

Social care in Scotland: CCPS briefing for MSPs

May 2026

CCPS represents not-for-profit providers of care and support in Scotland. Our members provide support for children, families and adults. As a membership organisation we work strategically and collaboratively to Inspire, Influence, Involve and Inform.

This briefing is intended to support MSPs to understand the role of not-for-profit social care and support in Scotland and why it urgently requires change and investment. It provides an overview of CCPS's work, the key challenges currently facing the sector, and explains why social care is so important. We look forward to working constructively with MSPs across the new parliament to build a social care sector which allows people to thrive.

Our key messages

- **The new Scottish Government must fund social care like it matters.** A combination of increasing need and delivery costs, coupled with years of underfunding, means that social care in Scotland is now facing significant pressure.
- **The social care system is under real strain, putting our members and the people they support in jeopardy, but solutions exist.** CCPS can provide expertise and insight to MSPs on the challenges in social care and offer evidence-based solutions.
- **Social care is a vital public service and is essential to the wellbeing of people.** It exists at the heart of communities across Scotland and allows people to live their lives on their own terms.
- **The social care sector is a major employer in Scotland.** Social care workers provide essential, skilled support to our communities. Our members need to be funded to provide the pay and conditions that reflect that.
- **Social care is closely intertwined with other national policy areas of major importance,** including child poverty, housing, economic prosperity and NHS waiting times.

Who we are

CCPS represents not-for-profit providers of care and support in Scotland. Our 84 members deliver services across Scotland for adults with disabilities, older people, children and families, people impacted by addictions, homelessness and housing insecurity, poor mental health, poverty and people involved in the justice system. Collectively, they support tens of thousands of people and employ a significant proportion of Scotland's social care workforce.

Through the evidence and knowledge of our members, we provide detailed insight into how social care is working in Scotland, the challenges providers face and what needs to be done to tackle them. Our vision is a rights-based, sustainable system of social care and support that enables individuals, families and communities in Scotland to thrive.

Why social care matters

Social care and support enables people of all ages to thrive, live independently, and enjoy life with connection, dignity and purpose. It offers practical and emotional support that helps people realise their rights, build on their strengths, and achieve the outcomes that matter most to them. Social care is provided in people's own homes, communities, and residential settings, supporting individuals to stay connected and feel valued. As a core public service, social care works hand in hand with health, housing, education and community services to help people flourish and live fulfilling lives.

Social care plays a vital role in preventing crisis and supporting wellbeing and independence. The sector is a major employer and a key part of local economies in urban, rural and island communities. When the social care system is under strain constituents experience reduced access to support, workforce shortages, and increased pressure on local services - including the NHS.

Fund social care like it matters

The new Scottish Government must fund social care like it matters:

- **Ensuring sustainable funding for not-for-profit social care providers.** This funding must reflect the true cost of delivering good support and enable providers to pay their workforce fairly.
- **Agreeing to fund a short-term recovery plan** for our sector by delivery of its first budget in late 2026 / early 2027.

Social care in Scotland has endured years of underinvestment and our members are experiencing significant and growing pressure as a result. Many organisations are struggling to make ends meet, with impacts on service availability, quality and jobs. If the new Scottish Government does not take action, the sector and the people they support will continue to be in jeopardy.

Underinvestment in social care is having a profoundly negative impact on the lives of some of our most vulnerable individuals, families and communities, and on a workforce which is predominately made up of women (over 80%). Findings from our latest survey of members paint a bleak picture. At the time they were surveyed, 84 per cent of respondents reported that they had either already lost, or expected to lose, posts during 2025/26. These losses were primarily driven by ongoing funding constraints. One member described the situation starkly:

"We are not expected to meet our income forecasts for the year, and our reserves are only at nine weeks. Local Authority and Scottish Government contracts, which make up 85% of our income, do not have sufficient margins to cover management and support costs. Our core Scottish Government grant has not seen a meaningful uplift in 10 years."

— CCPS member

As a result of these increasing financial pressures, many CCPS members reported that they have already had to, or expect they will need to, reduce the level of support provided to people who rely on their services. Other members are increasingly dependent on drawing down financial reserves simply to remain viable and reach short term financial balance. This approach is unsustainable and risks undermining both service quality and long-term sector resilience.

Shared opportunity: working together

Although the social care system is under significant pressure, solutions exist and change is possible. CCPS is keen to work constructively with MSPs, and their staff, to support the development of policy and the delivery of major improvements to social care. We can offer evidence and insight from frontline providers to inform understanding, policy development, implementation, and scrutiny.

As a strategic partner in shaping improvements to social care and support in Scotland, we would very much welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss these issues further. We are also able to provide a more tailored briefing to your constituency or committee.

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