

Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee
Wednesday 28 January 2026
3rd Meeting, 2026 (Session 6)

PE2141: Support the neurodiverse community by providing funding for psychoeducation

Introduction

Petitioner Luis Robertson

Petition summary Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to improve the support available to the neurodiverse community by providing fully-funded psychoeducation, and sensory aids, which allow for greater community integration pre- and post-diagnosis.

Webpage <https://petitions.parliament.scot/petitions/PE2141>

1. [The Committee last considered this petition at its meeting on 21 May 2025](#). 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. [Written submissions received prior to the Committee's last consideration can be found on the petition's webpage](#).
5. [Further background information about this petition can be found in the SPICe briefing](#) for this petition.
6. [The Scottish Government gave its initial response to the petition on 17 April 2025](#).
7. Every petition collects signatures while it remains under consideration. At the time of writing, 26 signatures have been received on this petition.

Action

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

Clerks to the Committee
January 2026

Annexe A: Summary of petition

PE2141: Support the neurodiverse community by providing funding for psychoeducation

Petitioner

Luis Robertson

Date Lodged

10 February 2025

Petition summary

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to improve the support available to the neurodiverse community by providing fully-funded psychoeducation, and sensory aids, which allow for greater community integration pre- and post-diagnosis.

Background information

Psychoeducation is crucial for autistic individuals as it empowers them with the knowledge and tools to better understand themselves and their unique experiences. By learning about autism, they can identify their strengths, navigate challenges, and develop coping strategies tailored to their needs. This understanding promotes self-acceptance, reduces feelings of isolation, and supports mental health by normalising their experiences. Furthermore, psychoeducation fosters improved communication and relationship skills, enabling autistic individuals to articulate their needs and connect with others effectively. It also encourages self-advocacy, equipping them to seek appropriate accommodations and challenge stigma, ultimately enhancing their autonomy and integration into society.

Annexe B: Extract from Official Report of last consideration of PE2141 on 21 May 2025

The Convener: The first of our new petitions is PE2141, lodged by Luis Robertson, which calls on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to improve the support available to the neurodiverse community by providing fully-funded psychoeducation and sensory aids, which allow for greater community integration pre and post diagnosis.

In the petitioner's view, psychoeducation is crucial for autistic individuals, as it equips them with the knowledge and tools to better understand themselves and their experiences. That knowledge could lead to self-acceptance and enable them to connect with others more effectively.

As noted in the SPICe briefing, psychoeducation interventions are typically structured, fixed-term, condition-specific sessions for neurodiverse people, delivered by a qualified professional. Depending on individual needs, some neurodiverse persons also find use for sensory aids, such as fidget toys, weighted blankets, therapy balls or visual timers. The SPICe briefing also highlights that the evidence base for psychoeducation is still somewhat small, given that it is an emerging field. However, it points to some research that suggests that psychoeducation could play a positive role in post-diagnostic support, particularly if it is co-produced by neurodiverse people.

In its initial submission, the Scottish Government explains how organisations funded through the autistic adult support fund provide support that achieves similar aims to those of psychoeducation. It also explains how existing providers of psychoeducation and sensory aids can apply for funding. The Government further stresses that it supports several alternative initiatives that achieve the aims sought in the petition, while indicating that it is open to exploring the integration of psychoeducational approaches and the use of sensory aids into existing frameworks.

If members are content, I suggest that we write to the Scottish Government to ask for a breakdown of the funding that is due to be made available to the providers of psychoeducation and sensory aids in 2025-26 and beyond and to ask whether that will be made available through the autistic adult Scotland fund. We should also ask for an update on whether the Scottish Government intends to subsidise or distribute sensory aids through the existing frameworks and to integrate that provision with the psychoeducational programmes that are led by neurodivergent individuals. Are members content?

Members *indicated agreement.*

The Convener: We will keep the petition open and seek to make inquiries along the lines that have been suggested.

Annexe C: Written submission

Scottish Government written submission, 16 June 2025

PE2141/C: Support the neurodiverse community by providing funding for psychoeducation

On 22 May 2025, you wrote to the Scottish Government in relation to Petition PE2141, which calls on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to provide fully funded psychoeducation and sensory aids to enable greater community integration pre- and post-diagnosis for neurodivergent people. Your letter advanced two additional queries from the Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee, requesting:

- a breakdown of the funding that is due to be made available to providers of psychoeducation and sensory aids, in 2025-26 and beyond, whether through the Autistic Adult Support Fund or otherwise; and
- an update on whether the Scottish Government intends to subsidise or distribute sensory aids through existing frameworks, and to integrate this provision with psychoeducational programmes led by neurodivergent individuals.

