



Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy Delivery Plan and Workforce Action Plan – Update on Progress and Next Steps

June 2025



Introduction

Since the publication of our joint Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy in June 2023, a wide range of actions have been taken forward to enable progress towards the Strategy's vision of:

“a Scotland, free from stigma and inequality, where everyone fulfils their right to achieve the best mental health and wellbeing possible.”

The Strategy identified the following ten key priorities, based on engagement with stakeholders. We see these as crucial to drive improvement across the whole system, at all levels of need.

- Tackle mental health stigma and discrimination where it exists and ensure people can talk about their mental health and wellbeing and access the person-centred support they require.
- Improve population mental health and wellbeing, building resilience and enabling people to access the right information and advice in the right place for them and in a range of formats.
- Increase mental health capacity within General Practice and primary care, universal services and community-based mental health supports. Promote the whole system, whole person approach by helping partners to work together and removing barriers faced by people from marginalised groups when accessing services.
- Expand and improve the support available to people in mental health distress and crisis, and those who care for them, through our national approach on Time, Space, Compassion.
- Work across Scottish and Local Government and with partners to develop a collective approach to understanding and shared responsibility for promoting good mental health and addressing the causes of mental health inequalities, supporting groups who are particularly at risk.
- Improve mental health and wellbeing support in a wide range of settings with reduced waiting times and improved outcomes for people accessing all services, including Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and psychological therapies.
- Ensure people receive the quality of care and treatment required for the time required, supporting care as close to home as possible and promoting independence and recovery.
- Continue to improve support for those in the forensic mental health system.
- Strengthen support and care pathways for people requiring neurodevelopmental support, working in partnership with health, social care, education, the third sector and other delivery partners. This will ensure those who need it receive the right care and support at the right time in a way that works for them.
- Reduce the risk of poor mental health and wellbeing in adult life by promoting the importance of good relationships and trauma-informed approaches from the earliest years of life, taking account where relevant adverse childhood experiences. We will ensure help is available early on when there is a risk of poor mental health, and support the physical health and wellbeing of people with mental health conditions.

The Delivery Plan accompanying the Strategy, published in November 2023, was built around these priorities, setting out initial actions under each.

We also recognise and highly value the fundamental role of the workforce in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our communities. We know that making progress towards the Strategy's vision, and delivering against our specific actions, can only be achieved with a workforce with the right capacity and skills.

The Workforce Action Plan, also published in November 2023, therefore sought to support this, setting out a range of actions to address key workforce issues.

This interim publication lays out the successes and challenges emerging from taking forward the current Delivery Plan and Workforce Action Plan to date. It also describes our approach to refreshing both documents in early 2026, the underpinning principles for this forthcoming work, our next steps, and an indicative timeline for the production of a refreshed Plan.

Across the system, we face significant challenges in terms of resources, and the capacity of services to respond to increasing demand. In this context, our Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy remains our blueprint for what a well-functioning whole mental health system looks like as we seek to ensure that the best support possible is available in the right place at the right time.

To ensure the Strategy results in the transformational change to mental health and wellbeing that we all want to see, we need to understand where we are making progress and make sure the actions we have committed to remain the right ones. With this in mind, refreshing our Delivery Plan and Workforce Action Plan is key.

This is especially so given that a Service Renewal Framework (SRF) is intended for publication shortly which will complement the new Population Health Framework. The SRF will set out the policy intent for health and social care service reform in the medium to longer term. There is no health without mental health, and the refreshed Delivery Plan will be crucial in illustrating how we are taking meaningful action to contribute to wider ambitions for the whole system, within the wider programme of renewal.

By ensuring that our revised Plan contains the right strategic actions, taking account of both progress and context, we can ensure we make progress against the Strategy's outcomes, and in turn move ever closer to achieving our Vision.



Maree Todd MSP
Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport



Councillor Paul Kelly
COSLA Spokesperson for Health and Social Care

Summary of Key Achievements

This report marks an important milestone for the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy, giving an opportunity to illustrate some of the progress that has been made to date, and the collective efforts which have supported meaningful change to people's lives.

A Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy Leadership Board, co-chaired by the Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport and the COSLA Health and Social Care Spokesperson has been established. The Board brings together key stakeholders across the public and voluntary sector, together with lived experience. It oversees and supports the delivery of the Strategy's ten priorities, and the actions within the Delivery and Workforce Action Plans.

Progress reports on the Strategy are presented to the Leadership Board at each of its meetings. These give a snapshot of progress against actions outlined in the plans, highlighting delivery successes, together with any actions which may be at risk. The reports to the Leadership Board on progress can be found on the [Scottish Government website](#).

