



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Criminal Justice Committee

Elena Whitham MSP
Minister for Drugs and Alcohol Policy
The Scottish Government

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13 November 2023

Dear Minister

Cross-committee on tackling drug deaths and drug harm

Thank you for attending the cross-committee meeting on tackling drug deaths and drug harm on 2 November 2023.

There were some questions that Members were unable to ask due to the time constraints of the meeting. I would appreciate it if you could please provide information on the following areas.

Safer drug consumption facility

- Could you provide an indicative timetable for the establishment of a proposed safer drug consumption facility pilot in Glasgow, and information regarding the healthcare provision planned for the facility.
- Could you please confirm whether the UK Home Office will be able to feed in its views to the proposed independent evaluation of the safer drug consumption room pilot?
- During the evidence session you confirmed that the Scottish Government is undertaking work in partnership with the City of Edinburgh Council to explore what a safer drug consumption room pilot could look like. It would be helpful to be kept updated on any progress in that regard.

MAT Standards

- Could you please confirm when you expect all the MAT standards to be fully implemented, and provide details about what is being done to make progress on standards 6-10?

- During the meeting you indicated that you would keep Members informed about a specific case raised by Sue Webber MSP regarding one of her constituents who was unable to access the required medication on release from HMP Edinburgh.

National Mission

- An update on the work of the National Mission oversight group would be appreciated, including an indication of how any gaps are being addressed, and whether the group is incorporating approaches from other countries into its oversight work.

Law reform

- An update on the engagement with the UK Government on the Scottish Government's drug law reform proposals would be appreciated.

Cross-Government action plan

- In line with a key function of the cross committee remit, Members would appreciate an update on the progress being made in relation to the Scottish Drug Deaths Taskforce recommendations and action points?

Charter of rights

- Could you please confirm how the proposed Charter of Rights will link with the Scottish Government's forthcoming Human Rights Bill and how the rights within the Charter will be enforced?

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

- During the meeting you indicated that the Scottish Government is considering the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's proposal for firefighters to carry Naloxone, and that you will keep Members updated with progress.

The next meeting of the cross-committee on tackling drug deaths and drug harm is expected to be in about six months' time. A response by the end of January 2024, would be much appreciated.

Best wishes,



Audrey Nicoll MSP
Convener, Criminal Justice Committee