

HEALTHIER SCOTLAND

News from the Socialist Health Association Scotland



January 2012

Welcome to **Healthier Scotland** the E-Bulletin of the Socialist Health Association Scotland.

SHA Scotland is a campaigning organisation which promotes health and well-being and the eradication of inequalities through the application of socialist principles to society and government. We believe that these objectives can best be achieved through collective rather than individual action. We campaign for an integrated healthcare system which reduces inequalities in health and is accountable to the communities it serves.

At our recent AGM a new communications plan was agreed that includes this bulletin. In addition to our established [web site](#) there is a new [Blog](#) and you can follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

Policy Review

Health Policy in Scotland – [Where Next?](#) Is the working title of the SHA Scotland review of health policy. More on this in the coming months as we consider how to tackle Scotland's health challenges.

We will be exploring these issues further at our fringe meeting at the [Scottish Labour Party conference](#). The SHA/UNISON health fringe will be held around 5pm after conference on Friday 2 March at Queens Hotel, Dundee. Speakers include Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Health, Jackie Baillie MSP and SHA Scotland Chair, Dr David Conway. All welcome.

We will be stimulating some further thoughts on future health policy in our journal 'Healthier Scotland'. This will be published to coincide with the Scottish Labour Party conference. If you would like to contribute an article please contact the Secretary by 17 February.

Local Government Elections

Local authorities have a key role in promoting good health and the May elections are an opportunity to put a focus on their role. SHA Scotland is drafting a Council [Charter for Health](#) and views on this would be welcome.

Des McNulty makes the point in this [Scotsman article](#) that tackling Scotland's health issues requires the engagement of local government. Health spending is not solely the preserve of the NHS.

Health Inequalities

Important new research from the [University of Glasgow](#) shows that the health of the city's most deprived residents could be impaired before they are even born. The link between deprivation and ill health is well understood but the pathways are not. This report could be important in explaining why people on the lower end of the socio-economic spectrum are more likely to be predisposed to a number of common health issues.

This World Health Association [report](#) explains the social determinants of health are the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age, including the health system. These circumstances are shaped by the distribution of money, power and resources at global, national and local levels, which are themselves influenced by policy choices. The social determinants of health are mostly responsible for health inequities - the unfair and avoidable differences in health status seen within and between countries.

NHS Scotland

The NHS budget increased in real terms by ten per cent over the five years to 2010/11. Although cash funding for the NHS continues to increase, higher inflation means that funding is decreasing in real terms as set out in a new report by Audit Scotland. There has been a 1.4 per cent real-terms decrease in funding between 2010/11 and 2011/12. The Scottish Government's 2011 spending review outlined a 4.2 per cent real-terms decrease in NHS funding in the five years to 2014/15. Capital funding is decreasing and the NHS plans to use more partnerships with the private sector (PPP/PFI) to build new facilities. More details in this UNISON Scotland [briefing](#).

Healthier Scotland is a Socialist Health Scotland publication

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