




Adult and Health



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Alzheimer's/Dementia

[New training to address unmet needs of older LGBTQ+ individuals with dementia](#)

The Dementia Services Development Centre (DSDC) at the University of Stirling is developing a new training course which is focused on LGBTQ+ ageing and dementia for health and social care professionals. The training aims to help professionals to provide inclusive, affirming care for LGBTQ+ individuals and will cover key topics such as understanding the impact of historical discrimination, addressing unconscious bias, and creating care environments that celebrate diversity and respect individual identities. The training programme will launch in 2025 and there are currently two dates available to book, 27 March and 12 June 2025.

[Age Scotland has appointed new Head of Dementia](#)

Anna Clements has been appointed as the charity's new Head of Dementia. She will lead Age Scotland's About Dementia forum, which works with those affected by dementia and unpaid carers to shape policy and practice in Scotland and will oversee Age Scotland's Dementia Training Service, which provides dementia and carers' rights training.



Care Homes/Care at Home

[Latest statistical report on care home services funded by HSCPs in Scotland](#)

Public Health Scotland (PHS) has published a statistical report on care home services funded by Health and Social Care Partnerships (HSCPs) in Scotland for the financial year 2023/24. The main points from the release show that during 2023/24 there were an estimated 49,565 people who resided in a care home. This was a decrease of less than 1% from 2022/23 and the majority of people were long stay residents. It also notes that in the quarter from January to March 2024 around 9% of long stay residents had an emergency admission to hospital and around 11% of long stay residents attended A&E.

Equalities

[NES call for views on future equality outcomes](#)

NHS Education for Scotland (NES) is consulting on its equality outcomes for 2025-29 and is inviting feedback through a short online survey. Feedback will help NES identify the most important issues to prioritise as part of its equality, diversity and inclusion strategy.

Justice

[Scottish prison population statistics published for 2023-24](#)

The Scottish Government has published the latest statistics in prison populations and flows into and out of prison. Key findings from the statistical release shows that the average daily prison population in 2023-24 in Scotland was 7,860, which is an increase of almost 6% from 2022-23, and is primarily driven by an increase in the sentenced population. It also notes that the average daily population of women in prison increased by almost 13% in 2023-24 and that for the first time since 2009-10 the average daily population of young people (under 21 years) increased slightly in 2023-24, going up from 160 to 168.

[New Chief Inspector of Prisons for Scotland appointed](#)

Sara Snell has been appointed as the new HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for Scotland. Ms Snell is due to start her appointment in February 2025.

Older People

[Pension Age Winter Heating Payment to be rolled out winter 2025-26](#)

The Scottish Government has announced that it will introduce the Pension Age Winter Heating Payments next year for every pensioner household. The new benefit will be rolled-out winter 2025-26 and will mean pensioners in receipt of a relevant qualifying benefit, such as Pension Credit, will receive Pension Age Winter Heating Payments of £300 or £200, depending on their age. All other pensioner households will receive £100 from next winter.



Other Health and Social Care

[Audit Scotland report finds commitments to reduce NHS waiting times have not been met](#)

Audit Scotland has published a report on NHS Scotland finances and performance in 2024 which highlights that national commitments to reduce waiting lists and waiting times have not been met. The report also notes that the number of people remaining in hospital because their discharge has been delayed is the highest on record and that despite increasing funding and staffing, the NHS in Scotland is still seeing fewer patients than before the Covid-19 pandemic. The report includes a number of recommendations for the Scottish Government such as publishing national strategies and plans that were recommended in last years report, including a national capital investment and asset management strategy, and a revised Medium-Term Financial Framework for health and social care.

[Analysis of consultation responses to Independent Review of Adult Disability Payment](#)

The Scottish Government has published an independent analysis of consultation responses gathered as part of the Independent Review of Adult Disability Payment (ADP). The report highlights that many respondents gave positive feedback about ADP and Social Security Scotland, however its also notes that respondents suggested changes that would encourage more people to apply for ADP, improve the efficiency of the application process, ensure the breadth of conditions and impacts are considered in decision-making and ensure clients continue to be treated fairly.

[NES will host its next annual conference on 24 and 25 April 2025](#)

The NES annual conference 2025 is due to take place over two days on 24 and 25 April 2025. The conference is aimed at professionals working across health and social care with an interest in education and training, workforce development and digital solutions. The event will be hosted online and is free to attend.

