Scottish Government Draft Budget 2015-16

Macmillan Cancer Support

3) Is variance between targets and outcomes being assessed?

We support the “Detect Cancer Early” programme, and welcome its role in raising awareness of the importance of screening and raising issues with GPs and other health professionals. We are still awaiting scrutiny and results from the first phases, but we are fully aware just how difficult it is to sustain such campaigns and produce results that actually increase earlier detection of cancers.

4) How are we mitigating pressures on health spending?

The Budget document argues that long-term conditions, including cancer, needs to “focus on the whole patient pathway, earlier referral, speedier diagnosis and clinically effective treatments and follow up”. Macmillan Cancer Support is at the heart of this work with our “Transforming Care After Treatment” (TCAT) programme. TCAT is an investment by Macmillan of £5M with the Scottish Government to change the way we support cancer survivorship. It is vital that pressure is taken off the acute sector, but also that resources are shifted to support the patient outwith the acute sector.

5) How are we ensuring the quality of outcomes for patients?

The Scottish Government’s Taskforce on cancer recently approved in principle the undertaking of a Cancer Patient Experience Survey across Scotland – the first of its kind. Macmillan believes this is a vital step to measuring the quality of care of patients. We will update the Health Committee on this major project when it comes closer to being launched hopefully sometime in 2015.

6) How are we planning for change (particularly health and social care integration)?

The Budget states that the Government will “continue to support NHS Boards to modernise nursing in the community, improve care for patients and build capacity, capability and sustainability across the whole nursing workforce”. Macmillan strongly supports this aim on nursing. As part of the Scottish Cancer Coalition, we campaign to ensure access to a clinical nurse specialist for cancer patients to get high-level care where needed – together with support from the wider nursing body in the community. Health and Social Care integration is a vital opportunity to bring together care for the patient throughout their cancer journey, but we believe it will be very difficult to ensure that traditional barriers are broken down to enable funding to follow the patient throughout their pathway.
7) What will be the impact of the health budget on (i) equality groups (ii) health inequalities and (iii) climate change policy?

Macmillan strongly supports efforts to reduce smoking rates and remains concerned that smoking remains so prevalent in our society.

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