

6-12 December 2024



bulletin



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Alcohol and Drugs

[Charter of Rights for People Affected by Substance Use launched](#)

The final Charter of Rights for People Affected by Substance Use has now been launched. The Charter aims to support those affected by substance use and includes key human rights which belong to people affected by substance use, including the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. It was developed by the National Collaborative which included people with lived experience and service providers.

[Quarterly report on suspected drug deaths in Scotland](#)

The Scottish Government has published a quarterly report presenting Police Scotland's management information on suspected drug deaths in Scotland. The report notes suspected drug deaths have fallen over recent quarters but remain at a high level. Figures for quarter 3 (July to September 2024) show that there were 244 suspected drug deaths which is 25 less than the previous quarter (April to June 2024) and 56 less than the same calendar quarter from last year.



[New findings from evaluation of the National Mission on Drug Deaths](#)

As part of a series of reports evaluating the Scottish Government's National Mission on Drug Deaths, Public Health Scotland (PHS) has published findings from 13 in depth interviews with key informants from policy, advocacy, research or service delivery relating to drugs in Scotland. The findings suggests that all interviewees noted some positive impacts of the National Mission, including additional funding and progress towards strengthening treatment systems. However, interviewees also identified unintended negative consequences and missed opportunities in the National Mission, including insufficient focus on resourcing and supporting the workforce.

Alzheimer's/Dementia

[Age Scotland blog on creating a dementia-friendly Christmas](#)

Age Scotland's blog on creating a dementia-friendly Christmas includes suggestions around decorations, creating quiet spaces for someone living with dementia to take a break if they feel overwhelmed, managing routines, and ideas for memory-friendly activities to help those living with dementia feel included.

Covid-19

[New report highlights ethnic inequalities during pandemic](#)

Research exploring the experiences of racism, the Covid-19 pandemic and belonging in Scotland has found that the pandemic has exacerbated ethnic inequalities in Scotland. The findings from the research suggests that in Scotland, experiences of bereavement was highest for people who identified with 'Any other' ethnic group (68%), Indian (44%) and Pakistani (38%). The report also includes findings around experiences of racism in Scotland and notes that in the last five years, around a quarter of ethnic minorities in Scotland experienced racist insult or another form of racism expressed in public.

Disabilities

[Stage 1 report on the Disability Commissioner \(Scotland\) Bill](#)

The Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee has published its Stage 1 report on the Disability Commissioner (Scotland) Bill. The Bill aims to establish an independent disability commissioner for Scotland whose primary purpose will be to promote and safeguard the rights of disabled people. The Committee has noted support for the premise of the Bill to improve the lives of disabled people, however it highlights concerns around the potential for duplication and overlap with the work of other bodies. The Committee's Stage 1 report makes no recommendation on the general principles of Bill.



Justice

[New Healthcare within Justice Strategy published](#)

Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS) has published its Healthcare within Justice Strategy for 2024-27. The Strategy provides an overview of prison inspection activities and sets out planned healthcare inspections for 2024-25. The Strategy also sets out five priorities for 2024-27 and outlines planned actions in support for each of the priorities.

[Short custodial disposals from court and the prison population](#)

The Scottish Government has published a paper on the relationship between custodial sentences of 12 months or less issued by courts and the number of people in prison serving sentences of 12 months or less. The paper notes that the offending background of the 5,000 people receiving custodial sentences of less than 12 months from court is varied and complex, and that this cohort of people include those who have been sentenced for previous offences, have spent time on remand and people who have outstanding offences which have yet to be tried.

Other Health and Social Care

[New partnership to tackle health inequalities in Scotland](#)

Public Health Scotland (PHS), University College London's Institute of Health Equity (IHE) and three Scottish local authority areas have come together to form the Collaboration for Health Equity in Scotland (CHES), a partnership which aims to strengthen and accelerate action to improve health and reduce health inequalities in Scotland. Learning from the partnership will be used to support work across the country.

[Annual summary of delayed discharges in NHS Scotland](#)

Public Health Scotland (PHS) has released a statistical summary of delayed discharges across NHS Scotland up to March 2024. The main points from the release note that in the financial year ending 31 March 2024, there were 666,190 days spent in hospital by people whose discharge was delayed. The report also notes that this is the highest annual figure reported since current guidance came into place in July 2016 and is an increase on the totals in 2022/23 (661,705) and 2019/20 (542,204).

[Latest data on unpaid carers who were supported by local services in 2023-24](#)

The Scottish Government has published data from the Carers Census which relate to unpaid carers who had a support plan, or were supported by local services, during the financial year 2023-24. The latest data release shows that there were 52,000 unpaid carers supported by local services across Scotland in 2023-24 which is a 17% increase from the reported number of carers in 2022-23 (44,310). It also notes that as complete returns were not submitted by all areas, the data presented is likely



an undercount of the true number of carers being supported by local services in 2023-24.

[Round 2 of the Self Management Fund is now open for applications](#)

The Health and Social Care Alliance (the ALLIANCE) has highlighted that applications for round 2 of the Self Management Fund are now open and will close on 27 January 2025. Round 2 of the fund will distribute Scottish Government funds to third sector and community organisations working in Scotland, to support new activities that will encourage new approaches or add to our learning around self management. There are two levels of grant available:

- small grants of up to £15,000 for up to one year
- large grants of up to £120,000 for up to three years.

[Annual review for Healthcare Improvement Scotland](#)

Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS) has published a video on their Annual Review for 2024, updating their work in patient safety, dementia and hospital at home. HIS has also published questions and answers relating to their work.

Other

[Scottish Human Rights Commission publishes State of the Nation report 2024](#)

The Scottish Human Rights Commission has published its first State of the Nation report, outlining the human rights challenges experienced by people in Scotland. The report brings together findings from the Commission's work on spotlight projects and international treaty monitoring, and examines the extent to which 14 civil and political rights are being adequately upheld for all people in Scotland. The report concludes that Scotland has work to do on refocusing its efforts on upholding civil and political rights, and also recommends a number of practical actions for the Scottish Parliament to better promote the civil and political rights of the people of Scotland.

[Data on diversity analysis](#)

The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) has published an analysis report on data from their register on fitness to practise, registration conditions, protected characteristics, religion and sexual orientation.

[Applying for registration within three months](#)

Following changes to their register, the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) is highlighting the benefits of applying for registration within three months of starting a role. The SSSC note that the new requirement for workers to apply within three months allows them to identify and act on fitness to practise concerns more quickly.



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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