

## Royal College of Psychiatrists in Scotland Policy Update

1 June 2023

### College Activity:

- On Wednesday 3 May, the team in Scotland attended the **Cross-Party Group on Mental Health**. This featured a presentation from See Me and a discussion of the Cross-Party Group's proposed work plan for the year.
- Two members of the College in Scotland had **articles featured in the Holyrood magazine** in May. On Tuesday 9 May, Dr Jane Morris, the College in Scotland's Vice-Chair, [contributed to an article](#) in which she called for more attention to be given to mental illness in Scotland. And on Wednesday 10 May, Dr Elaine Lockhart, the Chair of the UK's Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Faculty, [contributed to an article](#) which examined child and adolescent mental health services in Scotland.
- On Wednesday 10 May, the College in Scotland hosted **the Scottish Old Age Faculty's conference** at Stirling Court Hotel.
- The College in Scotland's **Legislative Oversight Forum** met on Thursday 11 May. This featured an update from a forum member on the Scottish Government's response to the Scott Review, which is now expected in June. This member shared that the Scottish Government is planning to prioritise AWI reform and deprivation of liberty initially.
- The College's **Medical Managers group** met on Friday 12 May. The team in Scotland provided an update on its recent policy activity at this meeting. Members also discussed the group's future direction, sharing what they hope to get out of the group.
- On Tuesday 16 May, the College submitted a **response to the second draft of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy**. The response included reference to the very tight deadline given by the Scottish Government. The College in Scotland supported the overall vision of the strategy but sought clarification around some of its

outcomes, as well as the Scottish Government's plans for the publication of a Delivery Plan. The response also pushed for further recognition and prioritisation of mental illness within the strategy.

- The College's response was shared with Scotland's Mental Health Partnership, to inform the **collective Partnership response to the second draft of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy**.
- On Tuesday 16 May, a member of the College in Scotland wrote an [article for the Scottish Daily Express](#). In this article, Dr Shridevi Gopi-Firth wrote about anxiety, the theme of this year's **Mental Health Awareness Week**, and the impact it can have on people with an eating disorder.
- On Wednesday 17 May, the College in Scotland received a **request from Scottish Labour for a briefing around mental health funding**. The briefing provided details on the Scottish Government's progress towards their commitment to 'ensure that, by the end of the parliament, 10% of our frontline NHS budget will be invested in mental health.' The briefing was accompanied by statistics comparing the percentage of frontline NHS budgets spent on mental health in England and Wales, as well as real terms funding trends in Scotland.
- Following this, **Scottish Labour introduced a motion during a Scottish Parliament debate**, calling for the Scottish Government to ensure that 11% of the frontline NHS budget is spent on mental health, to bring Scotland into line with 'Labour controlled Wales.' Jackie Baillie MSP and Carol Mochan MSP cited statistics from the College's briefing to support this motion. The SNP successfully amended this motion, removing reference to any mental health spending commitment. However, the Minister said during the debate that **'we are aiming for 10% of the health budget to be spent on mental health, and we are on track to reach that aim.'**
- On Thursday 18 May, the College sent two **letters on behalf of the Chair in Scotland**. The first offered support to a member's bid to bring the European Conference on Mental Health to Scotland in 2025. And the second offered support to the Mental Health Foundation with regards to a funding application they have submitted.
- On Wednesday 24 May, the team in Scotland met with **the Mental Health Partnership's Policy and Comms Group**. This meeting was used to discuss the Partnership's current policy priorities, including its responses to the Scottish Government's upcoming Delivery Plan and National Outcomes Review. With regards to the latter, the Partnership intends to call for explicit recognition of mental health.
- **Scottish Devolved Council** took place on Thursday 25 May. The meeting was divided into two breakout discussions. The first of these

discussions focused on the upcoming Scottish Psychiatry Workforce Report. The second focused on Values Based Health and Care, and the opportunities within this for psychiatry and mental health services. This will now be taken forward through the Scottish Academy's engagement with the CMO on this work. The policy report for Council is attached alongside this document.

## Looking Ahead:

- The College in Scotland intends to respond to the Scottish Government's **National Outcomes Review** in June. A draft response has been shared with members ahead of the consultation's deadline on Monday 5 June. If you have missed this and wish to respond, please contact [matthew.james@rcpsych.ac.uk](mailto:matthew.james@rcpsych.ac.uk).
- The team in Scotland is continuing to hold **meetings with the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the College in Scotland's various faculties**, to discuss their current priorities, any upcoming areas of focus, as well as any support that they require. To date, the team have met with the Liaison and Intellectual Disability faculties. Further meetings are scheduled to take place in June.
- The College in Scotland is currently organising a **meeting with the new Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport** to discuss priorities.

