

CCPS Briefing:

Social Care and Public Service Reform

June 2026

The Coalition of Care and Support Providers Scotland (CCPS) represents not-for-profit providers of care and support across Scotland. As a membership organisation we work strategically and collaboratively to Inspire, Influence, Involve and Inform. Our members support tens of thousands of people, including adults with disabilities, older people, children and families, and those affected by poverty, homelessness, addiction, poor mental health and involvement in the justice system. They also employ a significant proportion of Scotland's social care workforce, reflecting the fact that most social care services are commissioned and delivered by independent providers.

This briefing is intended to inform MSPs ahead of the Scottish Government debate: *"Public Service Reform: Empowering Staff, Service Users and Local Communities."*

Our key messages:

- Public service is not the preserve of the public sector alone. Not-for-profit social care providers are **fundamental to the delivery of public services** across Scotland.
- The majority of Scotland's social services, including social care, are **delivered by commissioned providers such as CCPS members**.
- Public service reform cannot be delivered without a strong social care sector.
- Investment in social care supports both prevention and effective critical interventions. It is essential to the sustainability of the NHS and wider public services.
- The not-for-profit social care sector is under **acute financial pressure**.
- The **Scottish Government must commit to urgent and sustained investment in social care**. This investment needs to reflect the true cost of delivery and secure the long-term stability of not-for-profit providers and the services they deliver.

Why social care matters

Social care is a cornerstone of Scotland's public services. Around one in 23 people require social care each year¹. These services enable people to live independently, keep connected to their communities and families, stay in education or work, and live with dignity and purpose. At its heart, social care is about supporting people to realise their rights, build on

¹CCPS (2026) [Workforce Priorities Report](#)

their strengths and live the lives that they choose. Every day, CCPS members work with people across Scotland, delivering preventative, community-based support.

Social care and public service reform

Social care is not a peripheral part of public service reform; it is fundamental to its success. If this parliament is serious about public service reform, then it must be serious about ensuring the sustainability of the social care sector.

This is particularly significant given how services are delivered in practice. The majority of Scotland's social services, including social care, are commissioned rather than provided directly by the public sector. Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) workforce data for 2024 show that 65.5% of staff in registered services are employed by independent providers (41% in the private sector and 24.5% in the voluntary sector)². Public service reform must therefore engage with providers as core partners in delivering change.

CCPS, drawing on insight, evidence and solutions from our membership, can be strategic partners in the delivery of public service reform. Not-for-profit social care providers are custodians of public funding, system leaders and innovators, and major employers in communities across Scotland.

Providers in our membership offer critical service for people in acute need as part of a whole system approach alongside our public sector partners. Many others deliver key preventative services and focus on early intervention – although many of these services are under particular threat of funding loss. By supporting people earlier and in their own homes and communities, social care reduces pressure on hospitals and other acute services. It improves outcomes for people and delivers better value for public money.

A sector under pressure

However, right now this foundation is under real strain. Scotland's social care system is in real jeopardy. Current funding levels do not meet the true cost of delivering care and too many people only get support when their needs have become acute. Years of underinvestment has created a fragile operating environment, with many providers facing significant and sustained financial pressure.

We are hearing from our members of services being reduced or withdrawn, workforce shortages and growing unmet need. These pressures do not disappear; they are displaced into other, often more expensive, parts of the system – for example, people being kept in hospital when they are medically able to leave due to a lack of social care being available³.

There is now clear cross-party recognition that NHS performance is directly linked to social care capacity. Contributions to the recent parliamentary debate on *“Investing, Protecting and*

² SSSC (2025) [WorkforceDataReport2024_211125.pdf](#), Page 24, Table 9.

³ CCPS (2026) [New report shows Scottish people can't get the best NHS care without investment in social care](#)

Renewing Scotland's NHS," reinforced the point that social care is a primary lever for improving NHS performance and reducing demand on services.

The case for investment

This is why investment in social care is not optional, it is essential to the long-term viability of Scotland's public services. A well-resourced social care sector prevents crisis, improves outcomes for people, and helps to ensure that public money is used effectively. Just as importantly, sufficient funding will also support a well-paid, stable workforce⁴, reducing family poverty and enabling providers to continue delivering high-quality care in communities across Scotland.

A failure to invest in social care does not save the Scottish Government money, it simply shifts costs and pressures into more expensive parts of the public service system. Most importantly it shifts risk to the very people who need support.

Our key asks

As part of their public service reform programme, we urge the Scottish Government to fund social care like it matters by:

- Ensuring sustainable funding for not-for-profit social care providers that reflects the true cost of delivery and enables providers to pay their workforce fairly.
- Agreeing to fund a short-term recovery plan for our sector by delivery of its first budget.
- Working with CCPS as a strategic partner in shaping improvements to social care and support in Scotland.

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⁴ CCPS (2025) [Impact of ASC Uplift Report](#)