



deafscotland Bulletin April 2020



We want the Bulletin to be accessible therefore we CANNOT use the information in the form of posters, PDF, JPEG, GIF or publisher in the bulletin.

****PLEASE NOTE:** We realise that many people are working at home and may not have the equipment they normally use. During this crisis, if you want an activity or a piece of news in the bulletin, email it to us – text and online links only – to admin@deafscotland.org

Thank you.

If your contact details have changed, please let us know so we can update our records.

Monthly Newsletter for deafscotland Members



We hope that all our members are safe and healthy. We realise that we are fortunate in that we can work remotely and that for many of our member organisations that provide essential services for people with a hearing loss and their families across Scotland, this is not an option.

Please accept our kind regards and know we are hoping that you all keep safe during this crisis. If you are working at home, please remember to be kind to yourselves but also to others who might share your home. We will get through this together...

**Connect and Capitalise would have taken place on
Tuesday 17 March 2020**

Unfortunately, the Covid-19 crisis hit our conference very late in the day. In fact, we were going ahead and were in the hotel starting the set up when the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, was on the television telling the country we were going into lockdown...

So at the very last minute, our Connect and Capitalise Conference was postponed until after the Covid-19 crisis is over. We are hopeful we will be able to reschedule once life gets back to normal.

The next National Council meeting

The next meeting is due to be held on Wednesday 24 June 2020 at Deafblind Scotland in Lenzie. At the present time, we are not sure if this meeting will go ahead, but we will make sure members are kept informed through the bulletin and by email.

Our Virtual Museum

Following on from our Culture and Leisure Showcase event on Thursday 20 February 2020, we are still working on our online museum. With people being asked to stay at home so as not to spread the Corona virus, now is the perfect time to find photographs and films you may have stored in the attic or under the bed that show what life is like for deaf people in Scotland.

Maybe you took your children camping when they were younger and filmed a family conversation in BSL. Or you might have photographs from school. Or you might have your school yearbooks from Donaldson's or Mary Hare that you could photograph or scan and share?

Now is the time to write and record your story about how you have coped with your deafness in a hearing world or something about your work that will interest other people. Maybe you invented something to make it easier to manage your deafness? Or have you written poetry that you can share.

We are interested in these stories, memories and inspirations. We can email you a "how to..." guide to filming/recording your stories.

If you are interested and want to know more about how to record your story or prepare your photos/films for sharing, please email Stewart at admin@deafscotland.org and I will get back to you.

Our Campaigns

We would like all our members to promote our **Communication For All** campaign and see that the interest is growing behind the principle.



Communication for All was launched last September and continues with our sticker campaign. Harder to take photographs of our car stickers on your car in interesting places at the moment, but some of you will still be able to go to local places of interest to have your daily exercise so please do share your photos on Facebook and Twitter and let us know.

Once the Covid-19 Virus crisis is over, we will be able to send out more stickers and will let you know what happens next! With your support, Scotland can come a few steps closer to becoming the first “Inclusive Communication Nation”.

There is more information about our “**Communication For All**”, “**BSL For All**” and “**Connect us Too**” campaigns on our website:

<https://deafscotland.org/campaign/>

Disclosure: Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG): Covid-19 Update

Disclosure Scotland is making a temporary change to how applications are processed. They have been working closely with the Scottish Government and key stakeholders on their response to coronavirus (COVID-19).

In addition to their prioritising of checks for those who have the most vital roles supporting the country during this time, they are no longer accepting paper applications. For more information, go to

<https://www.mygov.scot/coronavirus-disclosure/>

We, at **deafscotland**, can still countersign disclosure applications on behalf of other organisations which may be too small to become

signatories themselves or for individuals who are self-employed and need to have a disclosure to work in their chosen field. But will have to do it in a different way as we cannot put ourselves or anyone else at risk. The disclosure form needs to be submitted electronically, but as countersignatories we still need to be able to check ID. It might be possible to do this by Skype or Zoom.

Please contact us at admin@deafscotland.org to discuss your need for a disclosure and arrangements for countersigning the form.

