

12 – 18 September 2025



bulletin



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Alcohol and Drugs

[Committee of MPs report on safer drug consumption sites](#)

The House of Commons Scottish Affairs Committee has published a report on problem drug use in Scotland, specifically focused on Glasgow's Safer Drug Consumption Facility. The Committee found that funding of The Thistle facility needs to be maintained alongside investment in other recovery and harm reduction facilities in the future, and raised concerns that a full legal framework will be required to secure the facility's future and the establishment of future sites. The Committee has urged the UK Government not to make a decision on the future of The Thistle until an expert evaluation has been carried out.



Disabilities

[Benefits funding gap reported by auditors](#)

A report by Audit Scotland suggests there will be a funding gap of £770 million for adult disability payments by 2029/30. The report states there is no plan in place setting out how the Scottish Government will plug this gap, which is the result of increased spending on the devolved benefit which amounts to £141 million more than the funding available through the UK block grant. Audit Scotland's report also highlights the lack of a strategy to manage any impact on the Scottish budget from decisions made by the UK Government in devolved areas.

End of Life/Palliative Care

[Funding to continue palliative care support from ambulance teams](#)

Further funding has been announced for the dedicated Palliative and End of Life Care team at the Scottish Ambulance Service. The team has developed 30 alternative care pathways to Emergency Departments, including direct referrals to hospices and cancer support helplines, which aims to improve patient experience and reduce hospital admissions.

Justice

[Bill to improve experience of victims and witnesses justice system passed](#)

A Bill designed to improve the experience of victims and witnesses in the justice system has been passed by MSPs. The Victims, Witnesses, and Justice Reform (Scotland) Bill will make a series of changes to the justice system, including scrapping the not proven verdict, creating a Victims and Witnesses Commissioner, reforms relating to sexual offences and measures to embed the use of trauma-informed practice across the system.

Mental Health

[Figures show decrease in number of probable suicide deaths](#)

New statistics published by the National Records of Scotland show a 11 per cent decrease in the number of 704 probable suicide deaths in Scotland. Compared to 2023, male probable suicide deaths decreased by 71 (12 per cent) to 518 deaths in 2024, while female probable suicide deaths decreased by 15 (7 per cent) to 186 deaths. The gap between rates of probable suicide mortality between the most and least deprived areas has also decreased since 2001, driven by lower rates in the most deprived areas.



Workforce

[Accessibility of SSSC guidance reviewed](#)

The Scottish Social Services Council has outlined its recent work on simplifying its fitness to practise guidance, including efforts to make the guidance more accessible. The SSSC recently took part in the Open University's Witness to Harm research project, during which the accessibility of their guidance was reviewed alongside that of other professional regulators. After completing its full review, the SSSC has revised its guidance with new aims of reducing sentence length, minimising the use of legal jargon, being consistent in the use of language and only using comparisons where necessary and appropriate.

- The SSSC has highlighted a number of [free learning resources](#) to support learning needs in relation to fitness to practise conditions: [SSSC Learning Zone](#); [SSSC MyLearning](#); [SSSC Continuous Professional Learning](#); [Care Inspectorate Hub](#); [NHS Education for Scotland – Turas](#).

[Events to share results on workforce wellbeing survey](#)

The SSSC is holding free online events to share insights from its first workforce wellbeing survey. Those attending the events will hear key findings from the survey, which over 6,500 members of the social service workforce responded to. The events will also consider how the survey findings relate to continuous professional learning and invite attendees to share ideas to inform the next wellbeing survey.

[New SSSC Council Members appointed](#)

Children's Minister Natalie Don-Innes has announced the appointment of Alison Todd and Tricia Stewart as new SSSC Council Members. The appointments run for three years from 1 September.

[SSSC reflects on fitness to practise trends](#)

The SSSC has reflected on the rising number of fitness to practise referrals in recent years and is working to identify the reasons behind it. There was a 12% increase in concerns referred to the SSSC between 2022-23 and 2023-24, and a further 5% rise in 2024-25. Referrals in the period from 1 April 2025 suggest there will be a further 13% increase during this financial year. However, the SSSC notes that case closures are on an upward trend and cases are being concluded in less time.

Other Health and Social Care

[Social care workers' union outlines Spending Review priorities](#)

Unite the union has launched a campaign to highlight the social care crisis in Scotland and the need to place the workforce at the centre of solutions to address problems facing the sector. Ahead of the November Spending Review, Unite has written to the Minister for Social Care Tom Arthur, outlining three key demands for social workers including: fair and sustainable pay; a real terms increase in funding



for social care; and meaningful engagement with all stakeholders to design the future of the sector.

[Age Scotland questions age threshold for Covid winter boosters](#)

The BBC reports on concerns from Age Scotland regarding changes to the NHS criteria for vaccinating people against flu and Covid this winter. The charity's Chief Executive, Katherine Crawford, questioned the decision to offer the flu vaccine to people aged 65 and over, with Covid boosters only offered to people aged 75 and over. For the past two years, all people 65 and over have been invited for a Covid booster jab. The Scottish Government said it is following advice by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation.

[Care Tech Unplugged event – 2 October 2025](#)

Scottish Care is hosting the Care Tech Unplugged event in Glasgow on 2 October, which will explore the future of care and technology. The event will be facilitated by design experts from the Glasgow School of Art.

[Iriss seeking new board members](#)

Iriss is seeking new board members and they are particularly interested in hearing from people with experience of using social work or social care support or being an unpaid carer. The closing date for applications is 3 October.

[Roundtable events on national standards of care \(England\)](#)

The Social Care Institute for Excellence has announced a series of roundtable events, jointly convened by the Access Group, to discuss the future of adult social care in England in light of the UK Government's manifesto commitment to a National Care Service. The events will foster discussion on proposals to develop a framework for national standards of care and insights will be published in a report in January 2026, to be submitted to the Casey Commission to inform Phase 1 of its work.

**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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