## Headlines:

### Week Commencing Monday 1 May

- Colin Smyth MSP has [confirmed](#) he will develop a **member's bill to establish a commissioner for older people**.
- Following this announcement, 30 charities and advocacy groups have [signed](#) a statement calling for the **establishment of a commissioner for older people**.
- SHAAP has [highlighted](#) a new campaign called See Beyond - See the Lives - Scotland, from academics and advocacy organisations which aims to reduce the **stigma surrounding deaths due to alcohol and drugs**.
- Conservative and Labour MSPs have [called](#) on Humza Yousaf MSP to speed up plans to bring the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill** back to the Scottish Parliament after the First Minister said plans to embed the convention into Scots law would be rolled out by 2026.

- Maree Todd MSP has [vowed](#) to take a ‘fresh approach’ to **tackling child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) waiting times** after the latest figures showed little improvement since 2018. She also said she wanted to get children exercising more to improve their mental wellbeing in addition to physical fitness.
- RCN Scotland has [called](#) for a **retention strategy for nurses** as the union publishes its second annual workforce report ahead of a roundtable with Scottish politicians and senior nurse leaders.
- The Care Inspectorate has [published](#) a **thematic review on disabled children and young people**. It applied a rights-based approach to explore how well local authorities are applying GIRFEC principles to ensure disabled children have their needs met and their rights promoted and protected.
- Humza Yousaf MSP chaired an **anti-poverty summit** on Wednesday 3 May, with leaders from all Scottish Parliament parties meeting poverty campaigners, third sector organisations and people with lived experience. In his [opening remarks](#), the First Minister called tackling poverty the ‘defining mission’ of his government.
- RCN Scotland has [published](#) its **second annual report on the nursing workforce**.
- The Fraser of Allander Institute has [published](#) **data on the lives of people with learning disabilities in Scotland** to coincide with this year’s Scottish Learning Disability Week.
- Age Scotland has [launched](#) a **new resource for older people’s clubs and services**. The Wellbeing Flower initiative has been designed to allow for services to ask questions about how they contribute to the health and wellbeing of the older people they support.

### **Week Commencing Monday 8 May**

- The Children and Young People’s Commissioner Scotland has [published](#) a **report on the provision of counselling services in secondary schools**.
- At a meeting in the Scottish Parliament, RCN members from social care, community and acute services [shared](#) their **personal experiences and perspective on the challenges facing the nursing profession** with politicians and senior nurse leaders.
- The Scottish Parliament has [approved](#) the **Patient Safety Commissioner for Scotland Bill** unanimously at Stage 1.
- Humza Yousaf MSP has [called](#) on the UK Government to amend the **Online Safety Bill** to include greater protections for children and vulnerable adults.

- As part of its **scrutiny of the National Care Service (Scotland) Bill**, the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee [commissioned](#) research into international models of social care. A summary of the research report's findings has been prepared, alongside comparisons on the funding systems and key features of the different models.
- The Scottish Government has [announced](#) that **NHS Lothian has been de-escalated from Stage 3 to Stage 2 of the NHS board performance escalation framework** for its improved provision of mental health services, care and support.
- UNISON Scotland has [warned](#) the full extent of **NHS staffing shortages** is not being properly recorded, with a recent survey showing nurses are either too busy to report staffing shortages or have stopped as reporting makes little difference.

### **Week Commencing Monday 15 May**

- The Scottish Government has [published](#) a report exploring the role of commissions and commissioners in supporting rights in Scotland and the UK. The research will inform discussion and consultation about the **potential creation of a Learning Disability, Autism and Neurodiversity Commissioner or Commission in Scotland**.
- Citizens Advice Scotland has [published](#) its annual **Cost of Living Analysis** which found demand for crisis support advice increased to 118,384, compared to 84,103 last year, increasing by more than 40%.
- The Financial Fairness Trust has [published](#) a **report on Single Parents, Universal Credit and Mental Health**. New research from the University of York, Poverty Alliance and Child Poverty Action shows 32% of lone parents on Universal Credit experience mental health problems.
- The Digital Health and Care Institute has [announced](#) that **SCVO's Digital Pioneers Mental Health Fund has opened for applications**.
- The Scottish Affairs Committee has [launched](#) a **follow-up inquiry into how Scottish sectors have recovered from COVID-19** and whether government support was sufficient.
- The Accounts Commission has [published](#) a **report on local government in Scotland**. The report highlights councils have never faced such a challenging situation and argues radical change, achieved through collaboration, is needed if councils are to maintain services.
- Analysis by Scottish Labour has revealed that almost 9,000 children and young people had **referrals to CAMHS rejected in 2022**, 18% higher than in 2019.

- Faith leaders [held](#) a joint event at the Scottish Parliament on Thursday 18 May voicing opposition to Liam McArthur's proposed **Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults Bill**.
- The Times has [reported](#) that the **National Care Service (Scotland) Bill** is not expected to be voted upon at Stage 1 until at least October, with officials allegedly suggesting the legislation may not be revealed to parliament until the winter.
- The Scottish Government has [published](#) a **report exploring the early set-up and implementation of the Child Poverty Pathfinders**.
- The Scottish Government has [published](#) an analysis of responses to its **consultation on the development of the Suicide Prevention Strategy and Action Plan**.

