



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Michael Matheson MSP
Cabinet Secretary for NHS
Recovery, Health and Social Care

Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice
Committee
T2.60

The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Via email only

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19 April 2023

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

Funding of the Gypsy/Traveller Community Health Worker Service

At its meeting on Tuesday 28 March the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee considered correspondence from MECOPP (Minority Ethnic Carers of People Project).

In that letter – [available on the Committee's web page](#) - the Chief Executive and Gypsy/Traveller Service Lead set out MECOPP's concerns about funding for its Gypsy/Traveller Community Health Worker (CHW) Service. The letter is complemented by an [interim evaluation](#) conducted by the University of Dundee.

The Committee notes that the service was introduced as part of the Scottish Government and COSLA joint action plan *Improving the Lives of Gypsy/Travellers 2019-2021*, and that it was originally intended that the service would be delivered by an NHS organisation but that, as the interim evaluation identifies, it was "significantly delayed by bureaucratic barriers and the Covid-19 pandemic".

MECOPP agreed to take on responsibility for the CHW Service and the Committee notes the interim evaluation comments positively on the impact of the provision of the service. The Committee agreed that it was important to understand the current funding situation to support the continued delivery of the service and, in particular, the concerns about potentially having to issue redundancy notices.

The Committee would therefore be grateful if you could advise:

- What can or will the Scottish Government do to help to ensure the continued provision of this key service?
- Does the Scottish Government expect the NHS to take the lead on the delivery and provision of the service? If so, when?
- Does the Scottish Government anticipate any changes to the provision of the service, for example, as part of the next iteration of the joint action plan to improve the lives of Gypsy/Travellers?

As this issue potentially crosses a range of portfolios, I am copying to the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, the Minister for Equalities, Migration and Refugees and the Convener of the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee.

Yours sincerely,

Maggie Chapman
Deputy Convener
Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee