

22-28 November 2024



bulletin



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Alzheimer's/Dementia

[Age Scotland calls on Scottish Government to improve support to unpaid carers](#)

Age Scotland has published its Carer Engagement Report which provides insights into the experiences of unpaid carers of people living with dementia in Scotland and what training and education is most valued by carers. The charity has also [written](#) to MSPs highlighting the findings from a series of engagement sessions with unpaid carers and setting out a number of recommendations for the Scottish Government.

Recommendations include improving post-diagnostic support and ring-fencing Carers Act funding.

Covid-19

[Inquiry's listening project will close its surveys on 29 November 2024](#)

The Scottish Covid-19 Inquiry has announced the deadline for sharing experiences of the pandemic. The Let's Be Heard project will finish gathering people's experiences on Friday 29 November 2024. The project will now focus on analysing the information gathered and build on initial findings which were published last year.



Equalities

[New report highlights challenges to accessing human rights in Scotland's rural areas](#)

The Scottish Human Rights Commission (SHRC) has published a report on how economic, social and cultural rights are being experienced in Highland and Island communities in Scotland. The Commission has found significant challenges in the current enjoyment of these rights for people in the Highlands and Islands, and highlights failures to meet the most basic international obligations related to the right to food, the right to housing, the right to health, and the right to cultural life. The report sets out 8 recommendations for all duty bearers to ensure full compliance with Scotland's international human rights obligations, including strengthening human rights laws and access to justice, and meeting minimum core obligations.

Justice

[Legislation on early release of prisoners passed by the Scottish Parliament](#)

The Prisoners (Early Release) (Scotland) Bill has now been passed by the Scottish Parliament. The legislation will change the release point for offenders serving sentences of less than four years from 50% of their sentence to 40%. The change could be implemented from February 2025 for those already serving short-term sentences and would result in between 260-390 prisoners being eligible for immediate release. The new rules will not apply to prisoners serving sentences for domestic abuse or sexual offences.

[Independent Prison Monitoring Report for the period April to September 2024](#)

The HM Inspectorate of Prisons for Scotland (HMIPS) report notes that concerns around overcrowding, prison regime, progression, staffing, the complaints system, prisoner escorts, medication dispensing, and the cost of living, which were highlighted in last year's report, still remain as persistent issues across the Scottish prison estate. Independent Prison Monitors (IPMs) have highlighted that overcrowding remains the biggest single issue facing Scottish prisons and also raise concerns around the remand population and the prevalence of short sentences under 12 months.

Mental Health

[Mental Health Scrutiny and Assurance Collaborative](#)

The Scottish Government has published a paper on a Mental Health Scrutiny and Assurance Collaborative which aims to promote improved outcomes for people, with the intention of reducing inequalities in experience of and access to services. The Collaborative follows recommendations from the Mental Health Scrutiny and Assurance Review, the Scottish Mental Health Law Review and the Independent Review of Inspection, Scrutiny and Regulation which called for an overarching framework for mental health scrutiny and assurance. The paper provides an overview of the aims, initial scope and the scrutiny bodies involved in the Collaborative.



[Commission publishes 13 new local visit reports](#)

The Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland has published 13 new reports following visits to mental health services and community services in Scotland. The Commission's executive director has noted that the reports highlight a number of good practice examples and also noted an increase in awareness of rights-based approaches in care planning.

[SPICe briefing on how interventions under the Adults with Incapacity Act are supervised](#)

The Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe) has published a briefing on the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act (2000) and how the different interventions available under the Act are supervised. The briefing also includes an overview of the various proposals to reform the law around adults with incapacity and current developments in policy and practice. It notes the current work of the Scottish Government to establish a new Mental Health and Capacity Reform Programme and proposals to amend the 2000 Act.

[Joint inspection of adult services in the Clackmannanshire and Stirling Partnership](#)

The Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS) have published a joint inspection report of Clackmannanshire and Stirling Health and Social Care Partnership with a focus on people living with a mental illness. Inspectors found key strengths including that staff across the partnership were working hard to support people living with mental illness in Clackmannanshire and Stirling. Their care and compassion contributed to good outcomes for some people and improved their quality of life. However, inspectors also identified a number of areas for improvement including that the partnership should develop processes for capturing robust data on outcomes for people using mental health services and their unpaid carers to inform service planning and ongoing improvement and that the partnership should support staff across all mental health services to identify and respond to the needs of unpaid carers of people living with a mental illness.

Older People

[Older People's Housing Taskforce publishes final report \(England\)](#)

An independent report which looks at the housing options for older people in England has been published by the Older People's Housing Taskforce. The final report by the taskforce states that an estimated 30,000 to 50,000 new later living homes are needed per year to meet growth and that current private leasehold OPH (older people's housing) options are unaffordable for the majority of English households aged 75 and over. The report also highlights the need to develop age-friendly and inclusive communities, and the need to create positive connections between older people and their local communities and the wider health and social care system.



Other Health and Social Care

[Pandemic preparedness Committee publishes final report](#)

The Scottish Government has published the final report of the Standing Committee on Pandemic Preparedness. This report follows on from the Committee's interim report which was published in August 2022 and includes specific recommendations that aim to ensure learning and new knowledge can be communicated when the next pandemic arrives. The Committee has made recommendations around the establishment of an independent Scottish Pandemic Sciences Partnership, hosted by Public Health Scotland (PHS), fostering connectedness among the academic and wider pandemic preparedness community, including maintaining links with a network of experts from Scotland, the UK, and internationally, identifying and securing the effective use of data for pandemics, horizon-scanning and the role of innovation for pandemics, and developing a rapid assessment process which scrutinises the impact of crisis policies on marginalised and deprived communities.

[Committee overview of Scottish Government's proposed amendments to NCS Bill](#)

The Health, Social Care and Sport Committee has published an overview of the Scottish Government's proposed stage 2 amendments to the National Care Service (NCS) Bill and a [summary of views](#) gathered by the Committee on those amendments. The key messages from the views gathered by the Committee suggests that stakeholders remain frustrated by the lack of progress, and uncertainty on aspects such as Anne's Law and representation boards. The paper also notes that there is increased uncertainty among stakeholders following the withdrawal of support for the Bill by COSLA, Unions and opposition parties.

[New project to explore impact of domestic abuse on deaf survivors and families](#)

The ALLIANCE (Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland) has highlighted research which is being undertaken to examine the impact of domestic abuse on families when children of deaf mothers are relied on to interpret. The study will look at the challenges faced by deaf women in reporting or seeking help for domestic abuse and aims to identify and address the communication barriers that are masked when children are involved as interpreters, and how mothers and practitioners perceive the potential impact on children. The initial phase of the study will consist of interviews with deaf mothers and practitioners across the UK, with a view of involving children in a future project. The study is due to begin in January 2025 and the first findings are due to be published in December 2025.

[Programme supporting those experiencing distress has helped over 75,000 people](#)

The Scottish Government has highlighted that all 31 Health and Social Care Partnerships have now signed up to a programme which supports people experiencing distress. The Distress Brief Intervention (DBI) provides support to people who present to emergency services or in primary care settings in a distressed state and has helped over 75,000 people. The programme can offer people with an initial call with 24 hours and then provides up to two weeks of one-to-



one support with a specially trained practitioner to help address issues which might be contributing to their distress.

Workforce

[SSSC urges training providers and employers to offer new SVQ qualification](#)

The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) is calling on training providers and employers to offer the new SVQ Integrated Health and Social Care SCQF Level 7. The new qualification promotes the integrated value of health and social care and is designed for the adult social care and children and young people workforce across integrated health and social care.

Disclaimer

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

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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