Progress has been made against many actions, some of which are highlighted below. However, measuring the impact of specific actions on the mental health and wellbeing of the people of Scotland is challenging, particularly in the short term and we are working with Public Health Scotland to support better understanding of the cumulative impact of the Strategy and its actions. A full Monitoring and Evaluation Framework is under consideration, and will be introduced in due course to support this.

Meanwhile, the examples below highlight some of the tangible changes that have resulted from the actions in the current versions of the Delivery Plan and Workforce Action Plan since publication.

Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy - Delivery Plan

- In late 2023, See Me held three workshops with a range of stakeholders to refine their thinking on delivery of the commitments set out in this delivery plan. The stakeholders had experience of mental health stigma, whether personally or through work to address it. Discussions focussed on key areas identified in the Scottish Mental Illness Stigma Survey (SMISS), with participants asked to put forward suggested recommendations to be taken forward. Following an extensive review, a series of suggested actions were finalised for the delivery collective to consider when established. Since then, in 2024-25, See Me has delivered anti-stigma activities in several key settings including education, mental health services and workplaces. In education, they trained 295 people to deliver See Me See Change - a whole school approach on mental health services. They have collaborated with NHS Scotland and researchers at Abertay University to explore the impact of stigma by association in the mental health nursing profession and influenced

the National Mental Health Nursing Review. On workplaces, they have engaged with over 2,200 employers, providing information, advice, and support to create mental health inclusive working environments free from stigma and discrimination. Through their Time to Talk Day in 2025, See Me increased their representation of people with lived experience on their media coverage by 93%. The campaign also saw a 44% increase in website visits and an 11% rise in downloads, indicating a strong public engagement. Planning continues on the best approach to establishing a national anti-stigma collective with the first meeting taking place in the Autumn. **(Priority 1, Strategic Action 1.1)**

- [Extra Time](#), a programme which follows on from The Changing Room programme, provides additional support for men to understand and look after their mental health and resilience. Between November 2023 and March 2025, Scottish Government have funded groups at five clubs across Scotland: Rangers FC, Hibernian FC, Heart of Midlothian FC, Aberdeen FC and Dundee FC. Around 50% of participants are from lower socio-economic backgrounds and up to 60% are from the age groups most at risk of suicide (35-54 years old). The programme covers three key areas: life satisfaction, mental health and wellbeing, and social connectivity. The work of the programme has seen improvements for participants including improved relationships with loved ones, improved mental and physical health, and reduced social isolation and loneliness. **(Priority 1, Strategic Action 1.1)**
- Funding has been provided to a range of children and young people's organisations which has enabled developments and updates in online mental health and wellbeing self-help and support content. This has included the updating and maintenance of [Parent Club](#) and Young Scot's [Aye Feel online hub](#). The Aye Feel online hub was accessed by around 53,000 people in 2024/25. Additionally, the dedicated Aye Feel social media content was seen to reach over 6,000 young people. **(Priority 2, Strategic Action 2.1)**
- The [Roadmap for Creating Trauma-Informed and Responsive Change](#) resource was published in November 2023. An [online webinar](#) (with over 560 attendees) took place in January 2025 focused on the resource, sharing practical learning from the Scottish context around how a range of services and organisations are using the Roadmap to support them in their work. **(Priority 2, Strategic Action 2.4)**
- A rebranded [National Trauma Transformation Programme \(NTTP\) website](#) was launched in November 2023 to help raise awareness and increase the accessibility of the freely available trauma-training resources and supporting guidance for implementation. **(Priority 2, Strategic Action 2.4)**
- Two NTTP learning reports were published in September 2024, demonstrating real progress in delivering trauma-informed workforces and services and the long-term commitment that is required to achieve this across all systems and services:

- The NTTP Workforce Survey 2024 was completed by 5,075 respondents from all 32 local authority areas; from the public, private and, third sectors. It highlights that around 70% of those who had completed NTTP training said that they were extremely or very confident in understanding both the concept and impact of psychological trauma, compared to around 37% of those who had not undertaken the training.
 - A [follow-up Evaluation of the NTTP Local Authority Delivery Trials](#), noted that the NTTP has contributed to increased trauma-related knowledge and skills among staff, and a more trauma-aware and trauma-informed workforce overall. Programme activity was also seen to have increased awareness and led to more conversations about the impact of vicarious trauma, compassion fatigue and burnout, bringing a helpful focus on staff wellbeing. **(Priority 2, Strategic Action 2.4)**
- In partnership with Public Health Scotland and See Me, Scottish Government is supporting employers to create mentally healthy workplaces through our Supporting a Mentally Healthy Workplace digital platform - visited over 1,900 times since November 2023 - and the [national learning network for employers](#), which 800 individuals have engaged with. Our quarterly network events have an average attendance of 150 people and a May 2025 survey found that the network has improved members' understanding of mental health and supported the development of effective wellbeing policies. **(Priority 2, Strategic Action 2.5)**
- Community Mental Health and Wellbeing supports and services provided by local authorities were accessed by almost 83,000 children, young people and their family members between July 2023 and March 2024. This has been backed by £15 million per annum from the Scottish Government over the life of the plan, and this funding has been baselined from 2025-26 to provide more continuity for services. The supporting [Framework](#) was also updated to take account of learning to date and the changing context. **(Priority 3, Strategic Action 3.1/3.2)**
- Between November 2023 and March 2024, 1430 awards were made through the Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund for adults to grassroots projects providing early intervention and prevention support in local communities, this includes 554 projects with a focus on those facing socio-economic disadvantage, 537 projects focussing on people with a long-term health condition or disability and 316 projects with a focus on minority ethnic families. The Fund is making a direct contribution to our drive to tackle child poverty, with national guidance placing a clear focus on the six priority family groups identified in Best Start Bright Futures. For this reason, it has been included in the Scottish Government's Fairer Funding Pilot, with funding committed for a further two years until March 2027. **(Priority 3, Strategic Action 3.2)**
- Public Health Scotland (PHS) has developed an interactive dashboard to present the Mental Health Quality Indicators (MHQI). This dashboard will continue to be developed into a "one-stop shop" for data on mental health

services in Scotland. Publishing more detailed statistics in a similar form to the NHS England dashboard was one of the recommendations of the Public Audit Committee's report on adult mental health. As well as providing an interactive platform for the MHQI data it also provides the first subnational breakdowns of indicators. **(Priority 3, Strategic Action 3.3)**

- Significant progress has been made in delivering our three year **suicide prevention** action plan, [Creating Hope Together: 2022-2025](#), including: launching Suicide Prevention Scotland's powerful new campaign 'what if a conversation about suicide could save a life' and creating a new website providing information and support to anyone with thoughts of suicide (or for people supporting someone who may be suicidal). Testing of effective approaches of supporting people in communities at higher risk of suicide is ongoing, with efforts including a programme of Community Led Action Research. [Time Space Compassion](#) (TSC) remains central to all work in this area, with the release of a second volume of TSC practice stories and a new set of podcasts. All of this learning is shared through our Suicide Prevention Implementation Leads in Public Health Scotland and local suicide prevention leads network. This year, the commitment to double the suicide prevention budget, to £2.8 million, in the current parliamentary term has been met. **(Priority 4, Strategic Action 4.1)**
- As part of our joint commitment to develop and enhance person-centred support for people affected by self-harm, Scottish Government has funded [Penumbra's Self-Harm Network Scotland](#) to provide free support to anyone over 12 in Scotland. Since November 2023, just under 520 people have been referred for peer practitioner support. The service also provides free training which has been attended by over 3,000 people since November 2023. A new training for trainers programme has been developed to increase capacity for training delivery locally, and in turn increase awareness raising. As well as this training offer, Self-Harm Network Scotland has been running sessions for Loved Ones. Since Nov 2023, 127 people have attended these sessions. **(Priority 4, Strategic Action 4.2)**
- [Distress Brief Intervention](#) (DBI) is now live in every Health and Social Care Partnership area across Scotland, providing timely support to those in distress and easing pressures on frontline services. Some 84,000 people have now been referred to our world-leading DBI programme. **(Priority 4, Strategic Action 4.3)**
- Scottish Government has further developed our multi agency response to unplanned and urgent health care, including implementing a reference guide to enable Police Scotland and Scottish Ambulance Service to access advice from a mental health clinician on the best outcomes for the individual. This has resulted in a reduction in police attendance at hospital Emergency Departments for mental health concerns, for example, NHS Lanarkshire has seen an 82% reduction since the introduction. **(Priority 4, Strategic Action 4.5)**

