



Support in the Right Direction



Year 3 Progress Update July 2021



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
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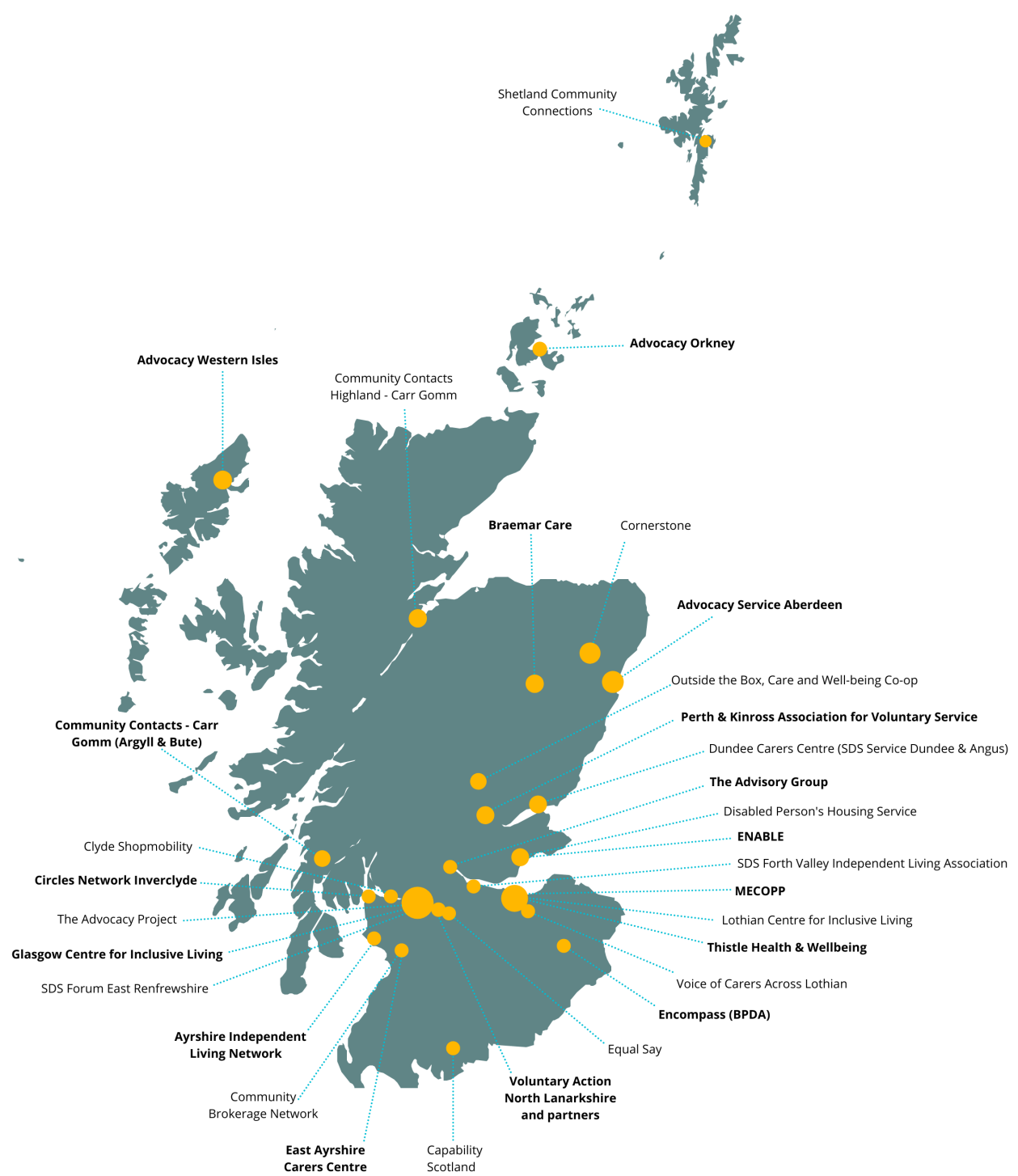
INSPIRING SCOTLAND

Support in the Right Direction

October 2018 – March 2023

30 projects across 31 local authority areas in Scotland are funded by the Scottish Government to provide independent support to families and carers accessing the social care system.

The purpose of independent support is to help people and carers make informed decisions and plans for their social care and maximise their choice and control over those arrangements using self-directed support (SDS) options.

