1. The Scottish Children's Services Coalition (SCSC) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Health and Sport Committee’s call for views on the 2018-19 Budget.

2. The SCSC is an alliance of leading independent and third sector service providers that care for and support vulnerable children and young people, as well as their families. Our vision is for Scotland to become a world leader in the care and support of vulnerable children and young people. We aim to achieve this through campaigning for a wide-range of high-quality, well-resourced and quickly accessible services. This is so that they get the best possible care and support, tailored to their individual needs and helping them to achieve their full potential.

3. SCSC members are:

   a. **Falkland House School**: An independent school based in Fife that specialises in the education and care of boys who require support for learning. It was one of the first independent schools in Scotland to be awarded Autism Accreditation by the National Autistic Society and offers day, 39 week and 52 week placements. Further information can be found at [www.falklandhouseschool.org](http://www.falklandhouseschool.org).

   b. **Spark of Genius**: An independent organisation offering residential care, education, autism services, post-16 employability programmes and adult services throughout the UK. It enables children, young people and adults who need a variety of support to achieve their potential. Further information can be found at [www.sparkofgenius.com](http://www.sparkofgenius.com).

   c. **Who Cares? Scotland**: A third sector independent advocacy organisation that provides individual and collective advocacy to care experienced children and young people across Scotland, as well as Corporate Parenting training and information. Who Cares? Scotland has been working with children and young people for over 35 years and uses this experience to campaign, lobby and speak out both with and on their behalf. Further information can be found at [www.whocarescotland.org](http://www.whocarescotland.org).

   d. **Young Foundations**: An independent organisation specialising in the care of children and young people with a range of complex needs. The aim of our Scottish service is to care, support, develop and empower young people with complex difficulties to realise their potential in a safe, secure and nurturing environment. This is achieved through a holistic model of care which is distinctive of compassion, skill and evidence based positive interventions. Further information can be found at [www.youngfoundations.com](http://www.youngfoundations.com).
e. **Kindred:** A voluntary organisation providing information, advocacy and emotional support to parents/carers of children with complex needs. Further information can be found at [www.kindred-scotland.org](http://www.kindred-scotland.org).

4. Our response to this enquiry will relate to the need for further investment in child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS).

5. Research indicates that 10% of children and young people (aged five to 16) has a clinically diagnosable mental health problem and that 20% of adolescents may experience a mental health problem in any given year.

6. Increased awareness and recognition of mental health problems in children and young people has led to a greatly increased demand on CAMHS. In addition, there appears to have been a real increase in the prevalence of mental health problems. For example, there has been a significant rise in the number of children and young people presenting with emotional distress, anxiety, eating disorders and self-harm.

7. The supply of services has however generally failed to keep pace with this demand. Coupled with the impact of austerity and cuts in support services - social services, youth services, school pastoral services - means that CAMHS are overstretched and under-resourced and that many children and young people are not getting the care and support they need.

8. With the overall number of referrals to specialist CAMHS rising, waiting lists are long, there is high demand for intensive treatment, and there is an increased demand for preventative work. NHS Scotland as a whole is failing to meet the maximum 18 week waiting time target for children and young people to receive treatment from mental health services.

9. There are currently only 48 specialist hospital beds provided by the NHS in Scotland for adolescents with mental health problems, despite increasing demand. These are located in three CAMHS inpatient units (Dundee, Edinburgh and Glasgow) and there is a further six place unit for five to 12 year olds in the Royal Hospital for Sick Children in Glasgow. There is no impatient provision north of Dundee.

10. For children and young people who require inpatient mental health care, a lack of such services means that they frequently remain at home, often until the family reaches crisis point. Many children and young people who do receive specialist treatment are often being treated in inpatient units far from home, frequently leaving them feeling isolated and delaying recovery. Others are admitted to non-specialist adult and paediatric hospital wards, settings which are inappropriate for their needs. In 2015/16 there were 135 admissions of children and young people to such wards.

11. There are currently no secure inpatient units in Scotland for under-18s. These are designed for children and young people severe challenging behaviour and/or learning disability who may have co-morbidity, including autism spectrum disorder, ADHD, schizophrenia and depression. At present these children and young people are treated in inappropriate settings, or sometimes sent to specialist units in England, a harrowing experience for the child and the family and at a
huge cost to the NHS. Some of these children and young people have involvement from youth justice due to extreme behaviour (violence, sexualised behaviour, fire-raising, self-harm). Children and young people with such histories require specialised ‘forensic’ inpatient care which is secure.

12. While we welcome the additional £150 million promised over the next five years to improve mental health provision, that investment in mental health will exceed £5 billion over this Parliament as well as the budget’s focus on early intervention and prevention, it should be noted that despite this increased funding, only 0.46% of NHS Scotland expenditure is spent on child and adolescent mental health. Indeed, a mere 5.81% of overall mental health expenditure is spent on child and adolescent mental health.

13. There is strong evidence that CAMHS is in desperate need of increased investment to ensure that a wide range of high-quality, well-resourced and quickly accessible mental health services are available to children and young people with mental health problems.

14. Increased investment in CAMHS will serve to reduce the health, economic and social costs associated with mental health problems and will in turn help to reduce the amount of resources and investment required in adult mental health services.

Recommendations

1. Increased investment: Children and young people with mental health problems must get the help they need, when they need it. This requires increased investment in CAMHS, supporting the provision of adequate staffing and ensuring more efficient and effective services. These include primary care, community-based services and specialist CAMHS outpatient and inpatient services.

2. Child wellbeing and resilience: Child wellbeing and resilience must continue to be supported through continued investment in broad programmes, such as Getting it Right for Every Child, which are preventative against poor mental health. Mental health and wellbeing education should be expanded in schools, developing emotional resilience and scoping skills, and valued alongside academic achievement and physical activity. Children and young people should also be made more aware of the mental health advice, information and support available to them, including appropriately experienced counsellor in secondary schools.

3. Prevention and early intervention: This includes increased investment in primary care and community support, as well as greater education and support within schools. The provision of easily accessible community-based support (CAMHS Tiers 1 and 2) can reduce the need for referral to specialist and costly CAMHS for treatment (Tiers 3 and 4).

4. Inpatient facilities: There must be an increased investment in provision of inpatient facilities for children and young people who require care and support, including secure provision. The number of beds for children and young people recommended by the Royal College of Psychiatrists for the population of Scotland ranges between 125 and 208, far greater than the 54 currently provided.
5. **Greater public awareness**: There must be additional funding to promote greater public awareness and understanding of mental health and wellbeing, seeking to strip away the stigma and discrimination associated with mental health.

4. Ibid., SFR 8.3.
5. RCPsych, Building and sustaining specialist CAMHS to improve outcomes for children and young people, CR182, November 2013, p. 35-39. Available at: http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/files/pdfversion/CR182x.pdf. Based on 24-40 inpatient CAMHS beds per 1 million total population required to provide mental health services for children and adolescents up to the age of 18 with severe mental health problems that require or very intensive treatments.