



Joint Open Letter

**John Swinney MSP
First Minister
Scottish Government**

**Via email
17 August 2025**

Dear First Minister,

Open letter – Why urgent action is needed now to address Scotland's health and social care crisis

We write to you as leaders and representatives of organisations within the third sector in health and social care to call for immediate action to address the profound crisis threatening our sector. This call comes in light of your recent announcement on reform based on the Christie principles. The wellbeing and rights of Scotland's people and the sustainability of the third sector and wider public services are at immediate risk. We support your broad vision. However, your commitments to prevention, early intervention, improved wellbeing and realisation of rights cannot succeed if we are not here to help you deliver them.

Today, our organisations face increasing levels of demand which simply cannot be met within available public funds. Services and support are facing severe funding cuts. Many organisations are scaling back services significantly; others are looking at the possibility of closure. The sector, and the people it supports, have been pushed to breaking point by decades of underinvestment and too little value placed on the contribution we make every day.

Evidence from the Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (ALLIANCE) and Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland (CCPS) illustrates the depth of the crisis. In a March 2024 survey, 49% of ALLIANCE members who participated reported their finances as being 'insecure'. In CCPS's February 2025 poll of 50 not-for-profit providers in its membership, 67% said they were budgeting this year on the basis of reaching financial balance through reserves – and, of these, 91% reported

that they will no longer be a going concern within four years, if they continue to reach financial balance in this way.

More widely, SCVO polling released recently revealed that 81% of charities and voluntary organisations face financial challenges that put essential services and support they deliver at risk – an increase of 10% since spring 2023.

We are now at a tipping point. Unless action is taken, the health and social care sector will be pushed over the edge of sustainability. The impact of this will be felt in communities across Scotland, including by some of our most marginalised individuals and families.

Therefore, we are calling for:

- Action in the upcoming Spending Review through an immediate and substantial cash injection into third sector providers of health and social care to address the current crisis. This must include full cost recovery for increases in employers' National Insurance contributions.
- A medium-term fully-funded recovery plan for our sector, to address decades of underinvestment and ensure people can get the services they need into the future.
- A commitment to finally deliver multi-year funding, with uplifts that reflect inflation, to ensure stability for organisations, employees and the people they support.
- A firm commitment to fully include the sector in making decisions about how services are planned and delivered.

It is vital the Scottish Government respects the third sector, listens to us, and invests in us. The consequences of inaction will be felt in every community. It will increase crisis interventions, deepen inequalities, build pressures on the wider public sector, and leave lasting scars on our country.

Yours sincerely,

Rachel Cackett, Chief Executive, Coalition of Care and Support Providers (CCPS)

Sara Redmond, Chief Officer, Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE)

+238 signatories that are members of CCPS or the ALLIANCE

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