In this response, we have outlined funding that the Scottish Government intends to distribute to providers of psychoeducation and sensory aids in the current and future financial year, as well as funding made available in previous financial years. We have also set out the existing frameworks through which the Scottish Government can subsidise sensory aids, as well as how these frameworks can dovetail with psychoeducational programmes led by neurodivergent individuals.

Funding for Providers of Psychoeducation and Sensory Aids

In my letter to the Committee dated 17 April, I outlined how projects funded by our Autistic Adult Support Fund (AASF) achieve many of the same ends, via similar means, to those of psychoeducation. We are currently assessing applications to the next phase of the AASF, and intend to announce which applicants have been successful in July. I can confirm that £500,000 of funding will be made available to successful projects from October 2025 until March 2026, and that these projects will receive recurring funding totalling £1 million per annum until March 2028. Overall, from October 2025 until March 2028, a total amount of £2.5 million will be distributed to successful projects.

Since October 2023, the Scottish Government has distributed £2 million of funding to projects in the AASF portfolio, which, all achieve the same ends via similar means to psychoeducation. Further, one project, run by Home Start Caithness, used part of their funding to provide sensory aids for autistic parents for use during childbirth. This project received £29,180 of funding in 2023 and then £61,773 in 2024-25.

The Scottish Government also funds the [Scottish Sensory Centre](#) and [CALL Scotland](#) to provide advice and training to school staff on support, including the use of assistive technology, for children and young people with specific communication and sensory needs. Whilst this funding does not cover direct provision of sensory

aids, it helps ensure that such aids and other assistive means are employed appropriately by service providers.

Grant funding from Learning Directorate funds The Scottish Sensory Centre £150,000 per year to work collaboratively with professionals, children and young people and parents to have a positive and enabling impact on the educational provision for children and young people with sensory impairments and those who support them.

The Scottish Sensory Centre received an additional grant in FY 2024/25 of £250,000 to enhance the educational provision for children and young people with complex additional needs and those who support them.

CALL Scotland aims to help children and young people overcome barriers to learning due to disability or additional support needs and become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens, and effective contributors to society. To achieve this aim CALL Scotland provides innovative specialist expertise in support of children and young people with additional support needs who need Inclusive Digital Technology (IDT) and/or Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC).

Grant funding from the Learning Directorate funds CALL Scotland £367,177 per year to have a positive and enabling impact on the provision of support to children and young people who can benefit from assistive technology or augmentative and alternative communication.

CALL Scotland, like the Scottish Sensory Centre, received an additional grant in FY 2024/25 of £255,000 to enhance the educational provision for children and young people with complex additional needs and those who support them.

Subsidising/Distributing Sensory Aids via Existing Frameworks and Integration with Psychoeducational Programmes

The Scottish Government does not at present have any plans to use existing frameworks to subsidise or distribute sensory aids. However, as demonstrated above, we have established funding frameworks in place which can be used by existing providers of such aids, and indeed psychoeducation, to deliver these products and services. Especially in the case of the AASF, as demonstrated by the example of Home Start Caithness, utilisation of funding from existing Scottish Government provision can enable projects to provide aids in conjunction with psychoeducation, or support activities that achieve similar ends.

If Local Authorities and Health Boards consider such provision meets the needs of their service users, they can choose to invest in services that integrate provision of sensory aids with that of psychoeducation delivered by neurodivergent individuals.

Conclusion

Various Scottish Government-funded initiatives achieve many of the benefits provided by psychoeducation and sensory aids, and we continue to fund and support such initiatives. Whilst we have not made specific provision for subsidising and

distributing sensory aids, a number of funded projects and organisations have provided these and other similar aids in the course of delivering the desired outcomes attached to their grant funding.

We remain open to exploring the possibility of integrating psychoeducational approaches, and the use of sensory aids, into these existing frameworks, and will continue to engage with relevant bodies such as the National Autism Implementation Team (NAIT) to understand how this might be achieved.

Neurodivergence and Learning Disabilities Unit