Alcohol and Drugs

Figures on drug and alcohol waiting times

New figures on waiting times for people accessing drug and alcohol treatment services have been published by ISD Scotland. The publication contains information on the number of people seen for treatment, types of treatment accessed and length of time waited between July and September 2019. Of the 11,229 people who started their first treatment in the most recent quarter, 95.0% waited three weeks or less.

Alzheimer’s/Dementia

Online tool to support digital needs of people with dementia

An online assessment tool is being developed to help people with long term conditions consider what digital products may assist in maintaining their independence, healthandcare.scot reports. The About Digital and Me (ADAM) tool, led by Alzheimer Scotland, has emerged from the Test of Change programme, which looked at how “off the shelf” technology could be used. The tool will also encourage carers to consider what digital products may be useful for people they are caring for.

Study makes Alzheimer’s memory discovery

Scientists from the universities of St Andrews and Edinburgh have discovered the functions of the area of the brain in which
Alzheimer’s begins. The research, published in Current Biology, focuses on the lateral entorhinal cortex (LEC), one of the first brain areas to show changes in Alzheimer’s. The research team found that when a particular connection between one of the layers of the LEC and the hippocampus malfunctions, episodic memory is affected while simpler forms of memory remain unaffected. The scientists hope that the research will support the development of new treatments and strategies.

Conference and graduation event for Dementia Champions

A conference and graduation event for Dementia Champions will take place in Edinburgh on 11 March 2020. The event is for Cohort 10, Health and Social Services Dementia Champions and Cohort 3 Dementia Specialist Improvement Leads, and is hosted by NHS Education for Scotland, the Scottish Social Services Council, Alzheimer Scotland and the Scottish Government as part of the Promoting Excellence workforce development programme.

Kate Lee appointed new Alzheimer’s Society CEO

The Alzheimer’s Society has announced the appointment of Kate Lee as its new Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Ms Lee is currently Chief Executive Officer at the CLIC Sargent charity and will take up her new role in April 2020.

Care Homes/Care at Home

Call for Home Office fee to hold end of life medicine stocks to be scrapped

Care homes should not have to pay to hold stocks of end of life medicines, according to Scottish Care in its submission to a parliamentary inquiry, healthandcare.scot reports. Writing to the Health and Sport Committee to support its work on supply and demand for medicines, Scottish Care pointed out that care homes must pay for a Home Office licence to carry a stock of ‘just in case’ medicines and suggested this is “preventing care homes from introducing such systems and therefore creating additional waste”.

SSSC advice for workers who missed care at home and housing support registration

The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) has issued advice for support workers who missed the deadline for care at home and housing support registration. Those who did not submit their application by 13 December have been told to start their application as soon as possible and submit it, even though it is after the deadline. The SSSC will still process new applications for registration in date order and will continue to process and register as many people as possible.

Blog on next phase of Arts in Care project

A blog on the next phase of the Arts in Care project has been published by the Care Inspectorate. Improvement Adviser Lisa Maynard reflects on Phase 1 of the project and Phase 2 of the project will involve a further 10 artists working with 30 care homes across Scotland to build confidence and capacity within care home staff to host creative activities with older residents.
Dates set for National Care at Home and Care Home Conferences and Awards

Scottish Care has announced the dates and venues for next year’s national conferences and awards. The National Care at Home and Housing Support Conference & Awards will take place on 22 May in Glasgow, while the National Care Home Conference & Awards will take place on 27 November in Glasgow.

CQC statement re Four Seasons Health Care

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) has issued a statement regarding the position of Four Seasons Health Care. The English regulator highlighted its Market Oversight regulatory responsibility to advise local authorities if it believes there will be likely service cessation as a result of likely business failure, adding: “We do not believe this to be the case at this time.”

Disabilities

Review of Learning Disability and Autism in Mental Health Act publishes findings

An independent review of learning disability and autism in the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 has published its findings. The review, led by Andrew Rome, Catherine Evans and Simon Webster, recommends that in future, autism and learning disability should not be defined as forms of ‘mental disorder’ under the Act, and that autism and learning disability should be defined in a new law. The review also recommends: that a commission or inspectorate be given power to set human right based standards and enforce these in relation to mental health services, and that there should be inspected standards set for services and environments that Health and Social Care Partnerships have in place for autistic people and people with intellectual disability. The report will feed into a wider review of mental health legislation, led by John Scott QC.

