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Alcohol and Drugs

[New resource on how to respond to drug overdose in prison](#)

Public Health Scotland (PHS) has published a new resource providing advice on how to respond to a drug overdose in prison and how to reduce the harm from drugs. The resource has been developed by RADAR(Rapid Action Drug Alerts and Response), Scottish Prison Service and NHS Scotland.

[UK's first drugs consumption facility to open in Glasgow in January](#)

BBC has reported that the UK's first drug consumption room is due to open from 13 January in Glasgow. The Safer Drugs Consumption Facility will allow people to take substances under the supervision of clinicians and is designed to reduce fatal and non-fatal overdoses by providing a safe and clean place for people to use drugs.



Covid-19

[Inquiry invites requests to attend preliminary hearing for final tranche of impact hearings](#)

The Scottish Covid-19 Inquiry is now accepting requests to attend the preliminary hearing for its final tranche of impact hearings. The preliminary hearing will take place on Wednesday 22 January 2025. Following the preliminary hearing the Inquiry will hold hearings relating to justice, worship and life events, and equalities and human rights. Requests to attend the preliminary hearing must be submitted to the Inquiry by 5pm on Friday 17 January 2025.

[UK Covid Inquiry to open fourth investigation](#)

The UK Covid-19 Inquiry has confirmed that the fourth investigation, Module 4, will open the week of 14 January, examining vaccines, therapeutics and anti-viral treatment across the UK. The Chair will also be working on the Inquiry's second report, focused on core UK decision-making and political governance, which she hopes will be published in autumn 2025.

Mental Health

[New report outlines actions to improve access in primary care mental health and wellbeing](#)

The Scottish Government has published a report outlining actions to improve access to support, assessment and treatment in primary care mental health and wellbeing services. The report outlines existing investment to increase mental health and wellbeing capacity in general practice, including the Enhanced Mental Health Outcomes Framework, and funding in community settings. The report also includes actions to improve access to mental health and wellbeing support from general practice. A [Mental Health and Wellbeing Primary Care Services resource](#) which has been developed to support staff working in general practice and a [Mental Health Unscheduled Care resource](#) have also been published

Other Health and Social Care

[UK Government announces independent commission into adult social care \(England\)](#)

The UK Government has announced the launch of an independent commission into adult social care in England. The commission is due to begin work in April 2025 and will be chaired by Baroness Louise Casey. It is the first step in the Government's long-term plans for social care reform, which include a proposed national care service underpinned by national standards to improve consistency. A package of immediate measures to improve adult social care and support the workforce have also been announced.



[National Care Service Forum 2024 report](#)

The Scottish Government has published a report outlining some of the topics discussed at the National Care Service (NCS) forum which took place in October 2024. The report provides details of the main speakers at the event and includes links to the transcripts of the speeches. It also provides detail around some of the topics discussed at the event, including key discussion points around embedding rights and equalities, shaping the system, accountability and the NCS Board, and delivering social care support.

[The ALLIANCE is gathering views on barriers to Self-Directed Support](#)

The Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE) is gathering views on barriers to accessing Self-Directed Support (SDS). The ALLIANCE is particularly interested in gathering views from members and those with lived experience of SDS in the past year who have come across care packages being reassessed or reviewed, cuts in packages, caps to payment amounts or support and pre-determined decisions.

[Public Health Scotland figures show rise in hospitalisation due to flu](#)

New figures published by Public Health Scotland (PHS) show hospitalisations due to flu continue to rise in Scotland. PHS notes that vaccination remains the best protection against serious illness from flu, however over two thirds of under 65 year olds who are eligible for the vaccine have not yet been vaccinated.

[The ALLIANCE annual conference 2025 will take place on 30 April](#)

The Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE) has announced that this year's annual conference will be held on 30 April in Glasgow. The conference will explore key issues including human rights, prevention, social care reform, and community resilience; amplifying voices that have been excluded

Other

[Scottish Government's Public Service Reform programme update](#)

The Minister for Public Finance has written to the Finance and Public Administration Committee to provide an update on the progress made with the Scottish Government's public service reform (PSR) programme. The update provides detail on work to drive efficiency and effectiveness, and sets out the Government's approach to PSR. It includes examples of work which is underway in core portfolio areas such as health and social care, including prevention work to help reduce demand for health and social care services.

[Patient Safety Commissioner role remains vacant](#)

The BBC has reported that Scotland's Patient Safety Commissioner role has still not been filled following a second round of interviews. The BBC highlights that the role will be readvertised this year following a review of the role's terms and conditions.



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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