- Since November 2023, the Mental Health Hub has responded to over 180,000 calls, ensuring that anyone in mental health crisis or distress can quickly and easily connect with professionals who are experts in that field. Support for the Mental Health Hub has continued, with additional investment increasing year on year, bringing total Scottish Government funding to over £9 million in 2024–25. **(Priority 4, Strategic Action 4.5)**
- Delivery of the award winning Enhanced Mental Health Pathway for those in distress not only improved mental health support for individuals but saved 17,413 officer hours by Police Scotland over a ten-month period and 99% of their staff confirmed they felt confident making referrals. **(Priority 4, Strategic Action 4.5)**
- We have worked at pace to develop and publish the [Framework for Collaboration and Collaborative Commitments Plan](#). These will support partnership working between services to ensure that those in need are able to access the right service at the right time. A national review of Psychiatric Emergency Plans was also completed in December 2024. A new national template and guidance is now being developed with the aim of removing barriers to multi-agency working when responding to a psychiatric emergency. **(Priority 4, Strategic Action 4.5)**
- We continue to develop a national veterans mental health and wellbeing pathway. The [Veterans Mental Health and Wellbeing Pathway Advisory Group](#) has agreed a model of delivery for the pathway. Work will continue throughout 2025 on the development of a national framework for the pathway; local implementation plans; and a digital hub. **(Priority 5, Strategic Action 5.1)**
- For the first time ever, national performance against the 18-week CAMHS standard has been met, with 90.6% of children and young people starting treatment within 18 weeks of referral during the quarter ending December 2024. **(Priority 6, Strategic Action 6.1)**
- The [National Specification for the Care and Treatment of Eating Disorders](#) in Scotland was published on 20 November 2024 and aims to ensure that everyone has access to a high-quality standard of service regardless of what stage they are in their recovery and is for care across all stages of treatment. **(Priority 6, Strategic Action 6.2)**
- The Scottish Government have adopted a phased approach to implementation of the mental health core standards to reduce pressures on services and staff. This has included a pilot conducted in early 2024. Health Improvement Scotland has undertaken a local assessment with all board areas to demonstrate and improve implementation of the standards and will use this analysis to develop local improvement plans and provide quality improvement support. In 2024-2025, NHS Benchmarking delivered data aligned with the standards, enabling board areas to drive improvement at a local level. **(Priority 6, Strategic Action 6.2)**

- Work has continued to improve the use of data. Work of the Scottish Mental Health Benchmarking and Quality Improvement Network has continued enabling the collection and reporting of data on treatment and care for mental health systems. In 2024-2025 this included bespoke projects collecting data on Mental Health Workforce, Children and Young People's Mental Health Services and Adult Mental Health Services. This work on data collection has helped to progress improvement work and policy development. **(Priority 6, Strategic Action 6.4)**
- The Scottish Government has published the first ever statistical report on mental health primary care patient experience. This provides valuable insights into the experience of people with mental health conditions and who contact primary care about mental health problems, as well as improving the data on equalities characteristics as well. **(Priority 6, Strategic Action 6.5)**
- The Target Operating Model (TOM) for prison healthcare has been developed by National Prison Care Network (NPrCN) in collaboration with key partners. This is now being implemented in all prisons and will provide a framework for a nationally consistent healthcare delivery. From April to November 2024, 66% of all service elements identified in the TOM were considered by NHS Boards/HSPCs to be fully implemented. **(Priority 7, Strategic Action 7.1)**
- Working with NHS Scotland Assure, a toolkit has been developed to systematically assess factors that affect the quality and safety of NHS adult in-patient mental health wards. This is recorded through an innovative app. Testing of the app and associated guidance has been completed. A phased roll out across Scotland has begun in 2025 and the app has been implemented fully in four NHS boards. **(Priority 7, Strategic Action 7.2)**
- Working with the State Hospital Board for Scotland and other stakeholders, a service for women who need high secure care and treatment will open at Carstairs in July 2025. This will deliver improved access for women to forensic mental health services and provide specialist care closer to home for women who need it. **(Priority 8, Strategic Action 8.1)**
- Working with a range of stakeholders including those representing the lived experience of children and families, Scottish Government and COSLA have jointly reviewed the implementation of the [Neurodevelopmental Service Specification](#), identifying positive next steps. It is anticipated that the associated report will be published in June and will inform next steps. **(Priority 9, Strategic Action 9.1)**
- A Perinatal Mental Health Service Specification is being developed by the Scottish Government and the Joint Strategic Board for Child and Family Mental Health, with input from those with clinical and lived experience. This will support clinicians and managers working in NHS inpatient and community perinatal mental health services of the principles of good practice in relation to the delivery of services. **(Priority 10, Strategic Action 10.2)**

- The Scottish Government have invested £1.5 million through the [Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Fund](#) from October 2024. This Fund aims to sustain and improve third sector, non-clinical support for babies, parents and carers affected, or at risk of, perinatal and infant mental health issues in Scotland. Through this Fund, [16 third sector organisations](#) are able to provide crucial support services for parents, carers, infants and families who are experiencing mental health difficulties during the perinatal period. **(Priority 10, Strategic Action 10.2)**

Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy - Workforce Action Plan

- To support delivery of the Plan, Scottish Government have provided NHS Education Scotland (NES) with around £30 million in 2024/25 to continue multidisciplinary education, training and workforce expansion for staff. This includes, but not limited to:
- 84 places in the Masters's programmes in Applied Psychology in Primary Care and Applied Psychology for Children and Young People and 84 Doctorate in Clinical Psychology places available in training programmes in Psychology services. Trainees are jointly matriculated with education partners whilst employed by NHS Scotland Health Boards – postholders deliver clinical services during training, therefore supporting delivery of the CAMHS and PT waiting times and improving outcomes for people accessing services. **(Action 34.1, Train)**
- Up to 50 places on the Enhanced Psychological Practice (EPP) programme are available on the post-graduate certificate level education programme which enables staff to deliver high-quality, evidence-based psychological interventions for mild to moderate mental health difficulties. Within the EPP Programme, there are two courses; one which focuses on learners working with Adults (EPP-A), and a course targeted at learners working with Children, Young People and their Families (EPP-CYP). **(Action 35.1, Train)**
- Increasing routes into the workforce through four new and distinct job roles for Psychological Interventions Assistant (PIA) jobs were approved in October 2024. These PIA roles will work within a range of service settings to deliver high quality, brief, outcome focused, evidence based psychological interventions for people with mild to moderate mental health problems, using a variety of delivery methods, such as face-to-face in person, using video technology or over the telephone. **(Action 35.1, Train)**
- Over 4,000 multidisciplinary education and training places were delivered directly (face to face or screen to screen) to the workforce across a broad range of workstreams, with over 100,000 in person or online engagements with education and training offers accessed by a wide multi-sector, multiprofessional workforce. **(Action 26.2, Train)**

- Increased capacity and delivery for service posts to help meet the access standards for psychological therapies across Scotland. Funding has enabled expansion of the workforce in key pressure areas, increasing supervision and training capacity in applied psychology and psychological therapy. The main impact is increased clinical service delivery, supporting 18.4WTE working with older adults; 25.4WTE Clinical Associates in Applied Psychology; and 65.3WTE additional CAMHS service posts. **(Action 26.9, Train)**
- Additional educational infrastructure has been made available to local boards across the following areas: Local Area Tutors; Trauma Coordinators; Learning Disabilities; Early Interventions for Children; and the EPP Programme. Boards utilise this resource to ensure safe and effective learning and education opportunities for the trainees, deliver training and supervision, conduct learning/training needs analysis of Psychology and multidisciplinary staff, and liaise with NES around outcomes and local requirements. Boards deliver and implement a programme of training in evidence based psychological approaches locally or nationally, in partnership with NES, and monitor and report on local delivery (including post training evaluation). **(Action 26, Train)**
- To support the implementation of the Plan, in partnership with NES the mental health and wellbeing workforce education and training advisory group has continued to explore opportunities to increase awareness, uptake and accessibility of existing, reliable mental health training resources and what further resources might be needed to support the training needs of the wider workforce. **(Action 20, Train)** This resulted in:
 - The development of the Mental Health and Wellbeing - [Learning Starters resource](#) (referred to in the Plan as Mental Health induction framework) which will be accessible across all sectors, including volunteers and carers. The first iteration went live on 9 May 2025. **(Action 20.1, Train)**
- Continued to fund the creation additional posts for resident doctors to undertake psychiatry specialty training with uplifts made to Core Psychiatry, Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, General Adult Psychiatry and Old Age Psychiatry as well as the introduction of run-through training programmes for Child & Adolescent Psychiatry and Intellectual Disability Psychiatry. **(Action 34.2, Train)**
- Recruitment into Core Psychiatry has improved drastically in recent years with 100% of entry-level posts being filled for a fourth consecutive year. **(Action 16, Attract)**
- The Scottish Government has actively shared and promoted the most up to date equalities messaging, resources and training available. These have been designed to meet the essential learning needs of the health and social care workforce. Linking these resources into the workplan of the education and training advisory group **(Action 23, Train)**. This has included:
 - Equality Diversity and Human Rights digital resource **(Action 23.1)**
 - [Cultural Humility online resource](#) **(Action 23.2)**
 - [Transgender Care and Knowledge Skills Framework](#) **(Action 24)**