Scottish Government updates on progress in delivering Fairer Scotland action plan

A progress report on the Scottish Government’s action plan to provide a ‘Fairer Scotland’ for disabled people has been published. The report assesses the progress made in support services, improving incomes and creating fairer working lives, accessibility, protected rights, and active participation for people with disabilities. The Care Inspectorate’s thematic work on Self-directed Support and continued activity to update inspection methodologies to reflect the Health and Social Care Standards are noted in the report.

Research pinpoints cells behind motor neurone failure

Scientists have identified cells key to motor neurone disease, The Herald reports. Research carried out by scientists at St Andrews and Edinburgh universities used stem cell technology to identify glial cells that can cause motor neurones to fail. It is hoped that the finding “highlights targets for the development of much-needed treatments and ultimately a cure for MND”. A further study by the University of Exeter has found evidence linking MND to an imbalance of cholesterol, the BBC reports.
Report from SDS, human rights and learning disabilities event

A report from a recent event on Self-directed Support (SDS), human rights and people with learning disabilities has been published by the ALLIANCE. The ALLIANCE and the Minority Ethnic Carers of Older People Project jointly hosted the last of a series of Masterclasses on SDS on 26 November. A report from the event has now been made available.

End of Life/Palliative Care

New palliative and end of life care guidance toolkit launched by SSSC

A new palliative and end of life care guidance toolkit has been launched by the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). The learning resource has been developed in partnership with the sector aims to provide health and social care workers with clear links, guidance and connections between the Enriching and Improving Experience Framework and the required registerable qualifications which are considered integral to the delivery of high quality palliative and end of life care.

Marie Curie calls for investment to meet demand for community end of life care

Around two thirds of Scots will die in the community by 2040 but investment is needed to meet projected demand, according to Marie Curie. The charity has published research by the University of Edinburgh and King’s College London suggesting that, by 2040, 66% of deaths could take place in environments such as a person’s residence, hospice or care home. However, Marie Curie warns that this will be unsustainable if “community support and capacity is not radically increased”. The charity makes three recommendations: to increase and upskill a community health and social care workforce through education, training and valuing of care work; to build community care capacity through informal carer support and community engagement; to stimulate a public debate on death, dying and sustainable funding.

Marie Curie study on improved use of electronic care plans in Scotland

Marie Curie has urged increased use of an electronic care coordination system, or Key Information Summary (KSI), to ensure clinicians have information to guide decision making for people likely to need emergency or out-of-hours care. The charity has led on research, published in the British Journal of General Practice, finding that 69% of people in Scotland with an advanced progressive illness had a KSI in place by the time of death, and that this was associated positively with dying in the community. The authors outline several ideas for further progress to be made.

Palliative care services lagging behind global need, Glasgow University study finds

Across the world palliative care services are lagging behind the need for specialised care at the end of life, according to a study by the University of Glasgow. Led by Professor David Clark, the research found that only 30 countries from 198 in the world have sophisticated levels of palliative care provision that are fully integrated into the health and social care system, covering just 14% of the global population.
The researchers involved have called for a major review of global policies to promote palliative care.

**Integration of health and social care**

**Integrated Health and Social Care Workforce Plan published**

An integrated workforce plan for health and social care in Scotland has been published by the Scottish Government. The plan sets out recommendations focussing on national challenges including embedding integration, waiting times and mental health. It sets out workforce factors to consider when assessing demand, the skills and size of the workforce needed, and the actions to be taken to ensure a sustainable workforce. The Scottish Government has also published Guidance on the plan, alongside Illustrative Scenarios.

**IJBs continue to face ‘very significant’ challenges, Accounts Commission report finds**

Integration Joint Boards (IJBs) continue to face “very significant” challenges “need to do much more to address their financial sustainability”, according to a report by the Accounts Commission. The Commission’s 2018/19 overview of local government finance includes a section dedicated to IJBs, highlighting that a majority of IJBs struggled to achieve break-even in 2018/19 and that around a third of the IJBs failed to agree a budget with their partners for the start of the 2019/20 financial year. In his foreword, Chair Graham Sharp suggests that the pace of progress with integration has been “too slow” and that there is not yet evidence of “a significant shift in spending and services from hospitals to community and social care”.