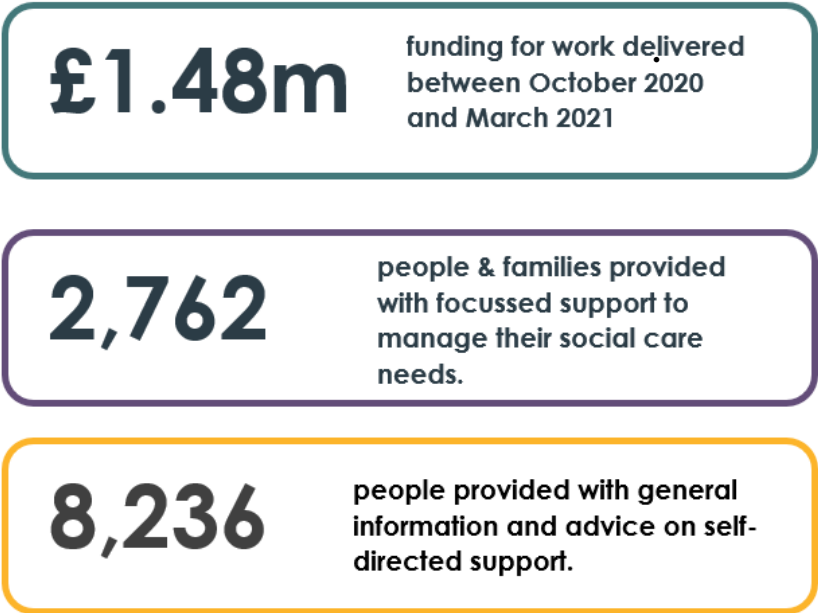


Support in the Right Direction (SiRD) Impact

Since the programme began
October 2018 - March 2021



In the last 6 months
October 2020 - March 2021



The value of independent support



Since our last progress update in January 2021, independent support has featured in the **Independent Review of Adult Social Care** (February 2021), the purpose of which was to recommend improvements to adult social care in Scotland. The report noted that:

"A network of support and brokerage services is in place in parts of Scotland that can help people prepare for [a social care] assessment, including identifying what goals or outcomes people want to achieve with support. This has been crucial in highlighting the choices and possibilities people have across the self-directed support options but it is not available to everyone and not everyone who would benefit from this support knows about it."

- Independent Review of Adult Social Care Report

SiRD projects undertake promotional work with people, schools and community groups across Scotland to tell them about the social care choices available to them under self-directed support legislation, and also the support SiRD projects can provide to help people access their choices and plan their care.

The value of independent support

My Support, My Choice research carried out by Self-directed Support Scotland and the Health and Social Care Alliance (October 2020) found that “People clearly value and benefit from independent advocacy and support, and these services play an important role in SDS/ social care.”



*71% of research participants strongly agreed or agreed that:
“Access to independent information and support makes SDS easier for me”.*

My Support, My Choice

Both of these reports highlight the valuable role independent support plays in supporting social care to work well and how important it is for people who use social care to have independent support available to them when exploring or planning their social care options.

This is reflected further in the national **Self-directed Support Framework of Standards** published in March 2021 which has independent support as the first standard.

Independent Support and Advocacy

People are offered independent advice, support and advocacy to have choice and control over their social care and support and to exercise their human rights.

The following stories give some examples of the types of independent support SiRD projects provide and the impact this has had for the people they work with. The stories also demonstrate how projects are helping to achieve the five SiRD programme outcomes:

- People and carers are better prepared, confident to engage and contribute meaningfully to social care assessments and reviews.
- People and carers feel more informed, listened to, less stressed.
- People and carers can creatively and flexibly plan to achieve personal outcomes including accessing community assets.
- People and carers have increased skills so are better able to manage social care packages.
- People and carers have an increased knowledge and understanding of Self-directed Support principles and options for social care.





SIRD PROJECT STORIES

People and carers are better prepared, confident to engage and contribute meaningfully to social care assessments and reviews.