BSL translation

We have translated our news / information into BSL (British Sign Language). Please use this link below to our YouTube page to find the information: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL7TPJkTbihG-K4V4oNtb3_vklbmUT79fT

Best wishes, Janis & deafscotland Team

From Abbey Consort and The Yetholm Sinfonia

With 2020 marking the 250th anniversary of **Beethoven's birth, Abbey Consort and The Yetholm Sinfonia** were to hold a celebratory concert focusing on attractive, but lesser-known works with all profits going to deafscotland. Unfortunately, as with everything else, the Covid-19 virus has got in the way. The concert may be re-scheduled after the crisis is over. Further information will be available in future bulletins.

NEWS / INFORMATION ON COVID-19

Dear Colleague,

deafscotland is not producing information on Covid-19 or advice on how to stay safe a protect your staff as plenty other organisations are doing this. If you haven't received any information either for your service users/members or as an employer, please email me at chiefofficer@deafscotland.org and I can send you the most appropriate links.

Kind regards Janis

ACAS has information for **employers and employees**:

<https://www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus>

NHS Inform

NHS Inform has produced information for people providing essential care and support to others throughout the crisis as well as a toolkit:

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-professionals>

There is information about Covid- 19 in **BSL**:

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/translations/languages/british-sign-language-bsl/illnesses-and-conditions/coronavirus-covid-19>

And in **Easy Read**:

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/translations/formats/easy-read/coronavirus-covid-19>

From Police Scotland

Police Scotland are continuing to monitor community tensions and hate crime as a result of Covid-19. If you have any concerns or become aware of any increasing tensions within your community, please contact Police Scotland at the email address:

Diversityunit@scotland.pnn.police.uk

Scammers and fraudsters

Please be aware that as more people are working at home and communicating with family and friends, people need to be aware the scammers and fraudsters are also online more trying to catch you out. Please make sure you stay safe online. If you are scammed/caught out, please report it to the police. They can help.

NEWS / INFORMATION

From The ALLIANCE

Communication for all is everyone's business

Janis McDonald (deafscotland) shares the importance of taking a human rights based and person-centred approach to communication.

“Communication for all” is the deafscotland campaign to highlight communication barriers and raise awareness of deafness and other communication barriers. It is based on the definition of Inclusive Communication from the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists in 2003 as “....an approach that seeks to ‘create a supportive and effective communication environment, using every available means of communication to understand and be understood.”

To read the rest of the article, click here: <https://www.alliance-scotland.org.uk/blog/opinion/communication-for-all-is-everyones-business/#expanded>

From Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks

SSEN works with deafscotland and Dingwall Academy to bolster resilience

A partnership with deafscotland and Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN) has seen the electricity distributor begin work with Dingwall Academy to promote resilience and electrical safety with the school’s Deaf Base.

Deaf Scotland and SSEN began their partnership in 2018 when they gave a joint talk at the Scottish Government’s Resilience Conference. More recently, a grant from SSEN’s Resilient Community Fund saw deafscotland receive £20,000 to help raise awareness of individual and community resilience.

The message of personal safety and resilience is one which applies to all age groups, and Mo Bates, SSEN Stakeholder Engagement Manager, explains how the awareness-raising sessions at Dingwall Academy came about:

“From our work with Scottish Government we became aware of a post being developed at Education Scotland which would focus on individual and community resilience. We recognised this new role as something that closely aligned with our own ambitions, and so we have part-funded the post, now filled by Alison MacLennan. It was through Alison’s links with Dingwall Academy that we began to explore working with the Deaf Base there”

Alison said:

“My role is about creating opportunities for children and young people to engage with their communities and local businesses, such as SSEN, through realistic and relevant learning activities in relation to community resilience, for example, electricity and keeping safe in the home. It’s been really encouraging to see the pupils engage with such an important subject and working together to get the most out of the lessons, whilst encouraging their ongoing development of life skills, learning and work.”

Margaret Kinsman, PT Deaf and Deaf Studies at Dingwall Academy, recognises the potential benefits this link-up with SSEN could bring to the Deaf pupils, including those whose first language is BSL. She said:

“BSL is a rich, vibrant language used by many Deaf people, and sharing information in their preferred language is vitally important. The pupils really took to the last session on electrical safety at home, and looking ahead, future work with SSEN and Education Scotland will focus on enhancing these resilience strategies to enable young Deaf people to be confident when they meet challenges – power cuts, dangers of playing near overhead lines and also the possibility of future careers with SSEN.”

