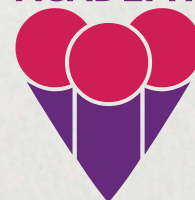




**Emphasising Humanity  
and Human Rights:**

# **CITIZEN'S BASIC INCOME**

Health and Social Care  
**ACADEMY**



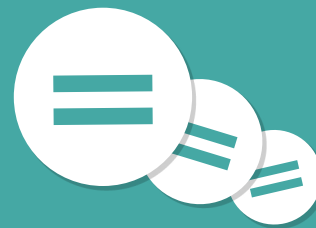


# Introduction

In 2015, the Health and Social Care Academy's Five Provocations for the Future of Health and Social Care<sup>1</sup> recognised that achieving meaningful change in health and social care requires new and different ways of thinking.

One of the provocations, **emphasising humanity, values and flourishing** placed an emphasis on breaking down the existing 'them' and 'us' relationship which has evolved over time between citizens and the state and move towards systems and structures which value equality, individual's talents and skills and invests in their ability to flourish. Concerns remain that this culture remains prevalent in certain elements of health and social care and social security. Citizen's Basic Income (CBI) is one platform through which people in Scotland are beginning to consider how to address this imbalance.

## What is Citizen's Basic Income?



At its heart, the Citizen's Basic Income (CBI) is an unconditional, regular payment by the state to every citizen regardless of background, income, employment or any other status. CBI is paid on an individual rather than household level and does not require means-testing. This is not a new idea, minimum income having first appeared at the beginning of the 16th century and an unconditional one-off grant first been discussed at the end of the 18th century<sup>2</sup>.

The creation of CBI seeks to provide every citizen with a universal, non-means-tested and

unconditional basic income, replacing most of the current Social Security benefits and most of the current tax loopholes in the personal income tax system. Its recent prevalence in political debate coincides with increasing discussions about the system of social security, whether that is because of perceived punitive nature of the system or its complexity. Citizen Basic Income attracts interest from across the political spectrum with support from groups with an interest in both increasing and reducing the state's influence in people's lives.

<sup>1</sup> <http://academy.alliance-scotland.org.uk/publication-five-provocations-for-the-future-of-health-and-social-care>

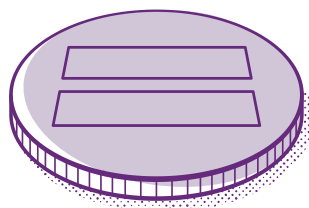
<sup>2</sup> <http://basicincome.org/basic-income/history/>

# Basic income initiatives tend to encompass the following principles:

- 1** They are paid at regular intervals, for example once every month, not as a one-off grant.
- 2** CBI is paid in cash allowing those who receive it to decide what they spend it on. It is not, therefore, paid either in food or services or in vouchers dedicated to a specific use.
- 3** CBI is paid on an individual basis and not, for instance, to households.
- 4** CBI is paid to all, without means test.
- 5** CBI is paid without a requirement to work.

Proponents of the Citizen's Basic Income approach argue that it could promote equality among people with protected characteristics (e.g. disability, sex or race) by providing everyone with an income which is independent of other people in their household, family or relationship. It is also argued that it would enable people to be better geared to manage the threat of unemployment/underemployment and empower the better management of work/life balance for people in employment.

Some argue that unpaid carers would be among those most likely to benefit from the introduction of a CBI, with the RSA arguing that "basic income would help people care for their relatives, friends and neighbours without having to account for their actions to the state."<sup>3</sup> Financial supports currently available to carers are underclaimed and administered by a bureaucratic system. It is argued that a basic income would enable people to more easily take time off, reduce their hours, or take short career breaks to care for an elderly, disabled or otherwise vulnerably person.



# Citizen Basic Income in Scotland

Scotland was recently added to the list of “places to watch” for growing understanding and implementation of the CBI by the Basic Income Earth Network<sup>4</sup>. This growing debate has been brought into even sharper context with the creation of a new Scottish Social Security Agency – separate from the UK Government’s Department for Work and Pensions – through the increased devolution of powers given to the Scottish Parliament.

In early 2017, the Guardian newspaper reported that Scotland “looks set to be the first part of the UK to pilot a basic income for every citizen”<sup>5</sup> and Scottish National Party (SNP) members recently backed the principle of a universal income to replace the current welfare system<sup>6</sup>, however this has yet to reach firm manifesto proposals from the SNP-led Scottish Government.

## Two areas of Scotland are currently considering introducing Citizen Basic Income pilots and more information is detailed below:

### Glasgow City Council pilot<sup>7</sup>

On February 16, 2017, Glasgow City Council unanimously approved a resolution to convene and fund a workshop dedicated to drafting and examining models for a pilot of the Citizen’s Basic Income model.

The Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA) will bring together community groups, businesses and politicians to identify which stakeholders and partners would be involved in any trial and consider the financial and constitutional implications of running a pilot scheme<sup>8</sup>.

### Fife Council pilot

The Fairer Fife Commission<sup>9</sup>, an independent commission created by the Fife Council, initially recommended a basic income pilot in a report published in November 2015, where it was one of 40 policy recommendations for achieving a “fairer Fife” by 2030.

Specifically, it encouraged the Fife Partnership, Fife’s community planning board, to select a town in the council area in which to run a pilot informed by global best practice. The pilot was included among the Commission’s anti-poverty proposals, which otherwise focused largely on promoting work and employment.

4 <http://basicincome.org/>

5 <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2017/jan/01/universal-basic-income-trials-being-considered-in-scotland>

6 <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/universal-basic-income-snp-scotland-independent-conference-vote-a6931846.html>

7 <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/councillorsandcommittees/viewSelectedDocument.asp?c=P62AFQDNDNDXT1T1DX>

8 <https://www.thersa.org/about-us/media/2017/rsa-launches-study-on-universal-basic-income-trial-in-glasgow>

9 <http://fairer.fife.scot/>

## What could make Citizen's Basic Income transformational?

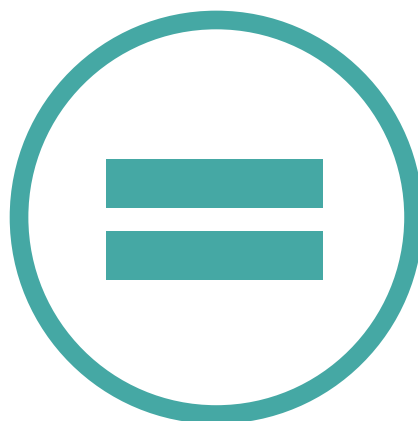


- Fundamental belief that basic income is a foundation of creative contributions to broader societal benefits which include, but are not exclusively about, work such as skills development and caring responsibilities.
- Continued investment in other forms of social security, e.g. Personal Independence Payment and Housing Benefit, and services which support people to achieve their human rights.
- The weekly amount that any working age person receives is a 'basic' amount, rather than a working wage.

## What could stop Citizen's Basic Income being transformational?



- Small scale pilot projects which do not address the bigger questions about our social security system and potential disinvest in current service provision.
- Social security continues to be seen through the 'fairness versus cheating' narrative which has led to greater and greater conditionality and complexity in the social security system.



# Emphasising humanity, values and flourishing

Whilst a basic income has the potential to fundamentally transform the relationship between people who live with long term conditions, disabled people and unpaid carers and the state, the introduction of a basic income is anything but a magic bullet. Proponents of CBI argue that the existing social security system works against people's ability to flourish, leading to demoralisation and impacts on mental health conditions.

In order to recognise the needs of its community, each CBI programme must be dependent on the objectives, priorities, assumptions and constraints of the people who are using and devising it. There is no one optimum scheme and it has been argued that means tested Housing Benefit would need to continue to be administered as well as a separate disability payment, with an eligibility criteria, in line with the way Personal Independence Payment has been rolled out since its introduction in 2010.

CBI places the focus on the best of people and credits citizens with the belief that a basic income ensures that volunteering, caring and entrepreneurship are further incentivised by a better relationship with the state. However, introducing CBI alone will not address the barriers faced by people with long term conditions, disabled people and unpaid carers. CBI must lead to a range of progressive reforms, including investment in people's skills, employability and addressing further social determinants of health.

Policy makers in Scotland must closely consider both the political and the social impact of introducing a CBI – not just the economic issues - and the difference it could make to existing service provision and the potential unintended consequence of shrinking state support. In a recent Parliamentary Committee it was argued that CBI could replace services altogether, as people had the resources to purchase them outright.

As studies develop in Scotland more consideration of the impact they have on disabled people, people with long term conditions and unpaid carers and whether they increase the opportunities for inclusion and flourishing.

## For more on Citizen's Basic Income why not visit:

- **Citizen's Basic Income Network Scotland** <https://cbin.scot/>
- **Centre for Welfare Reform, Let's Scrap the DWP:**  
<http://www.centreforwelfarereform.org/uploads/attachment/437/lets-scrap-the-dwp.pdf>
- **The RSA, Creative Citizen, Creative State:**  
<https://www.thersa.org/discover/publications-and-articles/reports/basic-income>



**Health and Social Care Academy**  
**Emphasising Humanity and Human Rights: Citizen's Basic Income**  
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