




Adult and Health



[Alcohol and Drugs](#)

[Equalities](#)

[Justice](#)

[Mental Health](#)

[Older People](#)

[Other Health & Social Care](#)

[Other](#)

Alcohol and Drugs

[Alcohol-specific death data for 2023 published by National Records for Scotland](#)

Figures published by National Records for Scotland show the number of alcohol-specific deaths in Scotland remains the highest since 2008. The recently published data shows that 1,277 deaths were attributed to alcohol-specific causes in 2023, which is the highest number of alcohol-specific deaths registered in a year since 2008. The data also shows that alcohol-specific deaths were 4.5 times as high in the most deprived areas of Scotland compared to the least deprived areas in 2023.

Equalities

[New report examines health and socioeconomic divides in Scotland](#)

The Health and Social Care Alliance (the ALLIANCE) has highlighted the publication of a report by the Scottish Health Equity Research Unit (SHERU) which looks at health and socioeconomic divides in Scotland. Key findings from the report suggests that core outcomes related to inequalities and health are not improving significantly and some are getting worse. The report also highlights concerns around key population-level indicators of health and living standards, including that life expectancy is no longer rising and that average living standards have yet to return to pre-2010 levels of growth.



Justice

[New guidance on automatic release dates for prisoners in England and Wales](#)

The Ministry of Justice has published updated guidance with information on the change to automatic release dates for some prisoners so they now serve 40% of their sentence in prison rather than 50%. The changes to automatic release dates will not apply to sentences for sex offences, serious violent offences with a sentence of 4 years or more, and domestic abuse offences. The BBC has [reported](#) that up to 1,750 prisoners were due to be released this week under emergency plans to ease overcrowding in prisons in England and Wales.

Mental Health

[New report highlights impact of work pressures on the mental health of nursing staff](#)

The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) has reported a 76% rise in staff seeking support for suicidal ideation in the first half of this year compared to the same period in 2023. RCN's UK-wide report has found that more than two-thirds of nursing staff who had contacted RCN's advice service between February 2022 and February 2024 said workplace issues were a key factor in why they were seeking help. The RCN is calling on health and care employers to implement preventative measures to reduce work-related pressures that may trigger a mental health crisis and suicidal ideation. The RCN is also launching a pilot scheme with Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust to explore how changes to workplace culture can improve staff wellbeing and develop a UK-wide framework that can be used by employers across the health and care system.

[The Scottish Recovery Network has launched its Big Scottish Peer Support Survey](#)

The ALLIANCE has highlighted work being undertaken by the Scottish Recovery Network to understand what mental health peer support looks like in Scotland. The Scottish Recovery Network is looking to find out where it's happening, who is doing it and what is needed to help it grow, and is inviting those who are a part of or know of a peer support group, service or activity that hosts mental health peer support to complete its Big Scottish Peer Support Survey.

Older People

[Charity calls on MPs to vote against Winter Fuel Payment cut](#)

Age Scotland has written to the 37 Labour MPs representing Scottish seats to urge them to vote against the UK Government's plan to means-test the winter fuel payment. In its letter to Scottish Labour MPs, Age Scotland states that "hundreds of thousands of pensioners across Scotland on low and very modest incomes, or in fuel poverty who aren't eligible for Pension Credit will now have less money to pay for higher energy costs."



[New guidance on supporting engagement with reablement services](#)

The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) has published new best practice guidance and information to help those who commission, manage and deliver reablement services tackle key barriers that can prevent people from fully benefitting from the service. SCIE notes that older people who have been recently discharged from hospital are among the primary recipients of reablement services, however it also highlights some of the barriers preventing them from benefiting from this service as much as they could, such as a lack of understanding of what reablement is and reluctance to engage. The guidance has been developed by researchers at the University of York and has been published by SCIE as an online resource

Other Health and Social Care

[Parliamentary Committee makes recommendations to improve SDS](#)

The Scottish Parliament's Health, Social Care and Sport Committee has published its phase 2 report on post-legislative scrutiny of the Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013. The report makes a number of recommendations on how to improve implementation of SDS, suggesting there need to be a "shift of emphasis" away from the four Options set out in the Act and towards the underlying principles of choice and control. The Committee also recommends the Scottish Government produce new guidance on SDS implementation, providing a framework to achieve positive outcomes for individuals in creative and flexible ways.

Other

[Annual progress report on implementing the Violence Prevention Framework](#)

The Scottish Government has published its first annual progress report on the implementation of the Violence Prevention Framework. The report provides a breakdown of the progress made in the first year of the three-year programme, including progress made against actions to help support people with multiple complex issues, support vulnerable and high risk people in their homes and communities, to prevent and tackle antisocial behaviour, and suicide prevention.



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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