

# Equality & Poverty Impact Assessment 00987 (Version 1)

## SECTION ONE: ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

<b>Service &amp; Division:</b>	Social Work Adult Services Community Care	<b>Lead Officer Name:</b>	Caroline Doherty
		<b>Team:</b>	Central locality
		<b>Tel:</b>	07484011661
		<b>Email:</b>	caroline.doherty@falkirk.gov.uk
<b>Proposal:</b>	<p>Update social care eligibility criteria</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Social care eligibility criteria refer to the set of guidelines or standards used by partnerships to determine whether an adult or their carer requires a social care service.</li> <li>2. The purpose of these criteria is to ensure that resources are allocated fairly and effectively, prioritising those with the greatest need or risk.</li> <li>3. Eligibility is determined through a needs assessment that includes consideration of urgency, risk, and the impact of an individual's presenting circumstances on their quality of life.</li> <li>4. The criteria cover all formal social care services, aids and adaptations provided to adults and/or their carers.</li> </ol>	<b>Reference No:</b>	SLT 21/02/25 and IJB 21/03/25

<b>What is the Proposal?</b>	<b>Budget &amp; Other Financial Decision</b>	<b>Policy (New or Change)</b>	<b>HR Policy &amp; Practice</b>	<b>Change to Service Delivery / Service Design</b>
	No	Yes	No	No
<b>Who does the Proposal affect?</b>	<b>Service Users</b>	<b>Members of the Public</b>	<b>Employees</b>	<b>Job Applicants</b>
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Other, please specify:</b>				
<b>Identify the main aims and projected outcome of this proposal (please add date of each update):</b>				
21/03/2025	Development of eligibility criteria that will support a consistent approach to the provision of services.			

## SECTION TWO: FINANCIAL INFORMATION

For budget changes ONLY please include information below:		Benchmark, e.g. Scottish Average	
Current spend on this service (£'0000s)	Total:		
Reduction to this service budget (£'0000s)	Per Annum:		
Increase to this service budget (£'000s)	Per Annum:		
If this is a change to a charge or concession please complete.	Current Annual Income Total:		
	Expected Annual Income Total:		
If this is a budget decision, when will the saving be achieved?	Start Date:		
	End Date (if any):		

**SECTION THREE: EVIDENCE**

Please include any evidence or relevant information that has influenced the decisions contained in this EPIA. (This could include demographic profiles; audits; research; health needs assessments; national guidance or legislative requirements and how this relates to the protected characteristic groups.)

**A - Quantitative Evidence**

This is evidence which is numerical and should include the number people who use the service and the number of people from the protected characteristic groups who might be affected by changes to the service.

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment was completed for the last HSCP Strategic Plan 2023-26 this identified:

**Age:**

Falkirk has a broadly similar distribution between the age bands as Scotland, with only slightly higher proportions of 0 to 15 year olds, 50 to 64 year olds and a slightly lower proportion of 16 to 49 year olds. There are slightly more males aged zero to 15, but from 65 upwards there are markedly more females in Falkirk. The revised 25-year projection in 2018 predicted an 80.3% increase in those aged 75 and over.

**Disability:**

Information on people with a physical disability is limited. In the 2011 Census there were over 10,800 people in Falkirk recorded as having a physical disability, 7% of the total population. The proportion of those with a physical disability increased as people aged – 80% were aged over 50.

**Gender Reassignment:**

Gender reassignment: Data on gender reassignment is very limited. Scottish Government surveys have, since 2018, asked respondents whether they describe their gender as male, female or 'in another way'. The question has not, however, helped to identify the proportion of people that have undergone gender reassignment. Further information on gender reassignment will be available once Scotland's Census results are published. The Census asked 'What is your sex?' and included a voluntary question about trans status. Recently released figures from the 2021 Census in England and Wales suggest that 0.5% of the population have a gender identity that is different from their sex registered at birth. 0.1% identified as a trans man, 0.1% as a trans woman, 0.06% as non-binary and 0.24% did not specify.