To learn more about SSEN’s partnership with Dingwall Academy, please click here - <https://vimeo.com/389759697> - to watch a short video.

From Scottish Government Employability Programme

On behalf of the Minister of Business, Fair Work and Skills and COSLA Spokesperson on Communities and Wellbeing, the Scottish Government has published the following:

- Shared Communique – February 2020
- The Scottish and Local Government Employability Action Plan

For more information, contact Paul Mercer - Paul.Mercer@gov.scot

From BT

Skills for Tomorrow – Learning at Home

How can we keep kids learning at home while we’re self-isolating?

We're delighted to be working with you on Skills for Tomorrow – and today we want to spread the word about the free resources to help parents of primary school kids, with fun, bite size activities that they can do together.

You can help to promote this content by sharing this new blog from BT's Pete Moorey, which provides more details on the Skills for Tomorrow Learning at Home content: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/today-day-12-my-familys-self-isolation-pete-moorey/>

From The Ear Foundation

The Ear Foundation celebrated its 30th birthday in 2019 providing a wonderful opportunity to reflect on this fantastic organisation and all that it has achieved since 1989. During this time the opportunities for people with hearing loss have been transformed by technology, research, family-centred care and education; The Ear Foundation is proud to have been a driving force in many of these changes.

However, rising costs and overheads, increased competition for charitable grants and cuts to training budgets in health and education have had a substantial impact on our charity finances. Staff and trustees have worked hard to address these issues, making changes to staffing, services, increasing grant applications and selling the residential building, Marjorie Sherman House. Unfortunately, this has not resolved our financial challenges and we have had to take the difficult decision to sell the remaining Ear Foundation property and cease trading in a positive, solvent and ethical manner, enabling the charity to leave a financial legacy.

We are therefore very sad to tell you that The Ear Foundation will close on 6th March 2020. We understand that this will come as a shock to many people and particularly those who have worked so hard and contributed to its success.

Much has changed since The Ear Foundation opened its doors. Yet even with the latest technology and all that it offers to children and adults with hearing loss, there continues to be a need for person-centred, family-friendly and practical support and training. It is for this reason that a number of current staff are setting up a new charity to provide services which will continue to make a difference to the everyday lives of deaf

children, adults and their families. We hope to bring you further news about this later in March and very much hope that you will continue to be involved with our work.

Finally, a huge thank you to you for supporting The Ear Foundation and being a part of making it such a special organisation. We hope you will stay in touch.

With our best wishes.

The Ear Foundation team

From Scottish Government

Advanced Notification of Upratings for 2020/21 for - Free Personal and Nursing Care Payments; Personal Expenses Allowance (PEA); Capital Limits; and Savings Disregards

This correspondence gives advance notice of the uprating of the Free Personal and Nursing Care rates from **1 April 2020** and the Personal Expenses Allowance (PEA), and Capital Limits and Savings Disregard for residential care charging from **6 April 2020**. This correspondence is provided to assist your preparations in advance of the formal changes to the regulations made under the National Assistance Act 1948.

Please Note all of the changes in the table below are subject to Parliamentary approval of the Regulations

Year	Lower Capital Limits	Higher Capital Limits	Personal Care	Nursing Care	PEA	Single Savings Disregard	Couple Savings Disregard
2019/20	£17,500	£28,000	£177.00	£80.00	£27.75	£6.50	£9.70
2020/21	£18,000	£28,500	£180.00	£81.00	£28.75	£6.75	£10.05

From See Me

We want to let you know about our plan for keeping people socially connected, during a time we are having to keep socially distant.

We know that this is a really difficult and distressing time for a lot of people, and being isolated makes that even worse. But we all know that at times like these supporting each other and talking about mental health is more important than ever.

As many of us around the country are being advised to stay home, isolate and keep 'social distance', we need to look at other ways to stay connected, and support each other with our mental health, so people aren't struggling to cope alone.

