




Adult and Health



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Alcohol and Drugs

[National Mission on Drugs annual monitoring report 2022-2023](#)

The Scottish Government has published an analysis report on the progress made against the National Mission on Drugs between April 2022 and March 2023. The report notes that although drug deaths have decreased since 2022, they remain at a high level. It also notes the association of deprivation with drug deaths, highlighting that in 2022 people in the most deprived areas of Scotland were almost 16 times more likely to die from drugs misuse compared to those who lived in the least deprived areas.

[New guidance on managing alcohol in care homes \(England\)](#)

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) has developed new good practice guidance on the availability and management of alcohol in care homes. The guidance, developed with the University of Bedfordshire, is aimed at care home managers and members of the public, and looks at the benefits of having alcohol available to care home residents as well as how to mitigate risks. The guidance is based on a study on alcohol policy and practice in care homes across England. It includes good practice guidance for care staff and a guide for care home residents and the general public.



Justice

[Findings from independent study on bail and remand in Scotland published](#)

The final report from an independent research study on decision-making on bail and remand decisions in Scotland has been published by the Scottish Government. The report presents the findings from the second phase of the study which included qualitative interviews from key justice stakeholders. The study findings highlight the complex bail and remand decision making process, and notes that “the main strengths of the current system appear to be the flexibility that the legislation affords and the involvement of social work staff to provide contextual information to triangulate with offence data”.

Mental Health

[New survey launched to better understand training needs for mental health support](#)

The Poverty Alliance and the Mental Health Foundation have launched a survey to understand the mental health training and support needs of grassroots organisations working with people on low incomes. This work is funded by the Scottish Government as part of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Delivery Plan, and will inform a series of workshops in early 2024 to develop and test training for grassroots organisations on preventative mental health support for people living on low incomes.

Older People

[New emergency fuel and food voucher initiative launched by Age Scotland](#)

The charity has announced the launch of a new emergency energy and food voucher initiative to support vulnerable older people this winter. The initiative, which is supported by SGN, offers older people £30 credit towards their fuel or food costs and is open to those aged 50 and over.

[Charity calls on the public to help tackle loneliness and isolation over festive period](#)

Age Scotland is urging everyone to help tackle loneliness and isolation during the festive period. The charity has highlighted that this time of year is difficult for many older people and is calling on everyone to help those in need of extra support. Age Scotland is also encouraging anyone who is struggling during this time to call the charity’s free helpline and chat to an advisor.

Other Health and Social Care

[Scottish Government 2024-25 budget statement](#)

The Deputy First Minister, Shona Robison, delivered the Scottish Government’s 2024-25 budget statement to Parliament this week. In her statement, Ms Robison announced the introduction of a new 45% tax band for people earning between



£75,000 and £125,140, an increase of 1% to the top rate of tax, funding for local government to help finance a council tax freeze, and confirmation of £200 million additional funding in social care to increase pay rates to £12 per hour for adult social care workers in commissioned services from April 2024.

[Independent Living Fund will reopen to new applicants](#)

The Scottish Government has announced that the Independent Living Fund will reopen to new applicants after receiving £9 million in funding as part of the 2024-25 Scottish budget.

[Progress review on recommendations set out in nursing workforce report](#)

The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) has published a review of the progress made on the recommendations from its Nursing Workforce in Scotland Report (2023). The 2023 workforce report included 10 recommendations to tackle the challenges facing Scotland's nursing workforce, including nursing vacancies. RCN note that there has been some progress around recommendations relating to safe staffing, including the implementation of the Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019, however progress around other recommendations has been slow. The report also notes little progress around recommendations relating to the number of registered nurses in community, social care and primary care services.

[Committee launches inquiry into Scotland's Commissioner Landscape](#)

The Finance and Public Administration Committee has launched an inquiry into the Commissioner landscape in Scotland. Currently, there are seven independent Commissioners directly responsible to the Scottish Parliament. The creation of a Patient Safety Commissioner was also agreed in 2023 and an additional six Commissioners have been proposed or are being considered. The Committee will launch a call for views in early January 2024 to inform its inquiry.

[Joint inspection of adult support and protection in Dundee](#)

A joint inspection of adult support and protection in the Dundee partnership area has found clear strengths in supporting positive experiences and outcomes for adults at risk of harm. The joint inspection found that the partnership's key processes for adult support and protection were effective with areas for improvement.

[Consultation on gender identity healthcare standards](#)

Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS) has announced the launch of a new consultation on the draft standards for Gender Identity Healthcare: Adults and Young People. The draft standards cover 8 areas, including shared and supported decision making, reducing inequalities in gender identity healthcare services, and staff training and support. The consultation is seeking views around any wording that is unclear, potential gaps within the standards, and any additional references for considerations. The consultation will close on Friday 1 March 2024 with the final standards expected to be published in summer 2024.



[Annual return deadline extended](#)

The Care Inspectorate has extended the annual return submission period for an additional four weeks, following feedback from providers and their representative groups about the pressures facing the sector. Annual returns will open on Monday 8 January 2024, with a revised deadline of Sunday 17 March.

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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