**Sex:**

Mid-year population estimates for 2021 suggest that there are 78,637 males in Falkirk (48.9% of the population) and 82,063 females (51.1% of the population). Printed: 24/09/2024 10:46 Page: 7 of 22 The distribution of males and females across age bands is broadly similar though a higher proportion of the older population (65+) is female. In Falkirk, men can expect to live up to 76.6 years on average and women up to 80.4 years. Life expectancy among males is similar to the rest of Scotland, whilst female estimates are slightly below the national average. Around 7 in 10 unpaid carers were female – 71% in 2020-21 and 73% in 2019-20. This is higher than previous estimates suggesting that female carers are more likely to seek out support from services than male carers.

At the time of the Strategic Needs assessment information for religion, marriage and race was not available.

## **Adults that currently receive a formal service**

Please note the source for all the below information is the social work recording system - Liquid Logic

3961 adults currently receive a formal service from social work.

### **Gender:**

Female - 2351

Male - 1604

Trans or non-binary - 3

Prefer not to say - 3

### **Primary client group for adults receiving a service:**

Elderly/frail - 863

Physical Disability - 776

Learning Disability - 562

Dementia - 472

Mental Health - 325

Elderly - 291

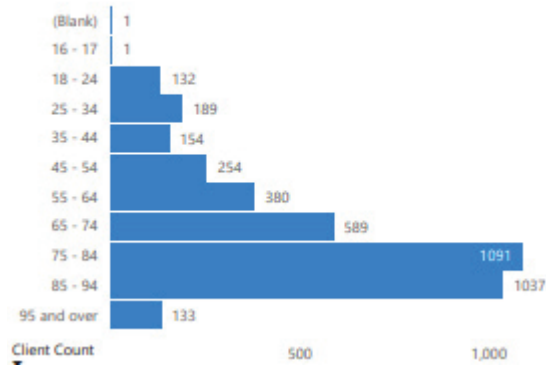
Physical & Sensory Disability - 196

Not Known - 147

Other - 329

## Age Groups for adults receiving a service:

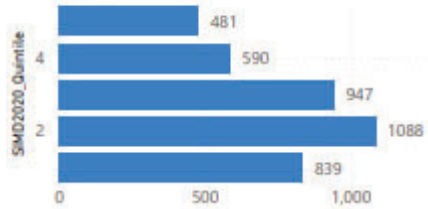
### Age Groups



## SIMD for adults receiving a service (all options):

### SIMD

1 is most deprived, 5 is least deprived



## Ethnicity for adults receiving a service (figures below 5 excluded):

Ethnicity	Client Count
White - Scottish	2429
White	497
NoDescription	358
Not Known	350
White - Other British	223
Client Declined to Say	36
White - Other background	15
Asian - Pakistani	10
White - Irish	10
Other Ethnic Group	6

**Religion for adults receiving a service (figures below 5 excluded):**

Religion	Client Count
Not Known	2654
	914
Christian - Church of Scotland	128
Not Disclosed	81
Atheist, Agnostic or no religious affiliation	75
Christian - Roman Catholic	73
None	7
Muslim	6

**Information about Carers supported by the service (Numbers less than 5 excluded):**

**From the 2243 carers who contacted Falkirk and Clackmannanshire Carers Centre in 2024 (Jan – Dec):**

826 (37%) identified as having disabilities. 528 entries are blank or unknown, if those were disregarded, 48% identified as having disabilities.

Of the 3207 main carers recorded on the Falkirk Social Work LAS system, 3160 have no recorded disability, 44 consider themselves to have a disability and 3 do not.

From the 2243 carers who contacted Falkirk and Clackmannanshire Carers Centre

**Gender:** 521 identify as male and 1667 as female.

**Ethnicity:**

42 as Asian, Scottish Asian or Asian British.

12 as African, Caribbean or Black; and 8 of other ethnic backgrounds.

425 returns show not disclosed or not known.

1818 as White Scottish

Figures for other ethnic minorities are expected to increase as more ethnic minority carers come to identify as such.

**Employment status:** 352 work part time, 498 are retired, and 577 are unemployed.

There is insufficient data to report on the religion of carers

**Aids and Adaptations:**

There is limited information for aids and adaptations.

From CES360 data for the last 5 calendar years, we are showing approximately 28,000 pieces of equipment are still shown on loan to a Falkirk client address. These pieces of equipment are distributed across approximately 8, 500 unique addresses. For all adaptations it is estimated that there have been 1300 completed over the past five years. There is no information available around protected characteristics.

