

Movement for HEALTH Creation



<INSERT DATE>

Dear Member of the Scottish Parliament,

Open Letter from Voluntary Health Scotland Members

Congratulations on your recent election/re-election to the Scottish Parliament. We look forward to working with you to reduce health inequalities and empower the people of Scotland to live well.

Voluntary Health Scotland are a movement for health creation working to reduce health inequalities to enable the people of Scotland to live well. We believe that health is more than the absence of illness, and together with our members and partners we champion this belief. We collaborate to provide the national voice for third sector health organisations in Scotland.

In this open letter, co-signed by <INSERT NUMBER> Voluntary Health Scotland members, we share some of the key health challenges facing Scotland and the actions we believe are necessary to improve Scotland's health.

Scotland is facing a public health crisis. Healthy life expectancy in Scotland has been steadily decreasing for over a decade. The [most recent figures](#) show that, on average, people in Scotland will be in ill health before their 60th birthday. Scotland's ageing population also means that the annual burden of disease facing our health services is [forecast to rise by 21% before 2043](#). Given current public sector spending pressures, this is simply not sustainable.

Scotland's third sector has an essential role in supporting our public services to improve health in Scotland. Our members empower people to live well and manage their own health in every community across Scotland. However, our sector is not always treated as an equal partner. Many Third Sector health organisations are facing funding challenges, leading to reduced services for those who need them most.

Voluntary Health Scotland

18 York Place, Edinburgh, EH1 3EP

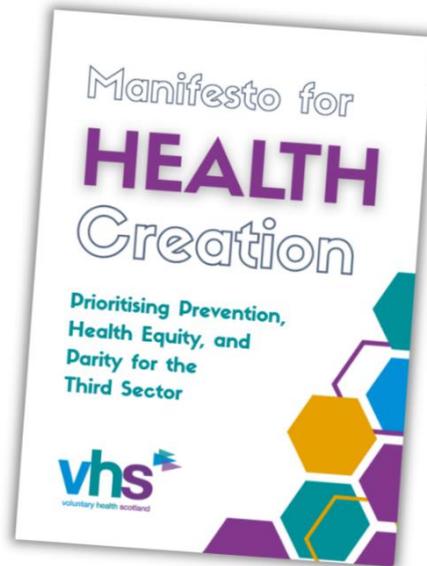
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We believe that change is possible, but we **must act NOW**. In October 2025, we launched our [Manifesto for Health Creation](#), setting out our four key asks for improving Scotland's health.



1. Create a Prevention-Centred Health System

Committing to a prevention-first approach, and building the system to successfully implement this, will support interventions that create health and relieve pressure on acute services.

2. Prioritise Health Equity and the Right to Health

A rights-based approach would support prioritisation of the root causes of health inequality, specifically poverty, and person-centred approaches to health.

3. Establish Third Sector Parity

Policy solutions which protect the third sector and its workforce, including volunteers, as vital and equal contributors in the delivery of public services will help to safeguard the future of the sector.

4. Improve Health Measures and Datasets

A meaningful shift to prevention and health equity can only be achieved if national outcomes and indicators for health reflect this. It is therefore essential to ensure that health data is robust, accessible and focused on enabling health creation.

The future health of Scotland's people is in our hands. It is not too late to reduce health inequalities and improve the health of Scotland's people. However, this will require cross-party commitment to prioritise health creation, health equity and the right to health.

We ask you to:

- read the [Manifesto for Health Creation](#).
- [Contact Voluntary Health Scotland](#) to further discuss your role in improving Scotland's health.
- Consider joining the [Cross Party Group on Health Inequalities](#) for which we provide the secretariat.

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Yours Sincerely,

Tejesh Mistry, Voluntary Health Scotland

<INSERT LIST OF SIGNATORIES>

DRAFT

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