Alcohol and Drugs

Alcohol-related hospital statistics

The Information Services Division has published ‘Alcohol-Related Hospital Statistics Scotland 2018/19’, providing an update of alcohol-related inpatient and day case activity within general acute hospitals and psychiatric hospitals in Scotland. The main points include:

- in 2018/19 there were 38,370 alcohol-related hospital admissions (stays) in general acute and psychiatric hospitals in Scotland, similar to the previous year (38,199)
- the 35,685 admissions to general acute hospitals relate to 23,751 patients some of whom had multiple admissions to hospital
- considering the long term trend since 1981/82, there was a steep and sustained increase in general acute alcohol-related hospital admissions until 2007/08 reaching a rate of 855 admissions per 100,000 population; this has now fallen to 669 per 100,000 population

Campaign launch to tackle drink and drug-driving at Christmas

The Scottish Government’s Justice Secretary and Police Scotland have launched their campaign to tackle drink and drug-driving over the Christmas period. The campaign highlights the criminal and personal consequences of being found guilty of driving a vehicle while under the influence alcohol or with drugs in your system.
Alzheimer's/Dementia

Reported increase in calls to Dementia Helpline

The Alzheimer’s Society has reported an increase in calls to their Dementia Helpline over the last ten years, totalling over 320,000 calls answered over the period and 45,000 last year. The Society also reports an increase in the volume of calls over December and January, as friends and relatives notice differences in behaviour during the festive season.

Ten years of Dementia Advisors

Alzheimer Scotland has published a report on the role of Dementia Advisers over the last ten years and their impact, specifically in the three areas of supporting people with dementia, supporting carers and families, and supporting the community. There are 36 Dementia Advisers across Scotland offering support to people living with dementia.

Health

Report on social prescribing of physical activity

The Health and Sport Committee has published their report setting out the evidence and conclusions of their short inquiry into the social prescribing of sport, exercise and physical activity. Amongst other conclusions, the Committee report states that social prescribing and primary prevention approaches can help in preventing long term conditions and dependence on pharmaceutical prescriptions, and there is no further evidence needed in relation to the efficacy of physical activity on improving health and wellbeing. It also has the potential to ease the pressure on existing health and social care services, as well as reducing waiting times, unplanned admissions to hospital and delayed discharges. However, social prescribing cannot be seen as a cost-free alternative, and sport and physical activity is an investment, not a cost.

Chair announced for inquiry into hospital issues in Glasgow and Edinburgh

The Scottish Government has announced that the Right Honourable Lord Brodie will chair the public inquiry into issues at the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital (QEUH) campus in Glasgow and the Royal Hospital for Children and Young People (RHCYP) in Edinburgh. The inquiry will examine how serious problems relating to key building systems and infrastructure occurred, and what steps can be taken to prevent these in future projects.

Nurse employment survey

The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) has published the results of their survey of members in Scotland, setting out a picture of what job quality looks like in nursing, including working patterns and workload, pay and earnings, the nature of work and views about nursing, physical and verbal abuse and bullying, and training and development. Key points include:
- 70% of all respondents reported that they work over their contracted hours at least once a week, around half of whom (53%) said that these hours were unpaid
- Six in ten (60%) agreed they are under too much pressure at work
- 62% feel that their pay is either inappropriate or very inappropriate
- 71% stated that nursing is a rewarding career
- 69% of respondents stated they had experienced verbal abuse by patients/service users or relatives, and 31% had experienced physical abuse

**Justice**

**Pre-budget report on justice and policing**

The Scottish Parliament’s Justice Committee has published its ‘Pre-budget Scrutiny of the Scottish Government’s Draft Budget 2020/21: Justice and Policing’, examining prison budgets and statistics, the key issues facing the prison sector such as prison numbers, the prison estate, purposeful activity, through care and rehabilitation, staffing issues, and key issues facing other sectors such as funding for the third sector, and local authority funding of criminal justice. The reports conclusions include that the Scottish Prison Service is under substantial pressure which is not sustainable.