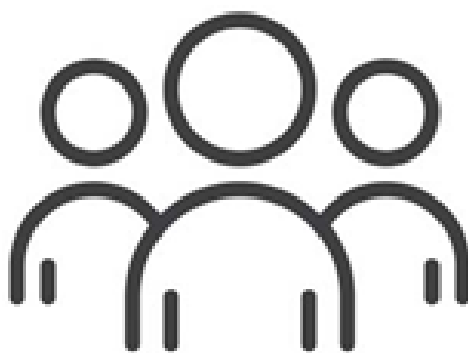
Equal Say

B had been supported previously by advocacy as a result of concerns about possible alcohol-related harms. She was at a low ebb, often refusing the offers of meals and personal care from Homecare visits. Her daughters felt helpless and discouraged by what they saw as an ever-changing care team accepting their mum's decline.

B's social worker hoped that advocacy could play a role in exploring B's feelings about her circumstances. When Equal Say contacted B by phone she spoke for more than an hour and ended saying just how much she missed having someone to blether to. More phone calls followed and a walking meeting was arranged where the conversation felt more natural and unpressurised and gave B a chance to share a wee bit of herself. She shared some of her pain and said that she wanted to change but didn't know how.

The walk provided a context for helping B to contribute to the formal part of an SDS assessment. She was supported to go through the form and using some of the things she had already spoken about made it more human. Although B didn't want to take part in the virtual assessment, using her words lent her voice to the review and persuaded her social worker that SDS could act as a catalyst for the changes that B so desperately wanted to make.

Equal Say



After the review, one of B's daughters had some kind words to say about the role of independent advocacy:

"I certainly feel as though people are listening more and I think that's down to you. Thank you again for dedicating time and ensuring my mum's views are part of this process. Myself and [other daughter] have found it very difficult to be heard...We both feel that other professionals involved do not think that my mum is committed to change – however, unlike you, they have not taken the time to get to know her... [Other daughter] and I both feel that the approach you have taken has enabled her to open up to you. We know that my mum has a deep sense of shame and is a very proud woman. This has been a barrier – however, you have recognised this, treated her with respect, and for that we are truly grateful. Your input has been so valuable".

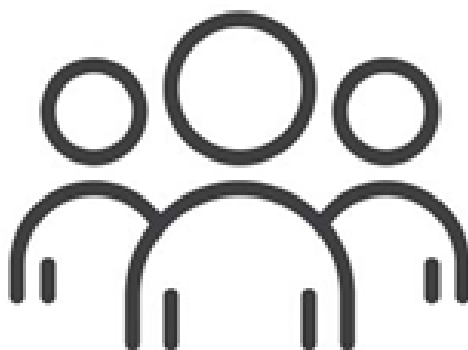
People and carers are better prepared, confident to engage and contribute meaningfully to social care assessments and reviews.

Advocacy Western Isles

Advocacy were approached by a parent carer who was trying to access respite support. As well as being a carer, she had a range of medical conditions which bring bouts of stroke like symptoms, impacting on her speech, cognitive function, physical movement and strength, and also causing considerable daily pain. She had asked her social worker about respite and after struggling to complete a carer's assessment form on her own over lockdown, was told she did not meet the eligibility criteria. Advocacy worked with her over three hour-long sessions to tease out the issues she was facing in detail. Together they talked through the difficulties she was experiencing with her day-to-day life and the impacts this had on her role as a parent carer. Stress is a contributing factor to her condition and can make flare ups more frequent. She had genuine concerns that worsening health could prevent her from carrying out her caring role to the best of her ability. She felt that a short break every week would help her keep her own health in check and allow her child to get the regular exercise he needed.

Having the opportunity to think about things from her perspective and talk through how she was feeling in herself was hugely beneficial and not something she had often done. Advocacy supported her to complete a new application for support and the clarity achieved led to a much-improved carer's assessment, which is being reviewed by Social Work. For the client, the simple experience of going through a thorough and complete assessment has been transformative, and she has already applied new thinking to the way she lives her life – setting out time when she can focus on herself and her own needs.

Advocacy Western Isles



Her feedback says it all:

"It's been amazing – you've really made a difference and done a great job!..... Having spoken to you just 3 times gave me the clarity that I needed to see that actually it's not selfish of me to look for help and in the long run it's not only going to benefit me but it will help with the whole family.

My husband is off work again and on Thursday I went for a spin by myself and I loved it. I knew he could deal with the school if needed, but I would never have dreamt of doing that before our phone calls. So in fact even if I don't get respite, these 3 phone calls have changed our lives, or my life, and I had zero guilt for taking time for myself this week.