Other

[Scottish Budget 2025-26](#)

The Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government Shona Robison provided a statement to parliament on the Scottish Government's proposed [Budget for 2025-26](#). In her statement, the Cabinet Secretary announced:

- over £21bn for the Health and Social Care portfolio
- increased capacity and access to Primary Care to shift the balance of care to preventative and community-based support and “substantially reduce delayed discharges by working with local health and social care partnerships”
- £8m for the continued development of flexible, affordable childcare for priority families in the Early Adopter Communities

- £3m for a Bright Start Breakfasts pilot, which will test the delivery of free breakfast clubs
- funding to ensure all ELC and social care staff are paid at least the real living wage from April 2025
- a rise in the earnings threshold for Carer Support Payment and Carer's Allowance to £196
- £2.5m to support actions within the Disability Equality Action Plan
- changes to income tax thresholds designed to protect low and medium-income earners
- funding to mitigate the two-child benefit cap for families on Universal Credit and £800m investment to ensure benefits increase with inflation
- a £30m Invest to Save fund, funding reform, drive efficiencies and improve productivity in the public sector

[Housing legislation aimed at tackling poverty passes Stage 1](#)

The Housing (Scotland) Bill aims to introduce changes around protections for tenants, preventing homelessness, and other housing matters. The Bill has six main parts with part 1 covering rent paid by tenants in private residential tenancies and includes proposals to introduce rent control areas and limits on rent increases. Part 5 of the bill covers homelessness prevention and includes proposals to place a duty on relevant bodies to ask if an individual is homeless or are at risk of homelessness and to take action if they are. Following a Stage 1 debate in the Scottish Parliament on 28 November 2024, the general principles of the Bill were agreed and the Bill is now at Stage 2 where MSPs can propose changes to the Bill.

Workforce

[RCN review of nursing workforce in Scotland suggests little signs of improvement](#)

An interim progress report by the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) suggests that Scotland's nursing workforce crisis shows little sign of improvement. The progress report follows on from RCN's third Nursing Workforce in Scotland report published in May this year which included 10 new recommendations that RCN Scotland believes are needed to retain and support existing staff and recruit and mentor new people to the profession. RCN has noted that while NHS vacancies have reduced over the past six months, the overall workforce is not growing and that latest NHS workforce statistics show that there are thousands of nursing vacancies in the NHS.

[NMC reports record number of nursing and midwifery professionals on register](#)

The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) has published its latest mid-year data report showing that as of 30 September 2024, the register of all nursing and midwifery professionals who can practise in the UK reached a record of 841,367. [Scotland](#) specific data shows that there are 74,566 professionals on the register in Scotland. This is an increase of 81 more professionals than six months ago. It also shows that the total number of joiners to the register has fallen in Scotland with 1,066 people joining in the last six months which is a 21.8% decrease from the same



period last year. The NMC data also shows that in the last six months more professionals left the register than in the same period last year.

[Home Office announces new measures to crack down on visa abuse and prevent exploitation](#)

The Home Office has announced new measures to tackle the exploitation and abuse of migrant workers, including changes to sanctions for employers who break visa rules. The proposed changes will be made alongside the UK government's new Employments Rights Bill which includes provisions for establishing a new Fair Work Agency. [The Royal College of Nursing \(RCN\)](#) has responded to the new measures announced by the Home Office, stating that while the measures are a step in the right direction, the government needs to go further.

[NHS Scotland workforce quarterly update](#)

NHS Education for Scotland (NES) has published its latest workforce quarterly update for the quarter ending 30 September 2024. The update includes the number of staff directly employed by NHS Scotland and the number of vacant posts for nursing and midwifery staff, allied health professions, and medical and dental consultants.

[CEIM Leaders programme recruitment now open for cohort five](#)

The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) has announced that recruitment is now open for cohort five of the CEIM Experience Improvement Model Leaders programme (CEIM Leaders). The programme is designed to give staff the knowledge and skills to coach and lead teams to implement CEIM and is delivered in partnership with Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS), NHS Education for Scotland (NES) and the Care Inspectorate. The programme is open to those working in adult social care services and healthcare services. The closing date for applications is 13 January 2025.

[RCN report highlights nursing staff experiences of long Covid](#)

The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) has published findings from its survey of RCN members' experiences of long Covid. The survey results show that the majority of respondents were experiencing symptoms associated with long Covid and that 80.7% have had a formal diagnosis. The report also includes a number of recommendations for the UK Government and health and social care organisation to support workers with long Covid, including recognising long Covid as an occupational disease for nursing staff who were exposed to Covid-19 through their work and providing effective care, accessible treatment and rehabilitation services for health and social care workers.

**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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