

Health, Social Care and Sport Committee

23rd Meeting, 2022 (Session 6), Tuesday, 28 June 2022

Inquiry on health inequalities

Note by the clerk

Introduction

1. At its meeting today, the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee will continue its inquiry into health inequalities, taking evidence from the Minister for Public Health, Women's Health and Sport.
2. The purpose of the session is to explore and understand what overall strategic approach is required to tackle inequalities and the differences in health outcomes that are a persistent indicator of wider structural, societal and systemic inequality.
3. Evidence suggests collaboration across portfolios, as well as building resilience within systems, are required to develop effective policy approaches for tackling health inequalities.

Background

4. At its work programme discussion on 5 October 2021, the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee agreed to hold an inquiry into health inequalities.
5. The Committee agreed that the aim of the inquiry would be to explore progress towards tackling health inequalities in Scotland since the Committee's predecessor report in 2015. It will explore any cross-sectoral work undertaken over that time to address social inequalities and what impact this has had on health inequalities.
6. The inquiry will also:
 - explore what impacts the pandemic has had on health inequalities and action to address them,
 - explore opportunities to reduce health inequalities and increase preventative work to tackle social inequalities before they impact on individuals' health,
 - make recommendations for the Scottish Government and other key decision-makers, and
 - seek to ensure that the Scottish Parliament sustains a focus on health inequalities across all portfolios.

Structure of the inquiry

7. The Committee issued a call for evidence on 11 February 2022 which closed on 31 March 2022. The Committee received 113 responses which can be read here: [Inquiry into health inequalities - Scottish Parliament - Citizen Space](#)

8. The Committee's inquiry consists of 11 sessions in May and June 2022:

20 May 2022	Two informal engagement sessions on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social justice and social security • Local government, housing, and planning
23 May 2022	Two informal engagement sessions on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economy and employment • Equalities and human rights
24 May 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One formal private session with Scottish Government and Public Health Scotland • One formal public session focusing on recent work to tackle, and progress in addressing, health inequalities since 2015.
31 May 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One formal public session to examine the impact of the pandemic on health inequalities and actions to tackle health inequalities. • One formal public session examining good practice examples to tackle health inequalities from during, and before, the pandemic.
14 June 2022	One formal public session informed by the informal engagement events on 20 and 23 May 2022.
21 June 2022	One formal public session to explore potential policy options to generate a range of solutions that can sustain focus and action on tackling health inequalities across portfolios.
28 June 2022	One formal public Ministerial session.

Clerks to the Committee
23 June 2022