

Health, Social Care and Sport Committee Priorities for Session 6

In your view, which three topics should be the priorities for the Committee during the next five years?

Mental Health Transition: Specifically, the transition from child to adult services and the barriers put in place of service users and their families.

Health Inequalities and preventative interventions: Review progress since The Christie Commission Report of 2011.

Why have you chosen these topics?

Mental Health Transitions: Specifically, the transition from child to adult services and the barriers put in place of service users and their families

It is our experience that services are too often designed to meet operational needs rather than those who wish to access them. Creating systems which are difficult to navigate around do not work for individuals and their families when they need assistance the most. The transition from child to adult mental health services is a prime example of individuals' needs failing to be met due to the complexity and lack of joined-up approach within service delivery.

With the anticipated increased demand for child mental health services due to the impact of Covid-19 we believe this area of work would be an appropriate topic for the Committee to prioritise in session 6.

Health Inequalities and preventative interventions: Review progress since The Christie Commission Report of 2011

Ten years have passed since the publication of the Christie Report which gave the following recommendation:

“A clear conclusion that we draw is that, if public services are at once to promote social justice and human rights and to be sustainable into the future, it is imperative that public services adopt a much more preventative approach; and that, within that, they succeed in addressing the persistent problem of multiple negative outcomes and inequalities faced by too many of the people and communities of Scotland.”¹

We originally thought to separate out Health Inequalities as a separate priority topic from that of preventative interventions however the truth is that the two subject matters are intertwined as

¹ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/commission-future-delivery-public-services/documents/>

highlighted in the quote above. With the Scottish Government seeking to reform elements of public service following the impact of Covid-19 we believe it is timely that the conclusions and recommendations of the Christie Report are reviewed to ensure that health inequalities are reduced and where possible eliminated.

The challenges of reducing health inequalities through the type of preventive interventions referenced in the Christie Report are laid bare in the Legacy Report from Session 5 of the Health and Sport Committee:

“We have been struck in a number of our inquiries by a lack of leadership across the public sector, with only a few notable exceptions. Until this is addressed there can be little prospect for the systemic change required. A focus on balancing the books before delivery of a service by all public bodies and budget holders prevents change at all levels, and also stifles risk and innovation. When innovation happens, it is often at a pace which renders most of it obsolete by the time it is fully delivered.”²

How could the Committee add value?

The Committee can add value by:

- looking to work in tandem with other Committees taking a joint approach to the issues raised
- ensuring that the lived experience of people within the topics chosen as priorities is front and centre of any inquiry
- continuing the hybrid-system of committee meetings so that people from all parts of the country can participate

² <https://digitalpublications.parliament.scot/Committees/Report/HS/2021/3/22/3d79f0d9-23cd-420a-b68c-a83587ad1b04>