So honestly I can't thank you enough for what you have done for me and my family." -Parent Carer

People and carers feel more informed, listened to, less stressed.

Equals Advocacy

Advocacy supported a 90 year old man and his daughter to put in place a support plan of their choosing on leaving hospital. Due to being on bed rest the client was unable to attend any support planning meetings and wanted an Independent Advocate to have his views, wishes and voice heard. Over several short calls the client made it clear that nursing care, which was their consultant's recommendation, was not an option for them. On attending the support planning meetings the advocate emphasised the client's wish to return home and also informed his daughter about Adult Carer Support Plans. The client ultimately returned home with support from PAs and was happy and relieved to be reunited with his family.

"Thank you for everything you have done to get me to this point. I really am beginning to see the light at the end of the tunnel and I appreciate what you both have done and knowing you have been following things up with the council."

Person supported by PKAVS

"Community Contacts has transformed my experience of the process of SDS. I only wish I had this contact 2 years ago. A difficult situation has been transformed into a positive and supported experience."

Person supported by Community Contacts (Carr Gomm)



"I have felt so much better this last week since I spoke to you. I feel things are now heading in the right direction since I now have support for my son and also you giving me some support."
"It's such a refreshing change to be listened to."

People supported by ENABLE

"Thank you for guiding P on behalf of C through SDS and the set up of the direct payment. This has been invaluable for the family and taken the stress off what is a very busy family due to C's needs."

Family supported by Dundee Carers Centre

People and carers can creatively and flexibly plan to achieve personal outcomes including accessing community assets

East Ayrshire Carers Centre

EACC completed an Adult Carer Support Plan with Mrs P after registering her due to the vaccine rollout for unpaid carers. Mrs P was unaware of the service at this point and was overwhelmed by the support offered. She cares for her partner, who is dealing with the results of a traumatic brain injury which leads to depression which affects his emotional wellbeing. Mrs P's life revolves around supporting her partner 24/7. She told us that she has very little to no free time. She is trying to do a degree alongside her caring role but that is suffering with all of the pressure she's under.

EACC looked at achievable outcomes, she was missing going to the gym which she felt was a very important way for her to maintain her mental health. They discussed Time To Live funding and purchased home gym equipment to achieve this outcome. They will also look at funding for a break away from home when lockdown restrictions ease. EACC discussed SDS and talked about how a budget could improve their quality of life including technology enabled care. They referred the couple on to the Thinking Differently Team at the local authority in order to start this process. Mrs P expressed feeling isolated and lonely. She now links in to EACC's weekly Wednesday Zoom support group and interacts with other carers and staff. They also carried out a benefit health check and will be applying for PIP.

Capability Scotland

B is in his 90s and until recently he has lived a healthy and fulfilling life with his wife M, who he has cared for over the last 3 years.

Unfortunately, B now requires support with end-of-life care and their daughter G had been living with them to try and care for them both. B subsequently received a self-directed support package but they were limited in their support options as there was a shortage of managed care services locally, particularly as a result of Covid. G and her father were very reluctant to become employers and despite support from Capability Scotland to recruit and manage two Personal Assistants, this did not work for the family. For them, they felt that using option 1 (being an employer) had not given them the level of choice and control they wanted. With support from Capability Scotland to liaise with social work, it was agreed that a managed service would be more appropriate.

People and carers have increased skills so are better able to manage social care packages

Community Contacts (Carr Gomm)

Z was referred to Community Contacts by the Transitions Team following the allocation of a direct payment. Z planned to use her budget to employ a PA to help her with her school studies, to reach her desire to attend University as well as to help her with hobbies. Z's father, B was able to share his anxieties with Community Contacts about managing a direct payment with Z and that they did not know where to begin with the process of recruiting a PA. Community Contacts worked alongside the family to:

1. Assist them to understand their responsibilities of managing a direct payment and with being an employer, using appropriate resources, including the Personal Assistant Employers' Handbook and ACAS information, to promote best practice.
2. Develop a job description
3. Design a recruitment advert and post it to four local social media pages.
4. Manage interest generated by the advert from nine potential candidates.
5. Screen each candidate by telephone.
6. Organise remote interviews.
7. Agree the key elements to include in the contract of employment and statement of particulars for the successful candidate.
8. Help them understand the SDS Payment card.
9. Select a payroll company to meet their needs and requirements.