**B - Qualitative Evidence**

This is data which describes the effect or impact of a change on a group of people, e.g. some information provided as part of performance reporting.

**Social - case studies; personal / group feedback / other**

Research and demographic trends data published by Scottish Government (Nov 2024) highlights that there is an ageing population within Scotland. As older people tend to experience ill health and/or disability and people are living for longer this will impact on the demand for social work and social care services.

The national release on Carers data in 2024 highlighted that people are more likely to be providing unpaid care in their later working years - especially females. The last significant review of the carers role by Scottish Government was completed in 2015 and highlighted the following:

"Carers often experience poor mental health and physical health arising from their caring role. For some this may be compounded by existing inequalities."

In February 2024 Scottish Government published a discussion paper on eligibility criteria. Some of the potential impacts for supported adults across client groups and carers were highlighted. The importance of transparent and accessible information about how resources are allocated was highlighted and will be part of the delivery of this policy.

References:

[Impact of Scotland's ageing population | Scotland's Census](#)

[Scotland's Carers Update Release March 2024 - gov.scot](#)

[Scotland's Carers - gov.scot](#)

[Adult social care eligibility criteria - innovations and developments: report - gov.scot](#)



<b>Best Judgement:</b>	
<b>Has best judgement been used in place of data/research/evidence?</b>	No
<b>Who provided the best judgement and what was this based on?</b>	Local data was utilised to provide information around protected characteristics.
<b>What gaps in data / information were identified?</b>	Yes this is due to the social work recording system being relatively new.
<b>Is further research necessary?</b>	No
<b>If NO, please state why.</b>	No. The equality impact of health and social care services is relatively well researched, even if local data can be difficult to ascertain. Research relating to Scotland or the UK as a whole can be used to fill gaps in local data.

**SECTION FOUR: ENGAGEMENT**

Engagement with individuals or organisations affected by the policy or proposal must take place

<b>Has the proposal / policy / project been subject to engagement or consultation with service users taking into account their protected characteristics and socio-economic status?</b>	Yes	
<b>If YES, please state who was engagement with.</b>	Public consultation. Attendance at face to face sessions as well as a on line platform for survey responses.	
<b>If NO engagement has been conducted, please state why.</b>		
<b>How was the engagement carried out?</b>	<b>What were the results from the engagement? Please list...</b>	
<b>Focus Group</b>	No	
<b>Survey</b>	Yes	How would the proposed eligibility criteria impact upon you, your family, people you support, other people in Falkirk, or your organisation?  We had 208 participants respond to this question. 41% of participants noted this proposal would have a significant impact. 38% reported some impact, and 10% reported no impact.
<b>Display / Exhibitions</b>	No	
<b>User Panels</b>	No	
<b>Public Event</b>	No	
<b>Other: please specify</b>	Attended at local groups to encourage participation in the online survey.	
<b>Has the proposal / policy/ project been reviewed / changed as a result of the engagement?</b>	Yes	
<b>Have the results of the engagement been fed back to the consultees?</b>	No	
<b>Is further engagement recommended?</b>	No	

## SECTION FIVE: ASSESSING THE IMPACT

**Equality Protected Characteristics:** What will the impact of implementing this proposal be on people who share characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010 or are likely to be affected by the proposal / policy / project? This section allows you to consider other impacts, e.g. poverty, health inequalities, community justice, carers etc.