While we are rightly talking and looking after our physical health, we can feel like it's not the right time to talk about our mental health. However we know that our physical and mental health are linked and if we can talk about both, then it will help our wellbeing.

So, to help us all with the 'social distance' we are using our Pass the Badge campaign to socially connect people, and show that it's okay to talk about how we are feeling, and it would be great if you could encourage your networks to do the same.

From today, we want people who are feeling a bit alone right now and unable to talk about their mental health, or who are worried about other people who might be feeling that way, or who just want to chat about mental health to visit <https://passthebadge.co.uk> and upload their picture showing how they are right now. They can then post it on social media, using [#PassTheBadge](#), to join in a conversation on mental health, and then tag others so they can get involved.

If you'd like to be involved in the conversation and connect with others that would be great, we'd love to see your picture and story. To help start conversation we're sharing the message below to encourage people to get involved.

There's a lot going on right now, but you don't have to feel embarrassed or ashamed to talk about your mental health. [@seemescotland](#) wants to connect people using [#PassTheBadge](#). Visit passthebadge.co.uk to start a conversation on mental health & tag others to join in.

From Hourglass

From Tuesday 24 March, Hourglass (formerly Action on Elder Abuse) will be the UK's only dedicated charity campaigning to end the abuse and neglect of older people and promoting safer ageing. Our services and programmes - including the only helpline for those experiencing or

concerned about the abuse of older people - are in greater demand than ever before.

On the day of our launch we are warning of a significant increased risk of abuse and neglect to the nation's older population as widespread lockdown and self-isolation takes effect amid the UK's efforts to tackle the deadly covid-19 pandemic. Hourglass commissioned new polling data which reveals that more than 1 in 3 (34%) UK residents don't believe that 'acts of domestic violence directed towards an older person' count as abuse. In London the figure is even higher, with close to half (44 percent) of all residents seemingly accepting of domestic violence towards older people. These, I'm sure you agree, are appalling figures.

Neglect is of even greater concern, with nearly half of all those surveyed reporting that 'not attending to an older person's needs in a timely fashion' doesn't constitute abuse (49%). 6 out of every 10 Londoners don't believe this sort of neglect equates to abuse (59%). The recently announced nationwide lockdown measures will exacerbate tensions and societal unease, and will risk creating a "pressure cooker" environment where abuse and neglect become more likely.

What we have here is a recipe for disaster. Even under the best of circumstances, we know that more than a million older people experience abuse or neglect in the UK every year. The findings from our polling indicate that even before coronavirus was a factor - the research was conducted in January and February of this year - a shockingly large proportion of people have a disturbing tolerance for abusive behaviours towards older people.

We also know that assaults and domestic murders [surge by as much as 25 percent during a festive season](#) - a time when the combination of financial strain and family members cooped up in close proximity exerts additional burden on relationships. The lockdown will create a pressure cooker environment for abuse, with vulnerable older people at particular risk.

Today, we need **you** to highlight the abuse of older people in the light of these unprecedented events. In light of the findings, Hourglass is calling on the governments and assemblies across all four nations to provide emergency funding as a matter of urgency to ensure that essential charities such as Hourglass can continue to provide vital services over the coming months. We need you to support the charity and keep its dedicated helpline fully staffed. If you'd like a conversation with me on

this – please do not hesitate to contact me at lesleycarcary@wearehourglass.org and please retweet or share our social media campaigns at [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) & [Instagram](#)

From Scottish Government

Year 1 Progress Report of A Fairer Scotland for Disabled People: Employment Action Plan.

The report can be found on the gov.scot website here: <https://www.gov.scot/isbn/9781839605994> .

We would like to thank all of the Disabled People's Organisations and wider partners who continue to support and work in partnership with us in delivering the plan.

The report will be available in a number of accessible formats on the above link. However, please note that the production of the BSL version of the report has been delayed due to the recording equipment being used to produce communications for the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak.

Implementing the Human Tissue (Authorisation) (Scotland) Act 2019

The Scottish Government and NHS Scotland continue to prioritise the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As part of this prioritisation, taking into account the significant time and engagement required across the NHS of implementing the Human Tissue (Authorisation) (Scotland) Act 2019 successfully, including the delivery of training to NHS staff, the Scottish Government have taken the decision that implementation of the 2019 Act is to be delayed.

