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Publication of first interim Children's Services Reform Research report by CELCIS

Dear Convener,

The Scottish Government has commissioned the Centre for Excellence for Children's Care and Protection (CELCIS) to conduct independent research to gather evidence to inform decision making about how best to deliver children's services in Scotland. As you heard during the Stage 1 evidence sessions for the National Care Service (Scotland) Bill, this research will help build the Scottish Government's understanding of the current service delivery models in Scotland, and internationally, and their effectiveness in supporting the needs of children and their families.

The over-arching research question CELCIS will aim to answer through this research is: **"What is needed to ensure that children, young people and families get the help they need, when they need it?"**. Further detail on the purpose, scope and remit of the research can be found on [CELCIS' website](#). The findings of this research project will be used to inform consideration of the future of children's services, in the context of the establishment of a National Care Service.

I am pleased to inform you of the publication of the first interim report from this research, published by CELCIS on 21 June 2023. This first interim report, a Rapid Evidence Review of existing published national and international literature associated with different models of integration of children's services, can be found on [CELCIS' website](#). This interim report is accompanied by a summary paper which can also be found on [CELCIS' website](#). I would encourage the Committee to read the interim report and consider its initial findings.

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The research began in September 2022 and is due to conclude in October 2023. There will be four interim reports published between now and October, which will be followed by the publication of the final report in late October 2023. The final report will draw together and synthesise all five strands of the findings into one report, addressing the over-arching research question set out above. The second interim report is due to be published on 28 June, with the third interim report due to be published in July. The five strands of the research are set out below for your information. It is worth noting that strands four and five will be published in one interim report in autumn. All reports will be published in due course at the same web address. I will write again later this year when the final report is published.

- Strand 1: Rapid evidence review
- Strand 2: Case studies of transformational reform programmes
- Strand 3: Mapping integration and outcomes across Scotland
- Strand 4: Workforce survey
- Strand 5: Focus groups and interviews with the workforce

My officials and I will be considering the information and data contained within the interim reports as they become available. The key criterion for deciding whether children's services are integrated into the National Care Service is what is most likely to keep The Promise by 2030. The government will not make any decisions about the future delivery of children's services until the research has concluded and been carefully considered.

I am grateful to the team at CELCIS for the work they are doing, and look forward to the reports to follow. I hope the Committee would agree that the research overall, and this first interim report, is an important contribution to our consideration of how we best support our children, young people and families.

I welcome the views and opinions of the Committee once members have had time to consider the interim report. I will write to you again in autumn upon publication of the final report.

Yours sincerely,



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