

Parliamentary Bureau – Referral of Bill at Stage 1

Right to Addiction Recovery (Scotland) Bill

Introduction

1. The Right to Addiction Recovery (Scotland) Bill was introduced in the Parliament on Tuesday 14 May 2024 by Douglas Ross MSP.
2. The Bill establishes a right for anyone addicted to either alcohol, or drugs, or both to receive treatment within 3-weeks of a treatment determination being made.
3. The Bill sets out the procedure that must be followed to determine the most appropriate treatment for the individual.
4. Scottish Ministers must also prepare a code of practice to help bodies like health boards and local authorities implement the Bill. The Bill provides that the Scottish Government must report on its annual progress towards providing treatment to people addicted to either alcohol, or drugs, or both.

Discussion

5. The Bill relates to a person's right to receive treatment for addiction to alcohol and/or drugs and sets out the process for diagnosis and a treatment determination to be made. The focus of the Bill is on the health aspects of addiction and the right to receive medical treatment.
6. The remit of the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee includes considering and reporting on matters falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for NHS Recovery, Health and Social Care and matters relating to drugs and alcohol policy. Both individual treatment and wider drug and alcohol recovery fall within this remit.
7. The Criminal Justice Committee, Social Justice and Social Security Committee and Health, Social Care and Sport Committee have been undertaking joint committee meetings to scrutinise the implementation of the recommendations of the Scottish Drug Deaths Taskforce. However, the Bill does not make provision about addiction in relation to criminal offences or about more general factors that may contribute to addiction. As such, it is considered that the remits of the Criminal Justice Committee and the Social Justice and Social Security Committee are not engaged in this instance.

Recommendation

8. The Bureau is invited to agree to refer the Right to Addiction Recovery (Scotland) Bill to the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee under Rule 9.6.1 for consideration at Stage 1.

Parliamentary Business Team

May 2024