- Carer awareness and Triangle of Care **(Action 48.8)**
- As well as ensuring that updated resources are included in the resources for [Primary Care \(Action 49\)](#) and [Unscheduled Care \(Action 22\)](#) in Mental Health.
- The MSc Leading Digital Transformation in Health and Care for Scotland is a flagship programme, designed to develop a new generation of leaders who can drive, deliver, and embed digital transformation across Scotland's health, social care, social work and housing services. Funded by the Scottish Government and led by NHS Education for Scotland, the programme is delivered by the University of Edinburgh's Health and Social Care Data Driven Innovation Talent Programme, based at the Usher Institute. **(Action 31, Train)**
The programme has so far seen:
 - Cohort 1 - PG Certification - 48 participants, all passed the certificate year
 - Cohort 1 - 40 out of 48 continued into the diploma year
 - Cohort 2 - PG Certification - 24 participants in this year
- Council Leaders agreed a new doctorate model for Trainee Educational Psychologists (EP) in November 2024, to better meet the needs of councils, wider stakeholders and provide a more sustainable model for the EP profession. Recruitment has commenced for trainees to begin the new doctorate course from September 2025. **(Action 34.4, Train)**
- Scottish Government has exceeded our commitment to provide funding for 320 additional staff in CAMHS by 2026, increasing capacity for cases by over 10,000 - supporting those who require mental health treatment and care and providing additional capacity to support more children and young people in the community and at home, supporting our progress to meet the 18-weeks CAMHS standard. **(Action 35, Employ)**
- Funding has continued for additional mental health workers providing local provision and support in key settings, including A&Es and GP practices via the Enhanced Mental Health Outcomes Framework, exceeding the original commitment of 800 mental health workers. This funding will be included in overall board allocations from 2026-2027 onwards. **(Action 35.7, Employ)**
- The psychiatry recruitment and retention working group was established to consider the challenges facing the profession where key stakeholders and experts have come together to produce a series of recommendations aimed to support the psychiatry workforce in NHS Scotland. The working group are due to report to Ministers in Spring 2025. Whilst the report work has been underway we have worked with key stakeholders to make improvements such as the development of [resources](#) by Centre for Workforce Supply to support recruitment in psychiatry and updates to the [psychiatry webpages](#) which promote careers in Scotland. **(Action 16, Attract)**
- The [mental health nursing review](#) will be published shortly. It considered key themes such as strengthening the contribution and impact of the profession,

voice, leadership, education and development, nurturing the workforce and remote and rural consideration. Human centred design principles informed the Review process. Three advisory groups set the direction and contents of the Review report. Alongside a literature review, our National Mental Health Nursing Conversations, which included engagement with over 1,000 mental health nurses and students and views from those with lived and living experience and carers. This resulted in the report's five overarching themes and it's 25 recommendations. A new implementation group will be established to ensure effective collaboration, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of review actions, reporting to both the Nursing and Midwifery Taskforce Implementation Group and the Mental Health and Wellbeing Leadership Board. **(Action 15, Attract)**

- Since 2022, the Scottish Ambulance Service mental health and dementia care team have delivered education, training and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to a total of 3,703 people. They continue to explore innovative ways to deliver mental health education. For example, the recently published podcast which allows staff to listen from mobile devices whilst on frontline duties as well as a number of bite sized CPD videos that sit alongside links to online training resources. **(Action 31, Train)**
- Work is ongoing with our stakeholders to develop a parenting resource to support kinship, foster, supported lodging carers and adoptive parents to provide trauma-informed care for their children and young people to help them to thrive now and in the future. Working with NES, initial learning materials and resources have been developed into a course that will be delivered in person over several sessions, with follow up reflective coaching. Initial small-scale testing took place in conjunction with the Trauma Responsive Social Work Services team in March 2025 in West Lothian with a group of foster carers. Work will continue with stakeholders and carers to consider next steps and to further test and develop this resource in 2025-2026. **(Action 21, Train)**
- Aligned to the delivery plan, a rebranded National Trauma Transformation Programme (NTTP) website was launched in November 2023 to help raise awareness and increase the accessibility of the freely available trauma-training resources and supporting guidance for implementation. The [Roadmap](#) was published in November 2023. An [online webinar](#) (with over 560 attendees) took place in January 2025 focused on the resource, sharing practical learning from the Scottish context around how a range of services and organisations are using the Roadmap to support them in their work. **(Action 26.1, Train)**
- The Trauma Responsive Social Work Services workplan **(Action 28, Train)** has:
 - Developed and delivering a comprehensive programme of implementation and learning support, initially to four pilot sites (social work services and multidisciplinary teams), which included the development of new training products on worker wellbeing, power

- sharing with lived experience, professional supervision, and safety and stabilisation (trauma enhanced).
- Revised [Codes of Practice](#) for social services workers and their employers to include a new code on working in a way that is informed by an understanding of the impact of trauma.
- Updated [Continuous professional learning](#) for registered social services workers updated to mandate learning on psychological trauma, with specific learning for newly qualified social workers (NQSWs).
- Piloted 'Transforming Connections' Trauma Skilled Training with follow up coaching support with over 200 NQSWs in 2023 to consider suitability of the training for NQSWs. Learning from this was shared with key stakeholders. 'Transforming Connections' is now being delivered to NQSWs while work is underway with local NQSW leads to consider how best to embed this learning into their [mandatory supported year programmes](#). There is also a pilot with social work students in three universities to assess suitability for students.

