



Healthcare  
Improvement  
Scotland

Community  
Engagement

# Supporting better quality health and social care for everyone in Scotland

Integrating service change engagement, Equality  
Impact Assessment and Fairer Scotland Duty  
Assessment

December 2022

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# Introduction

In accordance with equalities legislation<sup>1</sup> NHS boards and Integration Joint Boards (IJBs) are responsible for impact assessing the engagement process. They must also ensure any potential adverse impacts of proposed changes to services have been taken into account.

Measures must be taken, in both the engagement process and proposal, not to inadvertently exclude or discriminate groups of the population.

## Background

We have updated our previous flowchart to take account of the following new guidance and policy:

- The [Fairer Scotland Duty \(FSD\)](#), set out in Part 1 of the Equality Act 2010, came into force in Scotland from 1 April 2018. It places a legal responsibility on particular public bodies in Scotland to actively consider ('pay due regard' to) how they can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage, when making strategic decisions.
- The new Scottish Government and COSLA community engagement guidance, [Care services - planning with people \(2021\)](#) advises that impact assessment must be started well before any engagement activity begins, and be updated throughout.
- [The Islands \(Scotland\) Act 2018](#) introduced measures to support and help meet the unique needs of Scotland's islands now and in the future.

## Recommendations

Using experience of the service change engagement process, and reflecting on the new guidance and assessments, we have produced an updated flowchart to help to show how the statutory duties for engagement and equality link together.

Healthcare Improvement Scotland's Community Engagement directorate recommends an impact assessment is undertaken at the start of a service change process to help identify the people and communities that may be affected. An impact assessment can also inform the development of a communication and engagement plan, and can consider any potential barriers people may experience to the engagement process. Impact assessments should be

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

updated to reflect the feedback received from people during the engagement process and may include actions to mitigate adverse impacts.

Community Engagement recommends that people who may be affected by a change should be involved in the Equality Impact Assessment and Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment.

Guidance and resources can be found on the Equality and Human Rights Commission website on the Public Sector Equality Duty- <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/public-sector-equality-duty-scotland>

The Fairer Scotland Duty: guidance for public bodies should be consulted for advice on undertaking assessment- <https://www.gov.scot/publications/fairer-scotland-duty-guidance-public-bodies/pages/1/>

Community Engagement recognises there may be local variation as to how NHS boards and Integration Joint boards approach impact assessment however, the flowchart assists in demonstrating how to align the processes<sup>2</sup>.

## Resources

Community Engagement has developed a series of animations to help support understanding of potential impacts through the involvement of people and communities.

Understanding the impact of changes- <https://www.hisengage.scot/service-change/resources/understanding-the-impact-of-changes/>

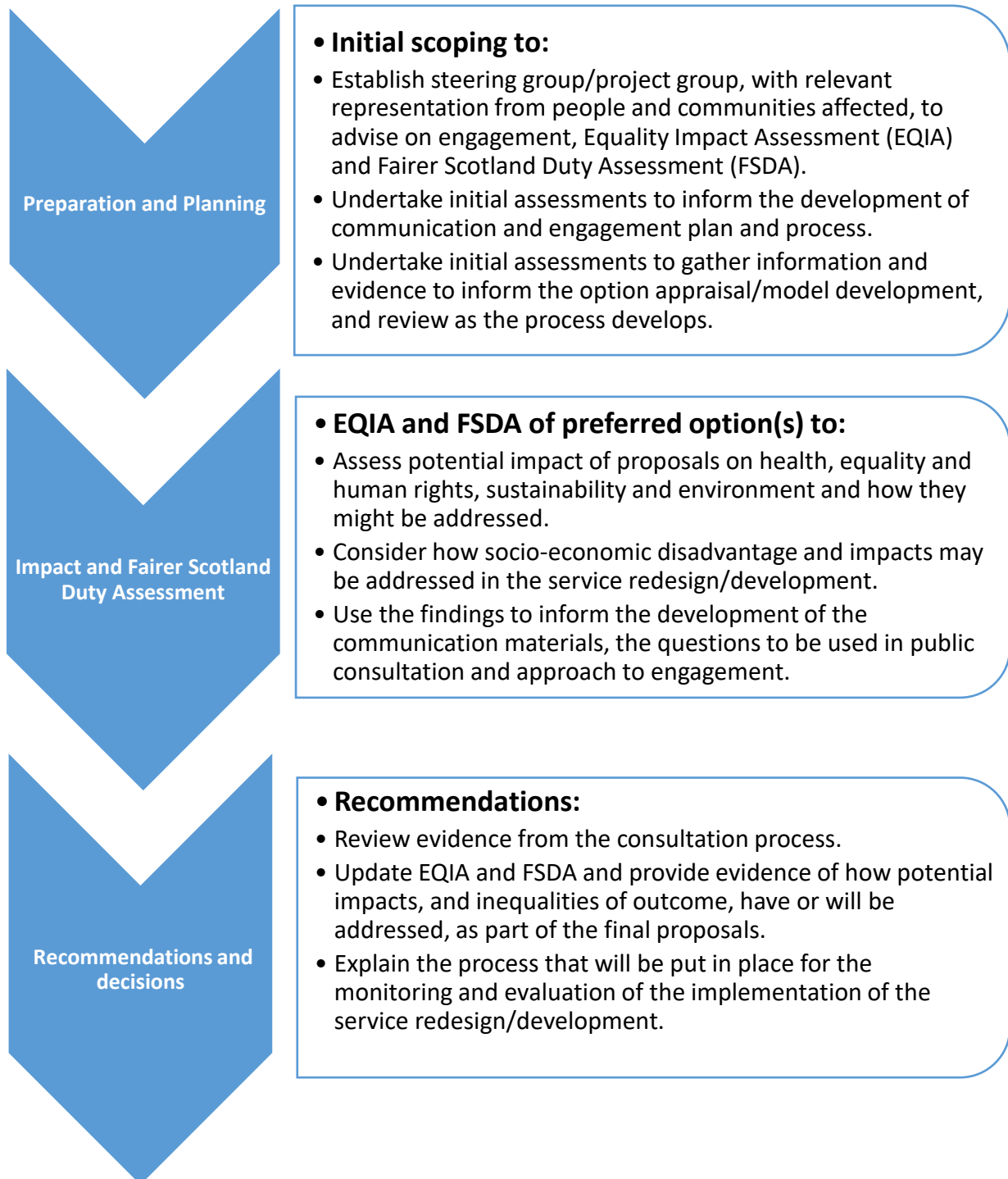
Potential barriers to engagement- <https://www.hisengage.scot/service-change/resources/potential-barriers-to-engagement/>

Understanding of proposed changes on transport and travel- <https://www.hisengage.scot/service-change/resources/understanding-the-impact-of-proposed-changes-on-transport-and-travel/>

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<sup>2</sup> Community Engagement notes that NHS boards and Integration Authorities may also need to complete an Island Communities Impact Assessment (ICIA) as required under the Islands (Scotland) Act 20181 (the Act) when proposed changes may come under Section 7 duty of the Act- <https://www.gov.scot/publications/island-communities-impact-assessments-guidance-toolkit/>

# Flowchart



You can read and download this document from our website.  
We are happy to consider requests for other languages or formats.  
Please contact our Equality and Diversity Advisor on 0141 225 6999  
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