Following the successful recruitment of Z's first choice of PA, B fed back:

"Z used to spend a lot of time in her bedroom, withdrawn from the family and disengaged from life in general. Now she is up and out, going for long walks with her support worker, and taking an active part in family life. Medication changes have helped but just having a routine every day and being out of the house has been extremely useful. You made the process understandable and easier to get through. The support worker has worked out so well but we could not have done it without you. Thanks for all your help. You helped us change Z's life for the better".

People and carers have increased skills so are better able to manage social care packages

Outside the box- working with Support Choices

A young man with a large care package needed to find alternative care as a matter of urgency after his care service provider pulled out. He lives in his own accommodation and had to accept an Option 1 support package and become an employer, as there were no other providers who could cover his package. Two individual carers who had previously provided support through the care service stayed on as employed PAs.

His mother is his unpaid carer and was under a huge amount of stress with having to recruit, train, supervise and retain additional PAs. Support Choices helped her to recruit several more PAs, putting together job descriptions and placing adverts. She finally had a staff team of 7.

However, she also had to deal with the rotas of the PAs and had to cover for any who couldn't come in. She found this increasingly difficult to do and it was beginning to impact on her physical and mental health. Support Choices supported her to secure an extra two hours on the weekly package to employ someone to manage the rotas, timesheets and other paperwork for her. An agreement was also secured with the local authority that the Council team would provide cover for the PAs so she didn't have to cover that role herself.

People and carers have increased knowledge and understanding of self-directed support principles and options for social care

Equal Say

M is a very proud and self-sufficient man whose circumstances had changed dramatically as a result of a brain injury, compounding his physical and mental ill health.

When M's sister referred him for advocacy support, he had been threatened with eviction, was having difficulty organising his life and was reluctant to entertain the idea of certain types of support. He had some support in place but his sister told us that he had "lost faith" in anything changing for the better.

M was often anxious and found it difficult to keep his train of thought. He hoped that advocacy could help him hold his nerve and get his point across more effectively.

In early meetings, we explored what mattered to him and discussed his needs and aspirations. We explored all the options available and came up with a plan of action. After he considered the options available to him, he decided to pursue SDS.

An indicative budget was agreed which accommodated more direct support than M felt necessary and he is exploring more personalised options. M reported that, just as important as the new support team and the possibility of creative support solutions, his involvement and understanding of the whole process has made him feel more confident and powerful.

Advocacy Orkney

Advocacy helped an 85 year old lady and her daughter understand the options available to help her to stay living at home, at a time when she needed more help. She had been offered home care but unfortunately no carers were available. Advocacy explained the different options available under self-directed support and helped them to access a social work assessment to explore this further. The daughter had not known that there were other options and was grateful to learn about alternatives.



This has been a good service; (I) would have given up if we didn't have Mairi's (project worker) support. I did not know what I was doing. It made such a difference having Community Contacts support. Mairi had a nice way of talking her through things and treated me with respect. No question was a stupid question".

Community Contacts "were the first people who came in and made everything clear. They had no agenda or bias and never gave an opinion. They were able to just give me all the information I needed to make decisions about what would work best for me and my sister. I felt like I had been given a choice."

"Community Contacts explained everything to me and made it easier. They followed the law and did everything they could to help us. I could never have done this without Community Contacts, I would have given up."

People supported by Community Contacts (Carr Gomm)

Activity highlights: October 2020 - March 2021



Personal outcome and social care planning

448



people supported
with personal
outcome planning

516



people supported to
prepare for a social work
assessment or review

299



people helped to
develop a shadow care
or personal outcome plan



Social care information

2881 families received information and support
about social care and self-directed support.

333 people participated in training about self-directed
support and social care.



Putting social care plans into action and support to manage a social care package

659 people supported to manage their finance.

389 people supported with Option 1 arrangements.

256 people supported to recruit Personal Assistants.

38 people undertook Personal Assistant Employer training.