Protected Characteristic	Neutral Impact	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Please provide evidence of the impact on this protected characteristic.
<b>Age</b>	✓			Older people are the highest users of our services. The purpose of the criteria is to prioritise available resource in line with critical care needs. This will promote greater independence at home for longer as services will be targeted.
<b>Disability</b>	✓			People with disability are high users of services. The purpose of the criteria is to prioritise available resource in line with critical care needs. This will promote greater independence at home for longer as services will be targeted.
<b>Sex</b>			✓	Our data shows that females use formal services more than males. There is the potential that changes will impact more on females who are involved as unpaid carers. The policy supports the available resources being prioritised based on eligible, monitoring of the policy and working closely to implement the policy with key partners will support the management or risk and impact.
<b>Ethnicity</b>	✓			Our data is limited. There is a commitment within the partnership for people that require assessment, care and support (and those involved in their care) to access services free from barriers and discrimination this policy will be delivered taking a person centred approach.
<b>Religion / Belief / non-Belief</b>	✓			Our data is limited. There is a commitment within the partnership for people that require assessment, care and support (and those involved in their care) to access services free from barriers and discrimination this policy will be delivered taking a person centred approach.
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	✓			Our data is limited. There is a commitment within the partnership for people that require assessment, care and support (and those involved in their care) to access services free from barriers and discrimination this policy will be delivered taking a person centred approach.
<b>Transgender</b>	✓			Our data is limited. There is a commitment within the partnership for people that require assessment, care and support (and those involved in their care) to access services free from barriers and discrimination this policy will be delivered taking a person centred approach.

**Public Sector Equality Duty: Scottish Public Authorities must have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance quality of opportunity and foster good relations. Scottish specific duties include:**

				services free from barriers and discrimination this policy will be delivered taking a person centred approach.
<b>Marriage / Civil Partnership</b>	✓			Our data is limited. There is a commitment within the partnership for people that require assessment, care and support (and those involved in their care) to access services free from barriers and discrimination this policy will be delivered taking a person centred approach.
<b>Poverty</b>	✓			Poverty is one of the social determinants of health. People living in more deprived circumstances are more likely to have poor health outcomes. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and our Locality Profiles identify inequalities in Falkirk. Tackling poverty is part of the priority 'Focus on prevention, early intervention and harm reduction'. We will do this in conjunction with Community Planning Partners. This will be considered within the implementation of the policy.
<b>Care Experienced</b>	✓			Our data is limited. There is a commitment within the partnership for people that require assessment, care and support (and those involved in their care) to access services free from barriers and discrimination this policy will be delivered taking a person centred approach.
<b>Other, health, community justice, carers etc.</b>	✓			The Partnership have a responsibility to ensure carers are supported in their 'caring role'. We are working with the carers centre to ensure support is provided to service users and their carers throughout the assessment process and as part of this policy development and implementation.
<b>Risk (Identify other risks associated with this change)</b>	<p>Key issues identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Accessible information</li> <li>- Fair and transparent process</li> <li>- Improve communication</li> <li>- Prioritising services for most vulnerable is beneficial but also needs to be managed carefully to ensure there is not harm to those in need</li> <li>- Measuring impact of application of criteria</li> </ul>			
		<b>Evidence of Due Regard</b>		

<b>Eliminate Unlawful Discrimination (harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct):</b>	<p>The eligibility criteria complies with the statutory duties to assess and provide an adequate service for adults and carers assessed as having a eligible need.</p>
<b>Advance Equality of Opportunity:</b>	<p>Proactive signposting and advice for adults and carers assessed as not requiring a formal service will be further developed. This is linked to future planned initiatives such as the development of an access team and community led support.</p>
<b>Foster Good Relations (promoting understanding and reducing prejudice):</b>	<p>We have developed this policy within a Short Life Working Group that has included involvement from the Carers Centre and SDS Forth Valley. The implementation of this policy will include development of case examples, access to service guidance which also be developed by this group.</p>

## SECTION SIX: PARTNERS / OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Which sectors are likely to have an interest in or be affected by the proposal / policy / project?		Describe the interest / affect.
<b>Business</b>	Yes	Many of the social care providers and care home providers are private business. More consistent application of the criteria may result in reduction in the level of care commissioned. This may impact on the business model viability. However there are opportunities as services transform to look at how businesses can collaborate with the partnership to reshape how services are delivered.
<b>Councils</b>	Yes	The Integration Joint Board through a direction will direct council staff that assess to implement the policy.
<b>Education Sector</b>	No	
<b>Fire</b>	No	
<b>NHS</b>	Yes	The policy may change the level of service provided and at what level of criteria a service is provided. A consistent application will also change the delivery of social care. To manage expectations there needs to be a shared understanding of the policy across health and social work services.
<b>Integration Joint Board</b>	Yes	IJB are responsible for the policy.
<b>Police</b>	No	
<b>Third Sector</b>	Yes	The sector is a key partner in supporting meeting the outcomes for the citizens of Falkirk. The consistent application of the criteria may impact of the demand on third sector services. The partnership will work closely with third sector to monitor impact and manage risk.
<b>Other(s): please list and describe the nature of the relationship / impact.</b>		

## SECTION SEVEN: ACTION PLANNING

**Mitigating Actions:** If you have identified impacts on protected characteristic groups in Section 5 please summarise these in the table below detailing the actions you are taking to mitigate or support this impact. If you are not taking any action to support or mitigate the impact you should complete the No Mitigating Actions section below instead.