Challenges and Lessons Learnt

Although many actions within the current Delivery Plan and Workforce Action Plan have been successfully completed, there are some actions where progress has been slower. These have been impacted by a number of contextual challenges, including funding and capacity and the Leadership Board has been updated on these.

Public finances remain under significant pressure. As a result, the Scottish Government has had to make difficult budget decisions in each of the last three financial years. This has affected how priorities are set internally, impacted service capacity, and the level of funding to delivery partners who rely on central funding as a proportion of their income. Since the publication of the Delivery Plan and Workforce Action Plan in November 2023, these financial constraints have limited the ability to carry out some planned actions to original timescales.

There has been an accompanying impact of fiscal pressures on wider local budgets. These have necessitated difficult decisions, which have in turn had the potential to impact mental health supports and services. Services which impact the social determinants of mental health have also risk being affected, which may have a longer-term, detrimental impact on demand. Ongoing capacity concerns were also prevalent across all delivery partners, including within the overall mental health workforce. Given the value of security of funding streams, Scottish Government has moved to baseline some key budgets both for Boards and local authorities - an example being the move to integrate £15 million per annum for provision of community-based support for children and young people into the local government budget settlement. Recognising the particular pressures on the third sector, the Scottish Government has also sought to provide early confirmation of grant support in 2025-2026 and used the Fairer Funding pilot to offer security of funding for some key frontline supports - including the Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing

Fund for Adults - until 2027. However, it is recognised that local budgets remain very challenging.

Members of the Leadership Board have also noted some challenges related to the form of the current Delivery Plans - for instance, in some individual actions, the end point felt unclear. This has made it difficult to understand the extent of the progress that has been made in some cases. There was also felt to be a degree of duplication between the Delivery Plan and the Workforce Action Plan. We will take this on board for the next iteration.

When the original Delivery Plan and Workforce Action Plan were published in November 2023, both documents had an initial 18-month lifespan. The original intention was to publish a new Delivery Plan and Workforce Action Plan in Spring 2025. However, the challenges described above, together with resourcing challenges within the Scottish Government and Local Government, have impacted the ability to meet that timeline in a meaningful way and we have agreed through the Leadership Board to revise these timelines to refresh our next Plan.

A revised timeline for publication is outlined below, alongside an improved approach to developing a refreshed Plan. This seeks to combat some of the challenges that we have experienced in delivery to date and will ensure that investment is effectively targeted towards where it will have most impact. In the interim, work will continue to deliver the current Delivery and Workforce Action Plans.

Forthcoming Refresh of the Delivery Plan and Workforce Action Plan

Underpinning Principles

Our current Delivery Plan and Workforce Action Plans contain a broad range of actions across our ten key priorities. However, it is the view of the national Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy Leadership Board that refreshed versions of the Delivery Plan and Workforce Action Plan should take a different approach.

As well as ensuring coherence with the new Population Health Framework and Health and Social Care Service Renewal Framework, the Leadership Board has agreed a set of principles for the next version of the Delivery Plan, as follows:

- There should be better alignment between future Mental Health and Wellbeing Delivery Plans and Workforce Action Plans.
- There should be more alignment with cross-portfolio work, seeking to capitalise on ongoing work in other areas that can contribute to the Strategy's vision and outcomes.
- There should be fewer commitments, with a focus on quality rather than quantity. The focus should be on actions which will deliver the greatest impact.

- A set of consistent criteria should be used to inform decisions on prioritisation of existing actions. These include an assessment of impact, deliverability, sustainability, affordability, and equalities and human rights.
- Consultation with stakeholders should be proportionate, including using the networks available through the Executive Group and Leadership Board.
- All commitments included in future versions of the Delivery Plan and Workforce Action Plan should contain specific timelines and clear outputs.

Next Steps

We are therefore working towards one succinct, combined, Delivery and Workforce Plan, which will be focused on a selection of key strategic commitments that we believe will make the biggest difference to people's lives, in the context of wider health and social care reform.

Each commitment that will be included in the refreshed Plan will have a timeline, a clear sense of what will be achieved as a result, and, wherever possible, will be fully costed.

The target date for a refreshed Delivery Plan and Workforce Action Plan is February 2026. To get there, we will utilise the expertise and networks of the existing mental health and wellbeing governance structure, including our Leadership Board.

