**Tell the Scottish government what health and social care should look like**

The Scottish government are writing a plan to improve health and care for people in later life, called the Health and Social Care Strategy for Older People. This is a fantastic opportunity to tell the government what is important to you to get the care you need, so that their strategy reflects what matters to you.

You can fill out the consultation [**here**](https://consult.gov.scot/healthcare-quality-and-improvement/health-and-social-care-strategy/), or email your thoughts to **olderpeopleshealthstrategy@gov.scot**. If you’d like to read more about the consultation, you can find information [**here**](https://www.gov.scot/publications/consultation-health-social-care-strategy-older-people/documents/).

Independent Age will be sharing with the Scottish government what we think needs to change based on our own evidence, and what people in later life have told us in recent events across Scotland. Here are some areas that we’ll be touching on in our response.

**Seeing your GP and health checks**

Lots of you have told us that it’s been difficult to make, and access, GP appointments, which are key for helping people to keep well and get the care they need. We’ll be recommending that the government work to improve access and satisfaction with GP surgeries, while making sure everyone gets an annual health check.

**Waiting times and cancellations**

We’ve heard from many of you who are wating for treatment or have experienced cancellations for surgeries like hip or knee replacements. Not getting the care needed has left many people in pain or unable to live how they want.

We’re asking the government to work towards reducing waiting times and improving communication around waiting times for healthcare. For those of you who have experienced a delay or have faced a cancellation, we’ll be asking the government to make sure the right support is in place so they’re not waiting in pain, or their pain is minimised.

**Access to mental health support**

We believe that growing older can, and should, be a positive time in someone’s life. But we know that many people face a range of challenges as they age, from lacking the care and support needed to complete everyday tasks, to not having enough money for the essentials, experiencing bereavement or feeling isolated and lonely. All these challenges can have an impact on our mental health and wellbeing. We think everyone should have access to mental health support when they need it and that the Government should do more to end stigma around mental health.

**Funding**

We know that the health service can face funding challenges, which have an impact on the support and care people can access. We’re calling for the Government to make sure that the new Health and Social Care Strategy for Older People has enough money behind it to improve health and social care for everyone in later life.

**About Independent Age**

We offer regular contact, a strong campaigning voice and free, impartial

advice on the issues that matter to older people: care and support, money and benefits, health and mobility. A charity founded over 150 years ago; we are independent so older people can be too.

For more information, visit our website [**www.independentage.org**](https://indyage.sharepoint.com/sites/Intranet/Shared%20Documents/How%20do%20I/request%20creative%20content/www.independentage.org)

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