

The Right to Health - Social Determinants



Everyone has the right to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health

Everyone has the right to the underlying determinants of good physical and mental health (things that are essential for the enjoyment of good health), which includes:

- safe, drinkable water and adequate sanitation;
- an adequate supply of nutritious and safe food;
- adequate and affordable housing (with adequate: privacy; space; energy for cooking, heating and lighting; security; ventilation; accessibility and infrastructure);
- adequate clothing;
- social security;
- safe working conditions;
- healthy environmental conditions;
- relevant education and information.

These determinants of health must be delivered in a way that:

- is **non-discriminatory**: those affected by substance use are entitled to the determinants of health on an equal footing with everyone else; no-one should be refused food, social security, housing or be evicted solely on the basis of substance use;
- is **respectful** of the inherent **dignity** of every person and **non-stigmatising**;
- is **delivered to all**, regardless of income or access to resources;
- **prioritises** groups living in unfavourable conditions;
- ensures those most affected by decisions are able to **participate** meaningfully in those decisions (have their views heard and taken into account);

People should also be able to effectively challenge practices and policies that breach these rights, and secure a remedy.

Questions

These questions are intended to focus discussion on the key requirements of the right to health. Some may find it useful to consider each question in turn. Others may prefer to use them as a prompt for discussion. Either approach is fine!

1. In Scotland, what stops people affected by substance use from accessing things that support good health (e.g. education, employment, leisure, adequate food and housing) in the same way as other people?

2. Are things that support good health (e.g. education, employment, leisure, adequate food and housing): available, easy to find and use, and good enough? If not can you tell us why? What could change to make it better?

3. Are there examples where things are being done well which could be used to help make things better?

4. Are people affected by substance use asked for their views on decisions about the determinants of health, and are these respected? Is the situation explained in a way that people can understand? If not, what do you think could help with this?

5. Are people affected by substance use able to speak about issues they find unfair and are they able to fix/resolve these? If not, what are the problems, and what do you think needs to change?