Annex A

Publications related to our achievements to date

Roadmap to Trauma-Informed and Responsive Change: Guidance for Organisations, Systems and Workforces in Scotland

This guidance, published in November 2023, assists services and organisations in embedding trauma-informed and responsive approaches across policy and practice. **(Priority 2, Strategic Action 2.4)**

The 2024 NTTP Workforce Survey

This survey explores awareness and attitudes to psychological trauma and trauma-informed practice across the Scottish workforce. **(Priority 2, Strategic Acton 2.4)**

Follow-up Evaluation of the NTTP Local Authority Delivery Trials

In 2019, three local authority areas (Argyle & Bute, Glasgow and Midlothian) were provided with Scottish Government funding to test out different approaches to rolling out trauma training. An interim process evaluation of the three delivery trial areas was undertaken and published in March 2021. This follow up evaluation was undertaken in 2023-2024 **(Priority 2, Strategic Action 2.4)**

A National Learning Report

Published by the Improvement Service in 2024, sharing learning about the progress, emerging impact, and enablers and barriers from work happening across Scottish local authorities and key community planning partners. **(Priority 2, Strategic Action 2.4)**

Children and Young People's Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Supports and Services Framework

This framework sets out the broad approach that should be taken in the provision of community-based mental health and wellbeing supports and services for children, young people and their families. **(Priority 3, Strategic Action 3.1)**

Access to Counsellors in Secondary Schools and Children and Young People's Community Mental Health Services – Summary Reports

A summary of information provided by local authorities on the school counselling service and community mental health supports in their area. **(Priority 2, Strategic Action 2.6)**

Primary Care – Mental Health and Wellbeing: Outcomes and Measures

This framework outlines outcomes, measures, and indicators to demonstrate the benefits of mental health and wellbeing services in primary care settings. **(Priority 3, Strategic Action 3.3)**

Mental health in primary and community care: report

This report published in December 2024 outlines actions to improve access to support, assessment and treatment in primary care mental health and wellbeing services. This includes support from general practice, digital provision, NHS 24, workforce education and out of hours. **(Priority 3, Strategic Action 3.3)**

Primary care services – mental health and wellbeing: resources

This resource was developed to support staff working as part of a multi-disciplinary team in mental health and wellbeing in primary care service. It provides a directory of additional sources of help and support to help all staff. **(Priority 3, Strategic Action 3.3)**

Mental health unscheduled care resource

The resource provides a directory of national services and tools to help unscheduled care services to support and improve people's mental health and wellbeing. **(Priority 4, Strategic Action 4.5)**

Safe Spaces: scoping report

This report published in in October 2024 explores the feasibility of implementing additional safe spaces for people experiencing crisis and acute emotional distress as an alternative to attending A&E. **(Priority 4, Strategic Action 4.5)**

Framework for Collaboration

The Framework promotes a multi-agency, collaborative approach to improving local distress pathways. It builds on the work of the Mental Health Unscheduled Care Network and will further assist partners to implement local distress pathways that ensure that individuals receive the support they need from the most appropriate service as soon as practicable. **(Priority 4, Strategic Action 4.5)**

Collaborative Commitments

The Partnership Delivery Group's (PDG) Commitments publication supports the implementation of the principles and approaching made in the Framework, with actions across priority themes to improve our multi-agency approach to supporting those experiencing mental health distress. These actions will be implemented by PDG members. **(Priority 4, Strategic Action 4.5)**

National Specification for Eating Disorder Care and Treatment in Scotland

This specification provides national guidance for the care and treatment of eating disorders in Scotland, aiming to ensure equitable and effective services. **(Priority 6, Strategic Action 6.3)**

Student Mental Health Action Plan

This plan addresses student mental health, through effective collaborative working across colleges, universities, NHS Boards, Integrated Joint Boards, Public Health Scotland, Health and Social Care Partnerships, and the third sector. **(Priority 2, Strategic Action 2.6)**

Mental health and suicide prevention learning provision in Scotland

Public Health Scotland undertook a review of mental health and suicide prevention learning programmes to help inform understanding of the current training landscape in Scotland. **(Priority 2, Strategic Action 2.5)**

Mental Health Partnership Delivery Group: Collaborative Commitments Plan

The Partnership Delivery Group's cross-sector collaborative commitments plan sets out actions across priority themes to improve our multi-agency approach to

supporting those experiencing mental health distress. **(Priority 4, Strategic Action 4.5)**

Elected member briefing note: Social Determinants of Mental Health

Aligned to the joint COSLA and Scottish Government Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy, this briefing is intended to enhance elected members understanding of the social determinants of mental health and support their consideration within local decision making. **(Priority 5, Strategic Action 5.1)**

NHS Scotland Operational Improvement Plan

Document setting out immediate actions that the Scottish Government will take to improve delivery across the health system, in support of the First Minister's vision for reform and renewal of the NHS. Includes the commitment to clear Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) backlogs and meet the 18-week standard nationally by December 2025. **(Priority 6, Strategic Action 6.1)**





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