Our Shared Vision for Independent Living in Scotland
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This statement is jointly signed by the Scottish Government, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (on behalf of local authorities), the disabled people's Scottish Independent Living Coalition, and the National Health Service Scotland. It sets out our agreed vision, based on the core principle that disabled people across Scotland will have equality of opportunity, and the means to be full and active citizens.

Independent living means "disabled people of all ages having the same freedom, choice, dignity and control as other citizens at home, at work, and in the community. It does not mean living by yourself, or fending for yourself. It means rights to practical assistance and support to participate in society and live an ordinary life."

Without practical assistance, an accommodating physical environment and a receptive and inclusive culture, many disabled people cannot exercise their full and equal contribution in society; live free from discrimination and harassment nor contribute to a wealthier and fairer, healthier, safer and stronger, smarter and greener Scotland.


The Scottish Government, Scottish Local Authorities, the Scottish Independent Living Coalition and the National Health Service Scotland are committed to working together as equal members of the Independent Living Programme. Our shared commitment to independent living for all disabled people in Scotland is founded on our belief that it is the right thing to do, and it is in Scotland's interest:

• It is right for the individual - to be free from prejudice and discrimination; and to participate within society as full, and active, equal citizens

• It is right for public bodies - putting this agenda at the heart of planning and service delivery will make them more effective and more efficient at targeting limited resources to needs, reducing spend in the longer term and meeting their legislative duties
• It is right for our economy - the more diverse the economy, the more innovative and high growth it is; and the more successful it will be at recognising, attracting and growing talent

• It is right for society as a whole - a more equal society will have greater strength and social cohesion

We have much to learn from one another. Our working partnership is based on a model of co-production and inclusion from policy making to service design, delivery and monitoring. We recognise that there is scope to deliver lasting change for disabled people in Scotland. This can only be achieved by thinking and acting aspirationally; and by ensuring that the voices of disabled people are heard, understood, have equal weight and are well respected. This approach will help deliver our shared vision across our respective areas of responsibility covering all devolved public services in Scotland.

Our vision and strategic approach fit with the National Performance Framework, the 'Statement of Ambition' on Community Planning, Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs) - as agreed between the Scottish Government and Community Planning Partnerships, and the National Health Service Scotland Quality Strategy. Our vision builds on a shared agenda to tackle health inequalities, and seeks to reduce inequalities in all other areas of life, which are experienced by disabled people at large, as identified by the Equality and Human Rights Commission Report of 2010.

Effective community planning arrangements will be at the core of public service reform. They will drive the pace of service integration, increase the focus on prevention and secure continuous improvement in public service delivery, in order to achieve better outcomes for communities. Community Planning and SOAs will provide the foundation for effective partnership working within which wider reform initiatives, such as the integration of health and adult social care and the establishment of single police and fire services, will happen. Disabled People’s Organisations have a pivotal role to play here as active, knowledgeable and unique Third Sector partners for statutory bodies.

Communities have high expectations of public services and have a key role to play in helping to shape and coproduce better outcomes within their communities. If community planning partnerships are to unlock that potential, their foundations must be built on a strong understanding of
their communities including disabled people, and provide genuine opportunities to consult, engage and involve disabled people as equal and active citizens.

We will work to make all our outcomes inclusive of independent living principles and practices, so that disabled people can participate in society and lead an ordinary life, on an equal basis to that of other citizens, and be a part of Scotland's future development as a country of equality opportunity and quality of life for all of its citizens.

We believe that by working in partnership we will be better equipped to identify the best approach to achieve agreed outcomes, making the most effective investment of resources and taking account of the priorities and needs of all local communities.

We will work in collaboration to deliver our strategic approach to independent living, with a cross sector plan of activity, which will support independent living for all disabled people in Scotland.

Our overall objective is to deliver real choice and control for disabled people in all areas of life, and all parts of Scotland, ensuring their dignity and respect at all times as full, and active, equal citizens of Scotland.

We recognise that this will require continued effort by all partners and others across society. It will take time to achieve this vision, but this refreshed and updated joint statement and our strategic approach are important milestones in our journey to make independent living a reality.
Jim Elder-Woodward, OBE
Independent Chair, Scottish Independent Living Coalition

Cllr Peter Johnston
COSLA Spokesperson for Health and Well-being

Alex Neil
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing

Derek Feeley
Director-General Health and Social Care, Scottish Government
Chief Executive NHS Scotland
Independent Living Programme Champion
Independent Living - A Shared Vision

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This statement is signed by the Scottish Government, COSLA (Convention of Scottish Local Authorities), NHS Scotland and the Scottish Independent Living Coalition.

We agree that independent living is about freedom, choice, dignity and control

This is what we want for disabled people in Scotland - at home, at work and in the community.

The Scottish Government, COSLA, NHS Scotland and the Scottish Independent Living Coalition will work together.

We believe it is right that all disabled people in Scotland should be able to live independently:

- It is right for each person to be considered as an equal, without prejudice or discrimination;
- It is right for all people - more equality means we are stronger together;

- It is right for our economy – we can be more successful if we support people into work, and make good use of people’s talent.

We have a lot to learn from one another and we will work together as equal partners.

We want to make changes for disabled people that will last.

We want to be the best we can be. To do that we must listen to everyone and treat everyone as equal. We will do this across all of our work.

The Scottish Government has a National Performance Framework and National Outcomes.

Local Authorities and Community Planning Partnerships in Scotland have Single Outcome Agreements.

NHS Scotland has a Quality Strategy.
We believe that all of these support Independent living.

We want disabled people to be part of Scotland's future where everyone is equal.

We believe that we can make better decisions if we work with disabled people.

We believe this can help us to use money and resources in a better way for everyone.

Most of all we want disabled people to have real choice and control in all areas of their life and in all parts of Scotland.
We know that this will take time and we will have to keep working together.

We believe this joint statement is important because it says we want to make things better together, for everyone.

Jim Elder-Woodward, OBE
Independent Chair, Scottish Independent Living Coalition

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