up children's services: where are we now? takes place at the Thistle Aberdeen Altens hotel, in Aberdeen on November 4 and 5.
2. Children in Scotland is the national agency for voluntary, statutory and professional organisations and individuals working with children and their families in Scotland. It exists to identify and promote the interests of children and their families and to ensure that relevant policies, services and provisions are of the best possible quality and able to meet the needs of a diverse society.
3. For further details contact Nicola Pay on 0131 2222419 or, from Wednesday afternoon, November 3, on 07793588672