New three-year Children's Health Strategy focuses on the healthcare needs and rights of children and young people in Scotland

Monday 14 October, 2019

A new national three-year 2020-23 Children's Health Strategy has been launched by Children's Health Scotland at its Annual General Meeting – held on Saturday 12 October 2019 at its national headquarters in Leith, Edinburgh. With the identification of five new Key Priority Areas, the strategy firmly focuses on the healthcare needs and rights of all children and young people in Scotland.

On launching the new strategy, Richard Olver, Chair of Children's Health Scotland said:

> "This new strategy embodies our hopes and aspirations for the future and describes the role we will play in supporting children's health in Scotland. We listened to many voices to develop this three-year strategy and to deliver it we will work with children, young people, families and key stakeholders, joining forces whenever possible to make changes and improvements that will benefit children and young people in Scotland. The next three-years promise to be both exciting and challenging but with a clear direction of travel, I am confident we will be successful."

It is the ambition of the Scottish Government for "*Scotland to be the best place in the world to grow up and the best place in the world to bring up children*". The new 2020-23 strategy launched by Children's Health Scotland is designed to support this high-level aspiration and commenting on its release, Maree Todd MSP, Minister for Children and Young People said:

> "The Scottish Government welcomes the support of Children's Health Scotland to deliver our ambition for Scotland to be the best place in the world to grow up. There are some exciting initiatives planned within the Strategy that will make a big difference to the healthcare needs and rights of children and young people and I look forward to working together with those in the sector to make sure children and young people get the best quality healthcare in Scotland."

Children's Health Scotland is a national charity that works to ensure that all children and young people in Scotland get the healthcare and treatment they need. The five new Key Priority areas identified in the strategy include:

Expertise and Information

Children's Health Scotland will provide children, young people and families with appropriate information to enable them to have equitable access to best quality health services. Acting as experts in the sector, the charity will offer information on the needs and rights of children and young people in hospital and in the community.

Voice

The national charity will be a voice for the healthcare needs and rights of all children and young people.

Improving Life Experiences

To ensure the best possible healthcare is received for children and young people to improve their life experiences, Children's Health Scotland will work together with parents, carers and professionals.

Training and Resources

A range of training and resources will be provided to ensure that children, young people and their families are empowered to identify the needs of children during times of illness.

Health-Related Play

The charity will advocate for health-related play for all children, either in hospital or at home. More than just a chance to have fun, play is serious business when it comes to a child's health and health-related

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play can help children physically, mentally and emotionally.

> "The targets set in the new strategy are ambitious but realistic and will be delivered by experienced and competent staff and volunteers working together to help children and young people and their families get the healthcare and treatment they need."

added Helen Forrest, Chief Executive of Children's Health Scotland.

> "However, at Children's Health Scotland we never forget that our work is only possible thanks to the generosity of supporters, volunteers, trusts and foundations. To achieve our ambitions laid out in the new strategy, this support is still really important, and we will continue to work in partnership wherever and whenever possible to ensure children and young people get the best quality healthcare."

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