This means that the law around organ and tissue donation will now come into force in **March 2021** and not autumn 2020.

This decision has been taken to ensure that, once implemented, the legislation can be as successful as possible and deliver on its stated aims.

If you have any questions as a result of this email please do not hesitate to contact [Organ Donation Scotland@gov.scot](mailto:Organ_Donation_Scotland@gov.scot) .

EVENTS

Digital Scottish Ballet Health Classes

In times such as these, it is even more important than usual to extend a hand to the community around us and find ways to share experiences and spark joy.

In a regular week at Scottish Ballet, our Dance Health department run several classes for people living with Parkinson's, Multiple Sclerosis, and dementia, as well as classes for people aged 60 and over. These programmes have grown since 2012 to form the backbone of many people's exercise regimens and social calendars, which is why we are committed to offering a digital version during these challenging times of self-isolation.

From Monday to Friday, we're inviting everyone to join us on Facebook Live to dance together in our new SB Health digital dance classes!

SB Health classes will be streamed live to Scottish Ballet's Facebook at 11.30am GMT each day of the week.

For more information, go to

https://www.scottishballet.co.uk/articles/digital-sb-health-classes?utm_source=WordFly&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=SB_Health_digital&utm_content=button&utm_source=wordfly&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=JDDanceHealthFacebookClassesMarch2020&utm_content=version_A

From the V&A Dundee

BSL Interpreted Tour: Mary Quant

Sunday 10th May 2020, 10:30 – 11:30

Supported by a British Sign Language interpreter, explore the story of this iconic British designer who revolutionised the fashion world with a youthful brand and a desire to make quality fashion affordable for everyone.

Her clothes capture the zeitgeist of the 1960s, however from the way we shop to the way we dress, Mary Quant continues to have a profound impact on the fashion world today.

Portable hearing loops are also available, to support non-BSL users who may still have a hearing impairment. Meet at the welcome desk in the Lower Locke Hall 10 minutes before the start.

BSL interpreter: Jennifer Ramsay.

N.B. For groups wishing to organise a BSL interpreted and/or amplified tour outwith these times, please get in touch.

<https://www.vam.ac.uk/dundee/event/264/bsl-interpreted-tour-mary-quant>

From SUSE

DuoDay 2020

This was scheduled for 14th May and we hope this will now take place later in the year, probably **in November**. We are co-ordinating this with our colleagues in Europe and will have a new date for you as soon as we can.

This year we are looking to create 24 opportunities for people with disabilities in an occupational sector of their choice.

In previous years we have focused on the voluntary and public sectors, so for Duoday 2020 we are hoping to partner with employers in the private sector.

In the 12 weeks leading up to Duoday we will be promoting it on social media and inviting SUSE members to partner with us to deliver this high profile initiative.

We will have more information for you in the next couple of weeks but in the meantime if you are interested in getting involved in Duoday 2020 please contact Michelle@susescotland.scot

CONSULTATIONS

From Revenue Scotland

The purpose of this consultation is to seek views on the proposals for Revenue Scotland's Draft Equality Outcomes 2020-24 and underlying actions. The Draft Equality Outcomes and plan set out actions that Revenue Scotland will take as part of meeting the statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010. This consultation will add information to shape the final outcomes and plan which will be published at the end of April 2020.

Revenue Scotland invites its stakeholders to respond to its consultation on its Equality Outcomes by 12 April 2020.

To find out more, click on the link: <https://deafscotland.org/what-we-do/policy-and-influencing/scottish-government-consultations/>

From The Scottish Mental Health Law Review

You may be aware that this new Act, which received Royal Assent on 25 March, introduces temporary changes to current mental health law. These changes are not yet in force and will be commenced by Scottish Ministers at the appropriate time, based on the situation in Scotland, in particular if staffing levels are severely affected. The Act allows Scottish Ministers to “switch on” these new powers when they are needed and, crucially, to “switch them off” again when no longer necessary.

The aim is to provide some flexibility to help support the continued running of services under mental health legislation.

