



[Child Protection](#)

[Disability](#)

[Early Learning and
Childcare](#)

[Health](#)

[Justice](#)

[Other](#)

Child Protection

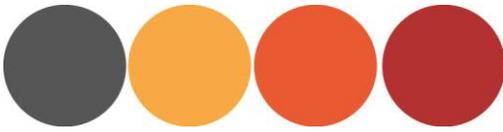
[Open letter on GIRFEC](#)

An open letter from senior leaders responsible for standards and practice in health, social work, social care and education has been published for the attention of managers, headteachers and practitioners in children's services. The letter reaffirms the authors' commitment to Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC), following the recent agreement of the GIRFEC Practice Development Panel by the Scottish Government. The letter covers a number of issues, including how Community Planning Partnerships are currently embedding the GIRFEC practice model and the commencement of refreshed practice guidance.

Disability

[Survey on disabled access to public places](#)

Euan's Guide will be running their annual access survey throughout October and November on what disabled people think of access provision in public places and spaces. The survey is open to disabled people, their family and friends as well as individuals who work closely with disabled people such as carers or healthcare professionals. Questions include how confident people are in visiting new places, what action they take if a venue has not shared its disabled access information, and what they do after visiting somewhere with good disabled access.



Early Learning and Childcare

[Survey on STEM professional learning launched](#)

Education Scotland has launched its [Annual STEM Professional Learning Survey 2019](#) and Early Years Scotland is encouraging practitioners in early learning and childcare settings to take part. The survey will gather information which will be used to improve the access that practitioners have to high quality professional learning. Education Scotland also hopes to track improvements in the provision of professional learning over the lifetime of the STEM Strategy (2017-2022).

[Staff retention concerns for Ireland's early years sector](#)

Nursery World has reported on a new survey showing a high percentage of early years staff in Ireland are looking to leave the sector. Carried out by Ireland's largest trade union, Siptu, the research suggests nine in ten staff are questioning their future in childcare based on the survey of 3,200 early childhood, education and care employees. The union said poor pay was to blame, highlighting the average rate of pay for childcare staff is €11.18 per hour but many employees are on the minimum wage. There have also been calls for greater investment in Ireland's childcare sector, which is thought to have the highest fees in the EU.

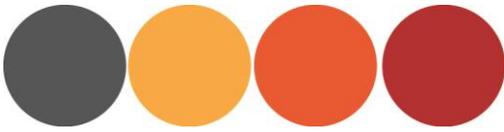
Health

[Alcohol industry casting doubt on health advice for pregnant women](#)

New research published in the Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs suggests the alcohol industry and the social responsibility bodies they fund are casting doubt on the risks related to drinking alcohol in pregnancy. The Guardian reports that the study claims alcohol producers from around the world are going against government health advice to abstain from alcohol altogether during pregnancy. Researchers said that in the UK, information had been published on a social responsibility campaign website stating that light drinking in pregnancy is safe and denying that consumption was linked to a baby having foetal alcohol spectrum disorder.

[Incontinence guidance published for teachers and early years leaders](#)

Nursery World reports on new good practice guidance on how to manage incontinence in children, following requests from families, schools and healthcare professionals. The guide, aimed at school leaders, nursery owners, governors, staff and practitioners, includes information on how to promote good bladder and bowel health and how to ensure children have access to clean, well-stocked toilets at intervals appropriate to their individual needs. It also gives advice on how to manage incontinence, with national guidelines covering all four countries within the UK, for which the legislation differs.



Justice

[Advice on cross-border family law disputes after Brexit](#)

The Scottish Government has produced a document detailing changes to the rules for civil judicial co-operation in family law that will arise in the event of a 'no deal' exit from the EU. The guidance is for the information of legal practitioners involved in family law in Scotland and the EU, including divorce and child maintenance, in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal. Other issues such as international parental child abduction, placement of children and judgements on parental responsibility are covered in the document. There is public guidance available and the Scottish Government has advised anyone involved in cross-border family law disputes to refer to that guidance.

