

Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee  
Wednesday 2 April 2025  
6th Meeting, 2025 (Session 6)

## PE2091: Provide funding to have a CAHMS worker and a nurse based within Scottish high schools

### Introduction

**Petitioner** Kirsty Solman on behalf of Stand with Kyle Now

**Petition summary** Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to provide funding to enable a CAHMS worker and a school nurse to be placed within our secondary schools.

**Webpage** <https://petitions.parliament.scot/petitions/PE2091>

1. [The Committee last considered this petition at its meeting on 12 June 2024](#). At that meeting, the Committee agreed to write to the Scottish Government.
2. The petition summary is included in **Annexe A** and the Official Report of the Committee's last consideration of this petition is at **Annexe B**.
3. The Committee has received a new written submission from the Scottish Government which is set out in **Annexe C**.
4. The Committee has received a copy of the Scottish Government's 'Implementation of the transformed school nurse role in Scotland: workforce and health board survey results' report. The school nurse role was transformed in 2018 to focus on areas most likely to impact a child's health and wellbeing. The report details findings from two surveys which looked at how the transformed role of school nurses has been implemented across Scotland's Health Boards.
5. The report found that almost all school nurses (97%) said that referrals under emotional health and wellbeing made up a high or moderate proportion of all referrals they received.
6. Health Board responses to the survey suggested that the high level of referrals school nurses received under emotional health and wellbeing highlighted a cohort of children that had needs beyond the remit of school nurses but that did not meet the threshold for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
7. [Written submissions received prior to the Committee's last consideration can be found on the petition's webpage](#).
8. [Further background information about this petition can be found in the SPICe briefing for](#) this petition.
9. [The Scottish Government gave its initial response to the petition on 30 April 2024](#).

**CPPP/S6/25/6/8**

10. Every petition collects signatures while it remains under consideration. At the time of writing, 168 signatures have been received on this petition.

## **Action**

11. The Committee is invited to consider what action it wishes to take.

**Clerks to the Committee**  
**March 2025**

## **Annexe A: Summary of petition**

**PE2091: Provide funding to have a CAHMS worker and a nurse based within Scottish high schools**

### **Petitioner**

Kirsty Solman on behalf of Stand with Kyle Now

### **Date Lodged**

28 March 2024

### **Petition summary**

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to provide funding to enable a CAHMS worker and a school nurse to be placed within our secondary schools.

### **Background information**

We are a Children's Mental Health Charity who work with families whose children are on waiting lists for CAHMS for anything up to 2 years. This significantly affects their child's education as they refuse to attend school or when they do they struggle and are unable to concentrate or engage.

We believe that access to a CAHMS worker and a nurse in secondary schools will allow children to be identified early when they are struggling with their mental health, and have referrals completed correctly and efficiently. They could also link in with the local primary schools and early education facilities, as early intervention for our children's mental wellbeing is key.

## **Annexe B: Extract from Official Report of last consideration of PE2091 on 12 June 2024**

**The Convener:** Our final petition for consideration this morning is PE2091, which has been lodged by Kirsty Solman on behalf of Stand with Kyle Now. It calls on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to provide funding to enable a CAMHS worker and a school nurse to be placed in our secondary schools. The petitioner believes that access to a CAMHS worker and nurse would allow children who are struggling with their mental health to be identified early and would make it possible for any referrals to be completed correctly and efficiently.

The SPICe briefing notes that school counselling services for children aged 10 and over are available in all local authorities, although the delivery varies across local authorities, with some providing authority-wide services rather than allocating practitioners to particular schools or areas.

A 2023 report by the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland identified further barriers to accessing school counselling services and recommended that all local authorities should have clear waiting time targets and that compliance with those targets should be part of the Scottish Government's evaluation of the services.

In its response to the petition, the Scottish Government highlights that all primary and secondary schools in Scotland are able to access the support of school nurse services, and that the school nurse role has changed over time and now includes a focus on emotional health and wellbeing. School nurses can support the mental health of children and make referrals to CAMHS, where appropriate.

This is a new petition. If we wish to keep the petition open and to seek further information, do colleagues have any suggestions about action that we might take or who we might contact?