716 families signposted to relevant community-based services, support or resources had this feedback:

**351
people
said**



“ they now know
the range of
options they have
to support them ”

**61
people
said**



“ they feel more
engaged in their
community ”

**275
people
said**



“ they have more (or
have maintained)
their independence ”

**55
people
said**

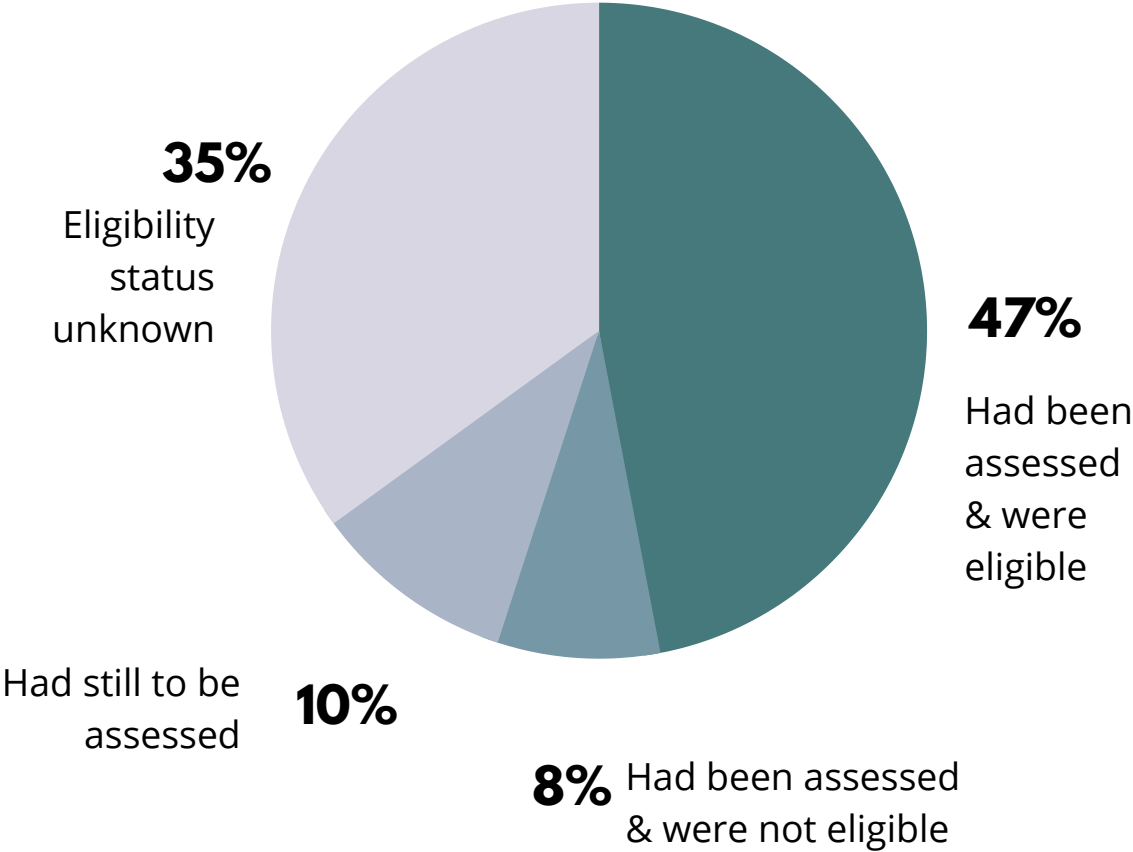


“ that they are
trying new things ”

