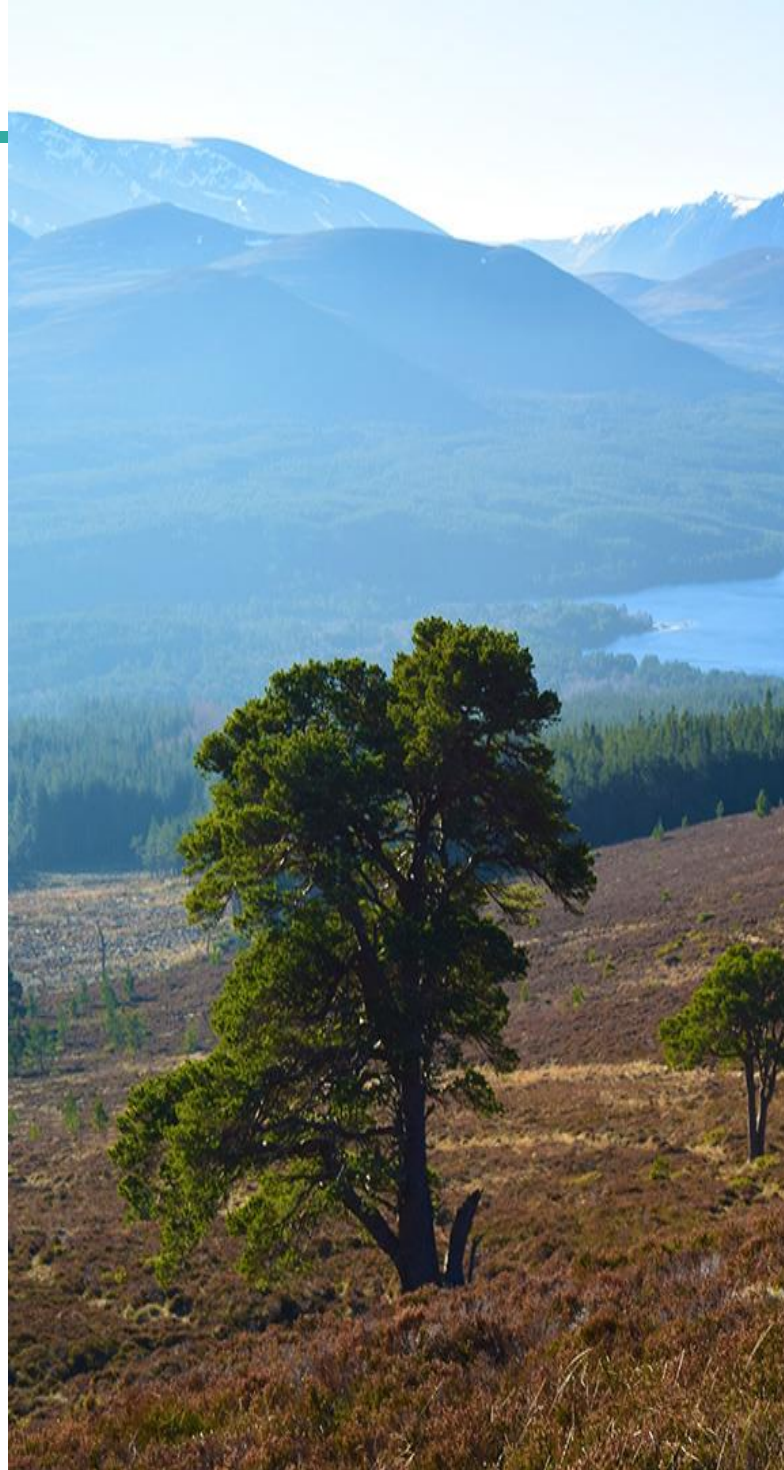

SCOTTISH RURAL HEALTH PARTNERSHIP MANIFESTO 2021



January 2021

SCOTTISH RURAL HEALTH PARTNERSHIP



Approximately 1.15 million people live in Scotland’s rural areas, which is almost one fifth of the population (Scottish Government, 2016)

The Triple AAAQ Framework states that standards in healthcare delivery are what public health should aim to deliver if we are to create the fairer healthier Scotland which we all need and want. These should be:

- accessible
- available
- appropriate
- high quality

The right to health is an inclusive right. The persistence of health inequalities means that not everyone is enjoying their human right to the highest possible standard of health in Scotland.

The population of rural Scotland has grown at a faster rate than the rest of the country, with more people moving into rural areas than moving from rural to urban areas. An ageing population and out-migration of young people are typical of rural areas. (SRUC, 2014)

Deprivation experienced by rural residents tends to differ from that experienced by their urban counterparts. Important aspects of rural deprivation can relate to fuel poverty where households whose energy costs are higher than can be sustained by their income, also hidden unemployment, and lack in opportunities such as poor access to services including shops and amenities, healthcare, childcare or digital services access.

Social deprivation such as isolation, both physical and social, may be more relevant to rural areas. There remains the need for further work to identify a set of indicators which may be used to better identify rural deprivation and the inequalities within rural communities. Such indicators might focus on households with fuel poverty, travel time to services and adults and children in need of social care.

In 2021 - The Scottish Rural Health Partnerships calls for:

- 1. The need for further research in rural and remote health and social care.**
- 2. The designation of an agency to advocate for the health and social care needs of rural Scotland.**
- 3. Support for remote, rural and island communities to improve resilience.**

1. The need for further research in rural and remote health and social care.

- Cultures of small communities are difficult to quantify and are much better captured using qualitative data which would highlight the differences within data zones. (SIMD, 2016, Rural deprivation Evidence Summary)
- Rural social work lacks academic interest, research and a strong literature base in Scotland. (IRISS, 2019, Rural social work in Scotland Insight 47)
- To provide an evidence-base on issues relating to rural health and care, that provides Scottish Government insights from the sector, lived experience of communities and patients, and evidence from academic and other literature

2. The designation of an agency to advocate for the health and social care needs of rural Scotland. We suggest that such an agency be supported by a parliamentary cross-party group.

The cross-party group (CPG) in Remote, Rural and Island Health and Social Care

- Would seek to improve the communication between the Scottish Government Department of Health and Social Care, Health Boards, Integration Joint Boards, academia, third sector and members of the public.
- Will work closely with the sector, communities, and other key stakeholders to help shape the development and implementation of rural health policies, strategies, and programmes.
- Will support the establishment of a rural health and social care resource repository.

3. Support for rural, remote and island communities to improve resilience.

- Endorse community engagement programmes to optimise health and social care service pathways for remote, rural and island communities.
- Identify and support adoption of healthcare innovations for implementation in remote, rural and Island communities.
- Help to identify metrics for assessing equity of care in remote, rural and island communities.

For further information on the Scottish Health Partnership or to become a member, please find us here or email SRHP@uhi.ac.uk.

<https://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/research-enterprise/res-themes/institute-of-health-research-and-innovation/srhp/>

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