

Proposed Right to Addiction Recovery (Scotland) Bill

Introduction

A proposal for a Bill to enable people addicted to drugs and/or alcohol to access the necessary addiction treatment they require.

The consultation runs from 7 October 2021 to 12 January 2022.

All those wishing to respond to the consultation are strongly encouraged to enter their responses electronically through this survey. This makes collation of responses much simpler and quicker. However, the option also exists of sending in a separate response (in hard copy or by other electronic means such as e-mail), and details of how to do so are included in the member's consultation document.

Questions marked with an asterisk (*) require an answer.

All responses must include a name and contact details. Names will only be published if you give us permission, and contact details are never published – but we may use them to contact you if there is a query about your response. If you do not include a name and/or contact details, we may have to disregard your response.

Please note that you must complete the survey in order for your response to be accepted. If you don't wish to complete the survey in a single session, you can choose "Save and Continue later" at any point. Whilst you have the option to skip particular questions, you must continue to the end of the survey and press "Submit" to have your response fully recorded.

Please ensure you have read the consultation document before responding to any of the questions that follow. In particular, you should read the information contained in the document about how your response will be handled. The consultation document is available here:

[Consultation document](#)

[Privacy Notice](#)

I confirm that I have read and understood the Privacy Notice which explains how my personal data will be used.

On the previous page we asked you if you are UNDER 12 YEARS old, and you responded Yes to this question.

If this is the case, we will have to contact your parent or guardian for consent.

If you are under 12 years of age, please put your contact details into the textbox. This can be your email address or phone number. We will then contact you and your parents to receive consent.

Otherwise please confirm that you are or are not under 12 years old.

No Response

About you

Please choose whether you are responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation.
Note: If you choose "individual" and consent to have the response published, it will appear under your own name. If you choose "on behalf of an organisation" and consent to have the response published, it will be published under the organisation's name.

an individual

Which of the following best describes you? (If you are a professional or academic, but not in a subject relevant to the consultation, please choose "Member of the public".)

Member of the public

Optional: You may wish to explain briefly what expertise or experience you have that is relevant to the subject-matter of the consultation:

My son, who stayed with me, developed an alcohol addiction and was alcohol dependent for several years prior to his untimely death. I supported him through his journey to try to access treatment.

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

No Response

Please choose one of the following:

I am content for this response to be published and attributed to me or my organisation

Please provide your Full Name or the name of your organisation. (Note: the name will not be published if you have asked for the response to be anonymous or "not for publication". Otherwise this is the name that will be published with your response).

Irene McCusker

Please provide details of a way in which we can contact you if there are queries regarding your response. Email is preferred but you can also provide a postal address or phone number.

We will not publish these details.

Aim and Approach - Note: All answers to the questions in this section may be published (unless your response is "not for publication").

Q1. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposed Bill?

Fully supportive

Q1. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposed Bill?

Please explain the reasons for your response. We would welcome comments on any experience you have had of accessing, or trying to access, addiction treatment.

Fully supportive as not enough is currently being done for people to receive the best treatment. During a 5 year period, my son tried to access proper treatment. He reached out to ask for help and yet sadly died aged 40. He was fully engaging with all appointments etc for majority of this period, yet it was a constant struggle to get people to really listen to us.

Q2. Do you think legislation is required, or are there other ways in which the proposed Bill's aims could be achieved more effectively? Please explain the reasons for your response.

Legislation would certainly be a good bold step, since nothing seems to be truly working at the moment. Perhaps, also though, a bit more flexibility in treating each person more individually. Instead of each person having to "tick all the same boxes", during the process of accessing treatment, in order to satisfy health professionals' to do list!

Q3. How do you think the right to treatment established in the Bill would be most effectively implemented and enforced? Tick all options that apply.

Duty on Scottish Ministers

Duty on Health Boards

Duty on Integration Joint Boards (IJB's)

Established targets/standards

Requirement for the Scottish Government to report progress on duty

Q4. Which of the following best expresses your view of creating a specific complaints procedure, in addition to the existing NHS complaints procedure?

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response. We would welcome comments on any experience you have had with the existing NHS complaints procedure.

If there is a separate Right to Addiction Recovery Bill then I think it would make sense to have a specific complaints procedure. I am currently in a situation of not knowing who to turn to with regard to this situation.

Q5. Which of the following best expresses your view of allowing those suffering from addiction to choose a preferred treatment option, and for them to receive that option unless deemed harmful by a medical professional?

Fully supportive

Q5. Which of the following best expresses your view of allowing those suffering from addiction to choose a preferred treatment option, and for them to receive that option unless deemed harmful by a medical professional?

Please explain the reasons for your response. We would welcome suggestions about how this could work in practice.

My son really wanted rehab with proper counselling etc and initially for a few years was told there was no chance! Then about 7 weeks before he suddenly passed away, he was told he possibly could be considered for rehab. However we were given the impression that he would have to jump through hoops to access it!

Q6. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposed Bill seeking to prevent treatment being refused?

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response. We would welcome suggestions about how this could work in practice.

I believe that my son would not have died and I'm sure that must apply to countless other families. Lives could be saved.

Q7. Which of the following best expresses your view of requiring the Scottish Government to establish a national funding scheme?

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response.

Too little funding has been available for too long. So again, this funding could save lives.

Financial Implications

Q8. Taking into account all those likely to be affected (including public sector bodies, businesses and individuals etc), is the proposed Bill likely to lead to:

no overall change in costs

Please indicate where you would expect the impact identified to fall (including public sector bodies, businesses and individuals etc). You may also wish to suggest ways in which the aims of the Bill could be delivered more cost-effectively.

Overall, if the correct course of action for treatment is taken before things spiral out of control, then surely it could in effect cut back on longer term costs. My son first visited GP in 2015 to ask for help to stop drinking. He sadly passed away in 2020. I would estimate that more NHS money was spent on him over that 5 year period, than would have been if he had access to correct recovery treatment initially.

Equalities

Q9. What overall impact is the proposed Bill likely to have on equality, taking account of the following protected characteristics (under the Equality Act 2010): age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation?

Positive

Please explain the reasons for your response. Where any negative impacts are identified, you may also wish to suggest ways in which these could be minimised or avoided.

In an ideal world it should be a neutral impact, however I'm sure that currently there are some inequalities. Therefore having legislation should protect everyone equally. to access treatment for recovery.

Sustainability

Q10. In terms of assessing the proposed Bill's potential impact on sustainable development, you may wish to consider how it relates to the following principles:

- living within environmental limits
- ensuring a strong, healthy and just society
- achieving a sustainable economy
- promoting effective, participative systems of governance
- ensuring policy is developed on the basis of strong scientific evidence.

With these principles in mind, do you consider that the Bill can be delivered sustainably?

Yes

Please explain the reasons for your response.

I see no reason to believe otherwise. A strong healthy and just society is what so many people crave to see.

General

Q11. Do you have any other additional comments or suggestions on the proposed Bill (which have not already been covered in any of your responses to earlier questions)?

Other issues which need to be addressed perhaps are the stigma and the judgemental attitudes directed towards people with addiction, sadly even from health professionals. I witnessed this with my son, from the professionals he was supposed to put his faith and his trust in. This could put people off accessing treatment and perhaps all professionals should receive further training. Also, various services should be working together in a holistic way, reading notes etc, rather than in a disjointed way, not fully knowing the full history of the patient. Family members, as well as patients, should also be listened to with respect and have their concerns taken seriously.