Some people have asked what, if any impact, the new Act will have on the work of the Review. We will obviously take account of any changes that are brought into force, informed by the lived experience of those affected by them.

The expectation is that existing laws, process and safeguards should continue to be complied with, as far as possible and the intention is to:

- ensure that the 2003 Act can continue to operate effectively in times of severe staff shortages.

- any changes are kept to a minimum.
- adhering to the principles of the 2003 Act; and maintaining compatibility of the 2003 Act and the 1995 Act with the Human Rights Act 1998, the European Convention on Human Rights and the Equality Act 2010.

Should these temporary changes be introduced, the Review will consider carefully the effect they have had in developing its proposals for long term reform and, in particular, any impact on people's human rights.

The consultation seeking people's views and experiences of current mental health laws in this country is taking place. This can be accessed online via: <https://consult.gov.scot/mental-health-law-secretariat/review-of-mental-health-law-in-scotland>

You can access the consultation via our new website which can be viewed by following this link: <https://www.mentalhealthlawreview.scot/>

This website has been designed so that people can see what stage the review is in (currently phase 1) as well as hosting relevant documentation about the review.

We have formally extended the period of consultation to **29 May 2020**. Following this, a short interim report will be published outlining the findings. If you can do so, please let us have your views and experience by then. If not, as some have already done, let us know and we will note this and take it into account as we move into the second phase of the review.

Due to the rapidly changing circumstances of this situation, we will continue to monitor the impact and keep the formal deadline under review. Any further changes will be communicated by e-mail in the same way, but you will also find updates and further information on our website at: <https://www.mentalhealthlawreview.scot/>

TRAINING



AWARENESSbites online Deaf Awareness course

<https://deafscotland.org/what-we-do/training/awarenessbites/>

deafscotland has teamed up with **AWARENESSbites** to provide quality online learning and development to front-line and public facing staff who may not be able to attend face-to-face training courses.

We are offering two packages: Green and Purple

The Package Contents:

Green package – £15 per user

- Aimed at those who require to know the basics and may come across a deaf or deafblind person occasionally. This package can easily be completed in under 2 hours.

Purple package – £28 per user

- Aimed at those who would require a little more detail and understanding and meet deaf or deafblind people more frequently within their day to day service provision. This package can take between 2.5 – 3.5 hours depending on activities taken.

Please note the system cannot take multiple log-ins so please make sure you have enough time to complete the course before starting.

If you would like to purchase packages, please contact us directly at admin@deafscotland.org.

We would consider an organisational discount that offers value for money for large numbers of users.

SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT PQs, MOTIONS AND DEBATES

Motion S5M-20924: Clare Adamson, Motherwell and Wishaw, Scottish National Party, Date Lodged: 19/02/2020

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5M-20924&ResultsPerPage=10>

Deaf Works Everywhere Campaign

That the Parliament commends the Deaf Works Everywhere campaign run by the National Deaf Children's Society; understands that the campaign, which was launched in February 2020 and is being highlighted during National Careers Week from 2 to 6 March, seeks to raise awareness of the additional barriers experienced by deaf young people in securing employment and to raise aspirations for deaf young people to make a successful transition from education to work; further understands that deaf people are twice as likely to be unemployed as their hearing peers but that, with the right support, deaf people can work everywhere; notes that only 5% of deaf young people get deaf-specific careers advice, which means that there is scope to strengthen the support that they receive; praises the work of the National Deaf Children's Society in campaigning for better careers support, more work experience and volunteering opportunities for deaf young people and for challenging expectations of what deaf people can achieve; encourages members and the public to support the Deaf Works Everywhere campaign, and wishes everyone involved in the initiative all the best in their endeavours.