**David Torrance:** Perhaps the committee could consider writing to the Scottish Government to ask how it evaluates the provision of counselling in secondary schools and how CAMHS referrals are monitored in secondary schools to ensure that they are completed correctly and effectively, and to highlight the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland's 2023 report on counselling in schools and ask what consideration it has given to the recommendations, especially the recommendation about establishing clear waiting time targets.

**The Convener:** Perhaps we could also seek a bit more information on the assertion that all primary and secondary schools in Scotland can access school nurse services. I would like us to quantify what the level of that resource is across Scotland and to what extent it is being accessed, as it would be useful to have an understanding of that.

Are colleagues content with the suggestions that have been made?

**Members *indicated agreement.***

## **Annexe C: Written submission**

### **Scottish Government written submission, 23 July 2024**

#### **PE2091/B: Provide funding to have a CAHMS worker and a nurse based within Scottish high schools**

The Scottish Government would like to begin by thanking the Committee for the opportunity to further respond to petition **PE2091**, submitted by Ms Solman, on behalf of the 'Stand with Kyle Now' Charity. In this response we will provide further information on the specific points raised by the Committee at its meeting on 12 June 2024.

#### **Evaluation of the provision of counselling in secondary schools**

Your letter asks how the provision of counselling through secondary schools is evaluated. The Scottish Government commissions six-monthly reports from local authorities on school counselling services which asks for the number of young people accessing counselling, broken down by gender and year groups. The reports also seek information on outcomes, inward and outward referrals as well as the issues young people are presenting with. A summary of the reports can be found at: [Access to counsellors in secondary schools and children and young people's community mental health services – summary reports - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/summary-reports/2023/06/20230601-access-to-counsellors-in-secondary-schools-and-children-and-young-peoples-community-mental-health-services-summaries-reports/summary-reports-20230601-access-to-counsellors-in-secondary-schools-and-children-and-young-peoples-community-mental-health-services-summaries-reports.pdf).

Within the reporting form, authorities are encouraged to share additional information, such as information on waiting times, if they have that data available. Although some authorities have reported that services are at capacity, no concerns have been raised about young people's needs not being met. It is worth reiterating that school counselling is just one a range of services that local authorities have in place to support the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people.

We published guidance to support local authorities in implementing the service, available at: [Access to counselling in secondary schools: guidance - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/guidance/2023/06/20230601-access-to-counselling-in-secondary-schools-guidance/summary-reports-20230601-access-to-counselling-in-secondary-schools-guidance.pdf). The guidance makes clear that education authorities are responsible for establishing and managing their services, which would include how CAMHS referrals are monitored in schools.

#### **Monitoring of CAMHS referrals in secondary schools**

The Scottish Government does not hold any information on or monitor data regarding CAMHS referrals in schools. CAMHS referral statistics are aggregate numbers which means it is not possible to identify the source of individual referrals.

#### **Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland's 2023 report on counselling in schools**

With regard to the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland's (CYPCS) report, the Scottish Government and COSLA representatives attended a meeting with the CYPCS Young Advisors last Summer to discuss the report and

recommendations. Some of the Young Advisors then attended the School Counsellors' Co-ordinators Network in October, to discuss selected recommendations in more detail with the local authority leads who co-ordinate the services.

In January, Ms Todd, Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport wrote to Ms Killean, the Children and Young People's Commissioner, to confirm that the Counsellors' Co-ordinators Network will work collectively over the course of this year to consider the recommendations. The Network meets quarterly, and officials are ensuring each agenda includes a focussed discussion on the recommendations, sharing of best practice and drawing in expertise where appropriate. This allows more in depth, meaningful discussions to take place and support an on-going improvement cycle for school counselling services across Scotland.

### **Provision of school nurse services in primary and secondary schools**

The additional funding for school nurses provided by the Scottish Government made provision for all health boards to recruit additional school nurses. It is for health boards to decide where in their locality this provision is deployed to meet the needs of their children and young people. The Scottish Government has undertaken a survey of frontline school nurses and health board school nursing services to better understand how the transformed role has been implemented across Scotland's health boards. The report of those survey responses will be published soon, and a copy sent to the Committee.

The Scottish Government would like to thank the Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee for the opportunity to provide further information on the topics raised in the petition. We hope that the information outlined above provides the Committee with the details they need to appropriately consider the petition.

### **Mental Health Directorate**