

Health and Sport Committee
Scottish Parliament
Holyrood
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

26th July 2017

The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH) is responsible for training and examining paediatricians. The College has over 17,000 members in the UK and internationally and sets standards for professional and postgraduate education. We work to transform child health through knowledge, research and expertise, to improve the health and wellbeing of infants, children and young people across the world.

Further to your call for views on the Scottish Governments health and sport draft budget for 2018-19 we would like to make the following comments:

Q1 Do you consider that the Scottish Government's health and sport budget for 2017-18 reflects its stated priorities (as set out in the National Performance Framework, the LDP standards and the National health and wellbeing outcomes)? If not, how could the budget be adjusted to better reflect priorities?

Children are mentioned under mental health services and in the context of GIRFEC but there is no direct link to funding these services. We would suggest the budget should be adjusted to better reflect the following priorities for child health, reducing obesity, improving awareness of and services for mental health and wellbeing, reducing child deaths and reducing child poverty. We would also suggest that the child death review programme (currently under development by the Scottish Government) could be mentioned. Ideally the priorities would be presented in a single document.

Q2 For the health and sport budget for 2018-19 where do you suggest any additional resources could be most effectively deployed and where could any further savings be found? What evidence supports your views?

Our State of Child Health Report 2017 details 25 indicators of child health in Scotland and some of the outcomes amongst our deprived children are amongst the worst in the developed world. Additional resources should be directed at reducing inequalities and the implementation of a robust, consistent child death review system.

Q3 Is sufficient information available to support scrutiny of the Scottish Government's health and sport budget? If not, what additional information would help support budget scrutiny?

There is little detail relevant to children within the budget. Including this would help support budget scrutiny.

Q4 What impact has the integration of health and social care budgets had on ensuring resources are directed at achieving the Scottish Government's desired outcomes?

It is difficult to follow a direct link between policy, monetary spending and improvement in health indicators. In future budgets, the setting of targets, milestones or 'stretch aims' would be helpful to determine whether the budget had an impact on the Scottish population. For example, the spending on the policy to reduce the proportion of children exposed to second hand smoke to 6% by 2020 was achieved in 2016; by setting a goal and date, the Scottish Government spending could clearly be linked to an outcome.

For further information about any aspect of this consultation response, please contact Professor Steve Turner, Officer for Scotland at: s.w.turner@abdn.ac.uk