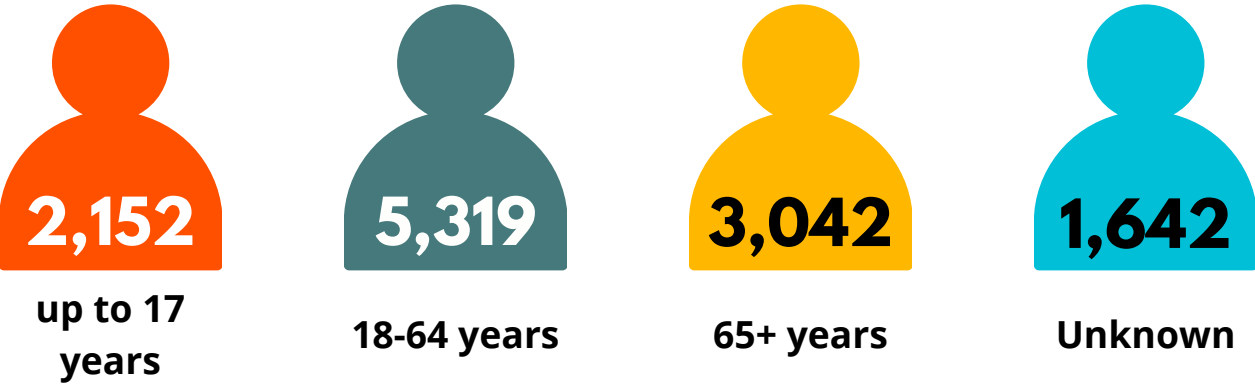
Over the life of SiRD

Eligibility for funded social care

of those people referred to SiRD projects for independent support

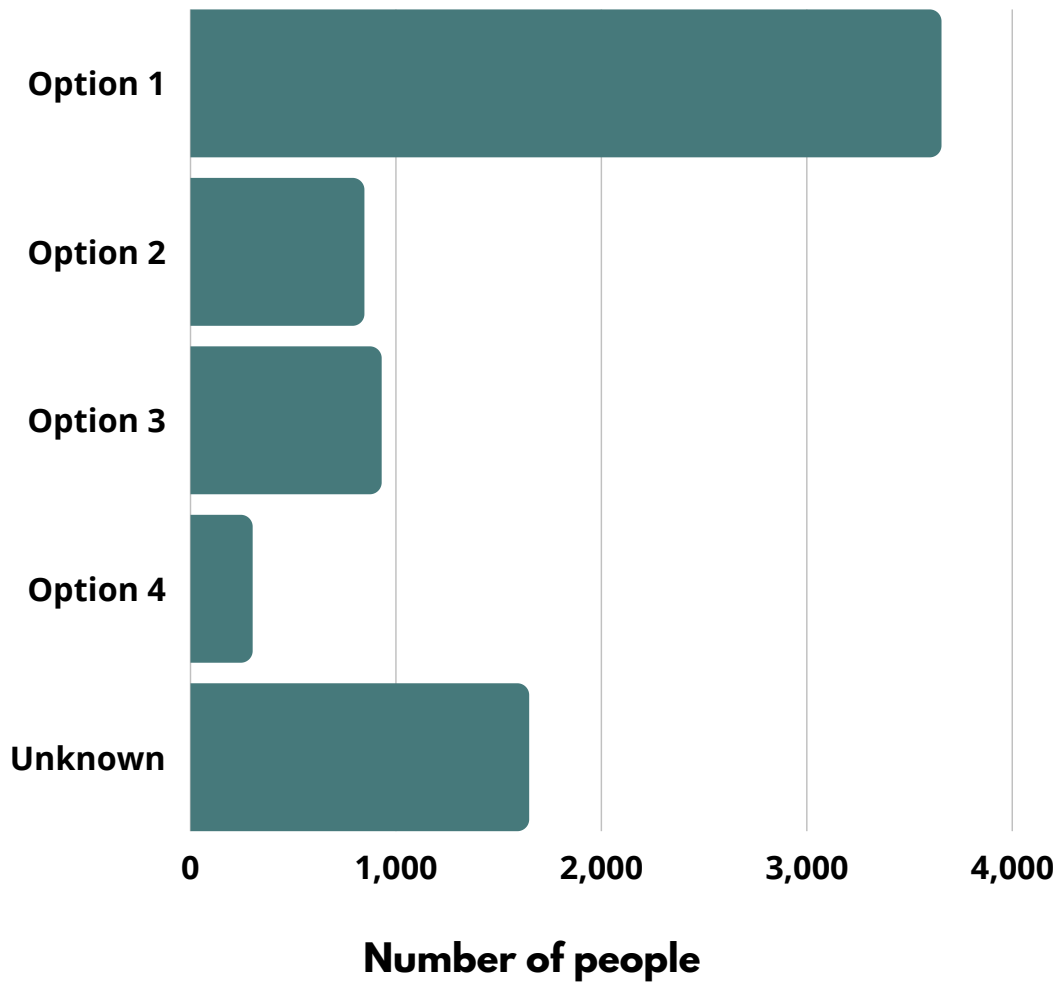


Age of people SiRD projects supported with their social care



Over the life of SiRD

Social Care option people received support with



Main referrers to SiRD projects

