




# Adult and Health



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## Covid-19 – General

### Updates on Scottish and UK Covid inquiries

The Chief Executive of the Scottish Covid-19 Inquiry has [provided an update on its work](#), including confirmation that hearings on topics related to justice will begin on 18 February and equalities and human rights in June. The Inquiry will later move onto its next phase, looking at how policies were implemented in Scotland and the decisions taken by Scottish politicians and their advisers. Meanwhile the UK Covid-19 Inquiry [held a preliminary hearing](#) for the investigation into the care sector this week ahead of public hearings on Module 6 (care sector).



## Alcohol and Drugs

### [Alcohol-related deaths reach record high](#)

The Office for National Statistics has published figures suggesting alcohol-related deaths have hit a record high in the UK, with rates higher in Scotland and Northern Ireland than England or Wales. The Guardian reports that the death rate in Scotland in 2023 was 22.6 per 100,000 people. Across the UK, statistics show men are more than twice as likely as women to die as a result of excess alcohol consumption.

## End of Life/Palliative Care

### [Report shows majority of public spending at end of life goes on hospital care](#)

New research commissioned by Marie Curie has found hospital care represents the largest share of healthcare spending in the final year of life, accounting for 81 per cent of the total healthcare cost. Public spending on primary and community healthcare makes up 11 per cent of health expenditure for people in the last year of life, with less than 4 per cent spent on hospice care. The report analyses public spending costs at the end of life over the last decade, providing estimates on healthcare, social care and social security.

## Justice

### [New modern prison to replace HMP Barlinnie](#)

The Scottish Government has announced that a new modern prison will replace HMP Barlinnie in Glasgow. The new prison will have a capacity of 1,344, adding 357 more places to the overall prison estate once it is completed in 2028. HM Inspector of Prisons for Scotland said in its last annual report on Barlinnie that its buildings, accommodation and facilities are not fit for purpose.

## Workforce

### [Consultation on expanding the SSSC Register](#)

The Scottish Social Services Council is consulting on proposals to expand its Register to include new groups of workers. The proposed new groups are:

- Adult day care service – support worker, practitioner and supervisor
- Offender accommodation service – practitioner, supervisor and manager
- Social work assistant

The consultation asks for views on the role descriptions that set out what people in these roles do, the relevant qualifications for each role, fee levels and continuous professional learning requirements. The closing date is 9 April 2025.



## Other Health and Social Care

### [Inspection volunteers invited to apply](#)

The Care Inspectorate is encouraging anyone with personal experience of using a care service or as a carer to become involved with their work by becoming an inspection volunteer. Inspection volunteers do not need to have any qualifications as their personal experience gives them unique insight and can help influence the Care Inspectorate's work. Further information and support with the application form can be found at [get.involved@careinspectorate.gov.scot](mailto:get.involved@careinspectorate.gov.scot).

### [Funding for councils ahead of National Insurance rise](#)

The BBC reports that the Scottish Government are to give local authorities an additional £144m to help cover the cost of the rise in employers' National Insurance introduced by the UK Government. Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Shona Robison, announced the funding ahead of the Scottish Parliament's Stage 1 vote on the 2025-2026 Budget.

#### **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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