Supported by: Mark McDonald, Richard Lyle, David Torrance, Stewart Stevenson, Alex Neil, Stuart McMillan, John Mason, Rona Mackay, Sandra White, Kenneth Gibson, Bill Kidd, Jeremy Balfour, Gail Ross, Willie Coffey, Joan McAlpine, Gil Paterson, Fulton MacGregor, Maureen Watt, Bruce Crawford, Tom Arthur, Ruth Maguire, Alex Cole-Hamilton

Young Disabled People (Transition to Adulthood)

6. Johann Lamont (Glasgow) (Lab):

To ask the Scottish Government what support it provides to young disabled people in their transition to adulthood. (S5O-04225)

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=12557&i=113544>

The Minister for Children and Young People (Maree Todd):

There are already a number of policies and initiatives under way to support the needs of disabled children and young people going through transitions, but we all recognise the need for something more.

A number of important aspects of transitions are already covered by legislation in Scotland. Across Scottish Government directorates, over

30 projects or programmes are already being progressed to effect real change to the transitions experiences of our young people. We will build on that to maximise impact, through greater co-ordination of work across Scottish Government.

We will also ensure that planning for transitions is integrated into good practice through the upcoming refresh of the getting it right for every child policy and practice guidance. We will ensure that the voices and lived experiences of children, young people and families feature strongly in our policy development.

Johann Lamont:

I am sure that the minister is aware of how important a time it is for young disabled people, as they face the transition to adulthood. However, despite what she says, provision is simply not working. Young disabled people face significant barriers because of their disability.

The minister might be aware of my proposed member's bill, which will seek to address the absence of support for disabled young people as they become adults. Given the powerful testimonies about the lack of serious planning and abandonment of families at that important time that I have received in response to my consultation, will the minister agree to meet me to discuss my bill proposal and to discuss how best to secure the rights of disabled young people and the support that they need to achieve their potential as adults?

Maree Todd:

Yes.

Coronavirus (Universal Credit Claimants)

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=12557&i=113544>

Bob Doris (Glasgow Maryhill and Springburn) (SNP):

Universal credit claimants who are unwell or self-isolating as a result of coronavirus must update their online portal and provide medical evidence by day 8 if they miss an appointment or cannot fulfil their claimant commitment. It is unclear how medical evidence can be secured when self-isolating and there is concern about how claimants who have caring responsibilities as a consequence of the virus will be supported. That will not be easy for Department for Work and Pensions staff, either.

Will the Scottish Government make constructive representations to the United Kingdom Government to ensure that universal credit claimants will not be sanctioned or otherwise in detriment, due to coronavirus?

The First Minister (Nicola Sturgeon):

Yes. We will continue to make those representations to the UK Government. In my view, the DWP must review its guidance now and provide clear information that people will not be sanctioned if they cannot meet their claimant commitment, if they are following health advice to self-isolate for a fortnight or are caring for someone with coronavirus. I am aware that the UK Government has advised workers without statutory sick pay to claim universal credit if their work is disrupted. However, waiting five weeks for a payment or accruing debt through an advance is not really acceptable, so I hope that the UK Government will initiate immediate hardship grants for people in those situations.

The Scottish Government is also looking at what we can do to have contingency funding for people in that position. We cannot have people feeling that they must work against medical advice because the welfare system is not meeting their needs. The social security system should be a safety net for people when they need it. In this instance, the actions of individuals have an impact on wider health, so it is important that those changes are made, and made quickly.

Blind and Partially Sighted People (Access to Health Information)

The final item of business is a members' business debate on **motion S5M-20919, in the name of Stuart McMillan, on "Communication Failure? Review of the accessibility of health information for blind and partially sighted people in Scotland"**. The debate will be concluded without any question being put.

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=12568&i=113625>

That the Parliament notes the contents of the RNIB Scotland report, *Communication Failure?*, launched on 17 February 2020, highlighting what it considers communication failures of NHS boards regarding people with sight loss or visual impairment; considers that the actions of each NHS board, including NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde,

which covers the Greenock and Inverclyde constituency, are putting blind and partially sighted people at risk of missing treatments and potentially leading to increased ill health due to inaccessible health information; believes that patient confidentiality is being breached due to individuals relying on carers, relatives or friends to read appointment letters on their behalf; understands that 170,000 people in Scotland have significant sight loss, and therefore considers that the need for accessibility is high, and notes the view that every NHS board should engage with organisations that deal with sight loss to provide a more person-centred approach to communicating with such people.

Motion debated...



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Organisation's name	
Article / news item	(Maximum 400 words)

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