Other

[Social work practice and user' needs should be at core of digital technology use](#)

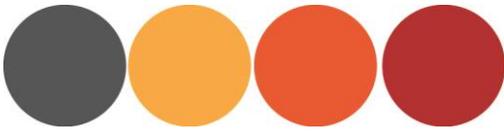
A report published by the Social Care Institute for Excellence and British Association of Social Workers suggests the development and use of digital technology in the sector should be driven by the needs of people who use services and social work practice. The research shows social workers are keen to engage with digital technology but want it to enable relationship-based practice and improve services for the user. A broad definition of digital technology was applied during the research, covering data, assistive technology, social media and networks and online learning. The report includes key messages for stakeholders, including a recommendation for educators, trainers and supervisors to build the development of digital capabilities into core programmes.

[Scottish Government publishes details of Brexit planning](#)

The Scottish Government has published an overview of preparations for a 'no deal' Brexit. The document sets out the potential impacts of no deal and a range of planned and potential actions in response. Under potential impacts of no deal, the publication states: "There would be myriad impacts on the NHS and on social care support in Scotland as a result of a 'No Deal' EU exit. A significant proportion of medicines, medical devices and clinical consumables are imported from the EU, meaning that the imposition of customs controls and tariffs if the UK leaves the EU with 'No Deal' has the potential to substantially disrupt supplies of medicines, medical devices and clinical consumables. EU withdrawal also poses a significant risk to the recruitment and retention of staff in the health and social care workforce." Under mitigating actions, the document states the Scottish Government is working closely with COSLA and social care providers to help with their contingency planning.

[Co-production information event \(20 November 2019\)](#)

The Institute for Research and Innovation in Social Services (Iriss) will host an event on co-production in Edinburgh on 20 November 2019. The event is for practitioners



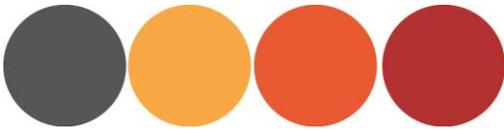
and managers working in local authority, third or private sector social services contexts, who want to understand more about co-production, develop their current practice, and network with others interested in this way of working.

[New benefit for young carers](#)

The Young Carer Grant will be available for young carers from Monday 21 October, the Scottish Government has confirmed. The new benefit will open for applications for young people aged between 16 and 18 who spend an average of 16 hours per week caring for someone who receives a disability benefit. Young carers can combine the hours they spend caring for more than one eligible person in order to reach the 16 hours a week requirement.

[Prevalence of gambling in young people explored by researchers](#)

The BBC reports on new research suggesting children as young as 11 have gambled in the last year. Cardiff University found two-fifths of 11 to 16 year olds had gambled, with playing fruit machines the most popular form of gambling. Playing cards for money with friends and scratch cards were other popular forms of gambling. Over 30,000 young people took part in the 2017 School Health Research Network Student Health and Wellbeing Survey, which also asked how they felt about their gambling. Of those who said they had gambled in the past 12 months, 84 per cent reported never feeling bad as a result. Dr Graham Moore, Centre for the Development and Evaluation of Complex Interventions for Public Health Improvement at Cardiff University, said the research suggests gambling might be emerging as a new public health issue.



Disclaimer

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Each item in the bulletin has a hyperlinked headline that will take the reader to the original source.

We collate items from our parliamentary and Scottish Government monitoring covering health and social care news from throughout the UK, and current research and policy development. We use a variety of sources for the bulletin, including alerts from [Newsdirect](#), [Community Care](#), [Children & Young People Now](#) and [ISD Scotland](#).

We aim to be representative rather than comprehensive, so we try to cover only the main Scottish stories, along with some stories from the rest of the UK. The purpose of the bulletin is to alert readers to items of interest. It should be noted that these items are the works of others and are neither authorised nor endorsed by the Care Inspectorate, with the exception of publications which are identified as Care Inspectorate publications.

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