Identified Impact	To Who	Action(s)	Lead Officer	Evaluation and Review Date	Strategic Reference to Corporate Plan / Service Plan / Quality Outcomes
Potential for adults and carers that previously received a formal service to no longer meet the eligible criteria to receive a service, aid or adaptation.	All adults that receive a service or have requested a formal assessment	Impact will be monitored and reported. This will inform action if required to mitigate.	Head of Community Services	01/04/2026	Falkirk HSCP Strategic Plan 2023-26 - Creating a Heathier Falkirk
Increased demand in caring role and increased risk of carer stress.	Females and Females that are carers have been identified as particularly vulnerable to impact from these changes.	Impact will be monitored. Engagement following implementation with carers centre on a regular basis.	Head of Community Services.	01/04/2026	Falkirk HSCP Strategic Plan 2023-26 - Creating a Heathier Falkirk

### No Mitigating Actions

Please explain why you do not need to take any action to mitigate or support the impact of your proposals.

<b>Are actions being reported to Members?</b>	No
<b>If yes when and how ?</b>	



**SECTION EIGHT: ASSESSMENT OUTCOME**

Only one of following statements best matches your assessment of this proposal / policy / project. Please select one and provide your reasons.

No major change required	No	
The proposal has to be adjusted to reduce impact on protected characteristic groups	No	
Continue with the proposal but it is not possible to remove all the risk to protected characteristic groups	Yes	The eligibility criteria policy is intended to support the transparent, consistent allocation of available resource in line with eligible need. This is intended to be more equitable however there is a risk that the proposal will disproportionately adversely impact on females who receive a service and females that are carers. This is because more adults that use formal services are female and more unpaid carers are female. The application of the policy will be monitored and officers will continue to collaborate with the carers centre to look at mitigations as they are identified.
Stop the proposal as it is potentially in breach of equality legislation	No	

**SECTION NINE: LEAD OFFICER SIGN OFF**

Lead Officer:

Signature:	<i>Caroline Doherty</i>	Date:	05/03/2025
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**SECTION TEN: EPIA TASK GROUP ONLY**

<b>OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF EPIA:</b> Has the EPIA demonstrated the use of data, appropriate engagement, identified mitigating actions as well as ownership and appropriate review of actions to confidently demonstrate compliance with the general and public sector equality duties?	Yes
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<b>ASSESSMENT FINDINGS</b>  If YES, use this box to highlight evidence in support of the assessment of the EPIA  If NO, use this box to highlight actions needed to improve the EPIA	Information from the strategic needs assessment and census as outlined in section 3.
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<b>Where adverse impact on diverse communities has been identified and it is intended to continue with the proposal / policy / project, has justification for continuing <u>without making changes been made</u>?</b>	No	If YES, please describe: No adverse impact identified at this time. However, social work does not currently record whether someone is eligible for care therefore we do not know for certain how many people will be impacted by the application of the eligibility criteria. This will have to be closely monitored.
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**LEVEL OF IMPACT: The EPIA Task Group has agreed the following level of impact on the protected characteristic groups highlighted within the EPIA**

LEVEL		COMMENTS
HIGH	Yes / No	
MEDIUM	Yes	The impact has been rated as medium for now. Although the application of the eligibility criteria will impact adults seeking social care, the impact is currently assessed as neutral. However, social work does not currently record whether someone is eligible for care therefore we do not know for certain how many people will be impacted by the application of the eligibility criteria. This will have to be closely monitored.
LOW	Yes / No	

**SECTION ELEVEN: CHIEF OFFICER SIGN OFF**

<b>Director / Head of Service:</b>		
<b>Signature:</b>	<i>Gail Woodcock</i>	<b>Date:</b> 14/03/2025