**Appointment of new HM Chief Inspector of Prosecution**

The Scottish Government has announced the appointment of Laura Paton as the new HM Chief Inspector of Prosecution in Scotland, replacing Michelle McLeod who has been in the role since 2013. Ms Paton has a background in human rights law with a particular focus on the rights of those involved in the criminal justice system and the rights of children and young people. Until appointed as HM Chief Inspector of Prosecution in Scotland, she was a Lead Inspector for HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland where she inspected the state, efficiency and effectiveness of policing from 2013 to 2019.

**Mental Health**

**Annual report for Mental Welfare Commission**

The Mental Welfare Commission (MWC) has published its annual report for 2018-19, covering key projects over that time, visits carried out by the MWC, publications published, and improvements in their own practice. Highlighted by the MWC is the Scottish Government’s announcement of a review of the Mental Health Act, and the appointment of the MWC’s chief executive Colin McKay to the team of advisers working on the review.

**New mental health assembly for capital city**

The Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership is leading a project to set up a new mental health assembly, healthandcare.scot reports. Thrive Edinburgh is part of
an initiative which brings together the council, NHS, charities and academics to make the city a “world-leader” in tackling mental health issues. The assembly will meet three times a year and be fed recommendations on a programme of actions and activities.

Funding allocated for perinatal mental health services

The Scottish Government has announced details of funding to be allocated to 11 organisations who provide perinatal mental health services for mothers and families. A grant of £225,000 has been provided for third sector bodies who provide peer-to-peer support, counselling and befriending services for mums at risk of poor mental health during and after pregnancy and their families. All of the organisations will also be offered additional perinatal mental health training for staff.

Older People

Loneliness during the festive season

Age Scotland, together with Age UK, has launched a campaign on loneliness for older people during the festive season. The ‘No One Should Have No One’ campaign is highlighting that one in ten people over 65 years old in Scotland (around 106,000) say they will eat dinner alone on Christmas Day, and one in six older people (around 184,000) often feel more lonely at Christmas than at any time of year, and the campaign urges people to think of older friends, relatives or neighbours who might be feeling lonely.

Workforce

Age inclusive workplaces

Age UK has published a blog on age inclusive workplaces and their own Age Inclusive Workplace programmes. The blog states that there are twice as many people over 65 years old currently in employment compared to ten years ago, and sets out the challenges facing organisations in relation to age.

Other Health and Social Care

Support for veterans and Armed Forces Community

The Scottish Government has published a document highlighting continued support for veterans and Armed Forces Community across the public sector. Within the health sector, amongst other achievements, the Scottish Veterans Care Network has been established, and the online information about veterans’ health services on NHS Inform has been updated.

Adult social care recruitment campaign

Scottish Care has published an overview of the Scottish Government’s recruitment campaign, which is due to launch in January 2020 and is aimed at frontline workers in adult social care. The campaign is in response to recruitment pressures and
difficulties in filling vacancies, and the National Health and Social Care Workforce Place recommendation to deliver a national recruitment campaign to promote social care as a meaningful, valued and rewarding career choice, and also aims to attract new recruits into care homes, care at home and housing support.

SSSC Learning Zone gets makeover

The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) has highlighted a ‘makeover’ of its Learning Zone website. Improvements include a simpler layout, resources grouped by categories that match job functions and topics, and easier to find podcasts.

Good practice examples of health and social care integration

The Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (ALLIANCE) have published a new collection of case studies to demonstrate examples of good practice within health and social care integration. In partnership with Moray Wellbeing Hub, Dumfries and Galloway IJB, Homeless Network Scotland, Engage Renfrewshire, the Coalition of Carers in Scotland, Forth Valley Sensory Centre and Glasgow City HSCP, the ALLIANCE’s Integration Support team has collected seven case studies which demonstrate the good practice that is taking place within health and social care integration. These case studies consider the themes of:

- co-production and leadership
- financial planning
- strategic planning
- accountability and transparency
- information sharing
- meaningful and sustained engagement

New social work regulator goes live (England)

A new independent regulatory body to oversee social workers in England has become operational. Social Work England replaces the Health and Care Professions Council.
Disclaimer

This weekly bulletin is produced as an update on the key issues concerning adults and health.

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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