**Summary of engagement activity with carers on integration in the Borders**

A summary of findings from engagement with carers and professionals on the integration of health and social care in the Borders has been published by the ALLIANCE. The ALLIANCE’s Integration Support team hosted an event in Galashiels on 7 November to gather views on carers’ experiences of both health and social care integration and the Carers Act.

**Justice**

**Inspection of justice social work services in Inverclyde Council**

A report into how well community payback orders are implemented and managed in Inverclyde has been published by the Care Inspectorate. Inspectors looked at how justice social work services in the area were delivering services for individuals who are, or have been, subject to community payback orders. The inspection took place between July and August 2019. Inspectors found that leaders demonstrated a strong commitment and vision to improve outcomes for individuals which was supported by a clear understanding of their needs and a well-informed strategic plan that was driving improvement.
Mental Health

New app to support mental health practitioners and students launched

A new app to support mental health practitioners and students has been launched by NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, healthandcare.scot reports. The MyPsych app gives staff and students quick access to essential information to improve patient support, covering medicines guidance, support for researchers and key information for students on placement.

Older People

Scottish Care to host Global Ageing Conference in 2023

Scottish Care has been selected by the Global Ageing Network to host the Biennial Global Ageing Conference in Scotland in Autumn 2023. The event, to be run in association with the National Care Forum from England and Wales, will host delegates and leaders in ageing services, housing, research, technology and design.

Other Health and Social Care

Framework of Action for neurological care over next five years

The Scottish Government has published a framework setting out a vision for driving improvement in the care and support for those with neurological conditions in Scotland over the next five years. The Framework for Action “aims to support Integration Authorities, NHS, the third sector and other organisations to build on what already works well, to identify and address gaps in provision, to challenge the more traditional models applied in some areas that may not be providing the best solutions and to introduce innovative ideas to drive up standards of care and support”. The framework includes an aim to ensure high standards of effective, person-centred, and safe care and support. Within this aim is a commitment to promote and support the implementation of the Health and Social Care Standards 2018 and Healthcare Improvement Scotland General Standards for Neurological Care and Support 2019.

Committee reports on Bill to modernise and improve the disclosure system

A Committee at the Scottish Parliament has reported on the Scottish Government’s proposed Bill to modernise and improve the proportionality of the state disclosure system in Scotland. Reporting on the Disclosure (Scotland) Bill at Stage 1, the Education and Skills Committee supported the general principles but identified a number of areas which will require further clarification and consideration to ensure that the Bill delivers on its aims in full. The Committee welcomed the move from lifetime membership to a renewable five year membership and the introduction of grace periods contained within the Bill. The report also acknowledged the Scottish Government’s commitment to improve parts of the Bill at Stage 2, including the definition of protected adult in relation to regulated roles and a consultation on guidance on the two-part test for disclosure of childhood conviction.
SASW updates on its work over last quarter

The Scottish Association of Social Workers (SASW) has published any update setting out its work over the last three months. Featured news includes publication of the Anti-Poverty Practice Guide and efforts to create a Cross-Party Group on Social Work at the Scottish Parliament.

Irss supports East Ayrshire on recording practice from cross-service perspective

Irss is again working with East Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) in 2019/20 to explore recording practice from a cross-service perspective. A series of three workshops will see practitioners from across the HSCP get support to identify and test changes and make recommendations on how good practice can be embedded. The workshops are using creative and appreciative methods to facilitate learning and dialogue with colleagues from other services within the partnership.

Audit Scotland outlines impact of 2017 progress report on SDS

Audit Scotland has published a report looking at the impact of its 2017 progress report on Self-directed support (SDS). As well as summarising the impact in relation to its communication and contribution to policy developments, the report highlights steps taken in meeting recommendations, including publication of a new SDS implementation plan for 2019-21.

Briefing on Brexit preparations published by Audit Scotland

A briefing on preparations for withdrawal from the European Union (EU) has been published by Audit Scotland. The paper highlights key messages from audit work, provides illustrations of the impact that preparing for withdrawal from the EU has had on public bodies, and suggests questions for public bodies to ask themselves about their ongoing preparations for EU withdrawal.

Number registered with NMC at all-time high

The number of nurses, midwives and nursing associates on the Nursing and Midwifery Council’s (NMC) register is at an all-time high of 706,252. The NMC has published mid-year figures showing that the six month period between 1 April and 30 September saw an overall increase to the register of 8,015 (1.15%) people.

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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.

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