### Week Commencing Monday 22 May

- The Philosopher's Consortium on Assisted Dying in Scotland has [backed](#) **assisted dying proposals for those with a terminal illness**, stating it would give vulnerable people control over their decision-making.
- The **Scottish COVID-19 Inquiry** has [launched](#) its listening project and is inviting the public to take part. Let's Be Heard is the main channel for people who were impacted by COVID-19 in Scotland between 1 January 2020 and 31 December 2022 to share their experiences and any lessons they believe should be learned.
- Public Health Scotland has [published](#) a YouGov addendum to its 2022 report on **the impact of Minimum Unit Pricing (MUP) of alcohol in Scotland on cross-border purchasing**.
- The RCN has [called](#) for urgent **psychological support for nurses** as staff mental health hubs close.
- The Scottish Government has [confirmed](#) a programme of events will take place over the summer in order for people to have their say on the **National Care Service**.
- SHAAP has [published](#) a report following its event on people with **alcohol problems in the justice system**.
- Shona Robison MSP has [set](#) out **the Scottish Government's medium term financial strategy**. The cabinet secretary highlighted significant projected funding shortfalls, with resource requirements expected to outstrip block grant funding by £1bn next year and by £1.9bn in 2027-28, and capital spending commitments surpassing funding by 16% in 2025-26.
- The Economy and Fair Work Committee has [launched](#) a consultation on the Bankruptcy and Diligence (Scotland) Bill. The bill

proposes adding a '**mental health moratorium,**' meaning debt enforcement could be frozen for someone with serious mental health issues.

### **Week Commencing Monday 29 May**

- The Scottish Commission for People with Learning Disabilities has [issued](#) a statement on **the Scottish Mental Health Law Review**, identifying 'significant concerns' around its failure to address the ongoing inclusion of people with learning disabilities in mental health legislation despite the commission having repeatedly highlighted this to the review team.
- **The Health, Social Care and Sport Committee has [published](#) its annual report for 2022-23.** The committee held 37 meetings over this period and scrutinised two pieces of primary legislation, the National Care Service (Scotland) Bill and the Patient Safety Commissioner for Scotland Bill.
- On Wednesday 31 May, the Scottish Government [published](#) its **new Dementia Strategy**, 'Everyone's Story.' The College in Scotland's Old Age faculty influenced the development of this strategy, responding to the Scottish Government's consultation on 5 December 2022.

### **Parliamentary Monitoring:**

#### **FMQs – Thursday 4 May**

- **Collette Stevenson MSP requested an update on the anti-poverty summit and emphasised the importance of a wellbeing economy and a fair social security system to tackling poverty.**
- The First Minister said over 80 people had attended the summit and said the government would be bold in its approach to tackling poverty. He agreed with Collette Stevenson that the UK Government held many of the levers to addressing poverty in Scotland and said it should reinstate the Universal Credit uplift and reverse key reforms introduced since 2015. He said he had discussed poverty in Scotland at his recent meeting with Rishi Sunak.

#### **FMQs – Thursday 11 May**

- **Douglas Ross MSP questioned how much the National Care Service would cost the taxpayer. He accused the government of**

**not knowing what the final cost would be and called for the plans to be scrapped.**

- The First Minister said engagement with stakeholders was ongoing regarding plans for the National Care Service which would determine any changes to a revised financial memorandum. He stated fair work was central to negotiations, and justified spending on preparation and consultancy so the plans would be ready for implementation.

### **Friday 12 May**

- The Social Justice and Social Security Committee has [written](#) to the House of Common's Work and Pensions Committee regarding its **call for evidence on cost of living support payments.**
- The Criminal Justice Committee has [published](#) a Stage 1 report on the **Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Bill.**

### **Monday 15 May**

- Caroline Lamb, the Chief Executive of NHS Scotland and Director General for Health and Social Care, has [written](#) to the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee providing further detail on the government announcement regarding **the de-escalation of NHS Lothian to Level 2 of the NHS Board Performance Escalation Framework** in relation to mental health.
- Neil Gray MSP has [written](#) to the Economy and Fair Work Committee regarding the **Disability Employment Gap.**

### **Friday 19 May**

- Maree Todd MSP has [written](#) to the Criminal Justice Committee regarding **mental health law reform.** She stresses the Scottish Government is committed to understanding and addressing the impact of mental health demands but proposals for changes to the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 will require further consideration.

### **Monday 22 May**

- SPICe has [published](#) a summary paper of submissions received relating to **the Social Justice and Social Security Committee's inquiry into child poverty and parental employment.**

- The Education, Children and Young People Committee has written to [Scottish Government ministers](#) and [Pam Duncan-Glancy](#) on the **Disabled Children and Young People (Transitions to Adulthood) (Scotland) Bill**.