



The Scottish Parliament Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Parliamentary Year 4, No. 90, Session 6

Meeting of the Parliament

Thursday 13 March 2025

Note: (DT) signifies a decision taken at Decision Time.

The meeting opened at 11:40 am.

- 1. General Questions:** Questions were answered by a Cabinet Secretary and Ministers.
- 2. First Minister's Questions:** Questions were answered by the First Minister (John Swinney).
- 3. Young Carers Action Day 2025:** The Parliament debated S6M-16302 in the name of Paul O'Kane—That the Parliament acknowledges that 12 March 2025 marks Young Carers Action Day; welcomes the annual campaign initiative, led by Carers Trust, which is encouraging as many organisations, communities and individuals as possible to take part in the day by taking action, and supporting and raising awareness of young carers; recognises the 2025 theme, Give Us a Break, which will focus on ensuring that young carers are able to access timely and restful breaks to avoid burnout from their caring role, and the need for education professionals and employers to give them a break in life by supporting them in school and at work, and creating better life opportunities; commends what it sees as the immense contribution that young carers make to society, including in the West Scotland region, by caring for their family or friends who are ill, frail, disabled or have mental health or addiction problems; believes that caring for someone should not be a barrier to having an equal opportunity in learning, earning or being able to participate and get on in life; recognises that young carers' responsibilities at home can mean that they often feel overwhelmed at having to juggle their caring responsibilities with their school work and social life; notes Carers Trust's research, which found that 52% of young carers surveyed said that they always or usually feel

stressed because of being a young carer or young adult carer; acknowledges what it considers is the importance of events such as the Scottish Young Carers Festival, which provide an opportunity for young carers to have a break from their caring role, meet other young carers and have fun; understands that young carers want lasting meaningful change to take place to ensure that young carers now, and in the future, remain at the forefront of policy development and have access to the support and breaks that they are entitled to and deserve; recognises what it sees as the importance of rest and respite for young carers in Scotland; notes the view that all young carers deserve a break, and wishes all involved in this year's #YoungCarersActionDay the very best of luck in their endeavours.

4. Motion without Notice: Paul O’Kane moved without notice that, under Rule 8.14.3, the debate be extended by up to 30 minutes.

The motion was agreed to.

5. Portfolio Questions: Questions on Social Justice were answered by a Cabinet Secretary and a Minister.

6. Ministerial Statement: The Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care (Neil Gray) made a statement and answered questions on Scottish Hospitals Inquiry Interim Report on the Royal Hospital for Children and Young People and Department of Clinical Neuroscience Edinburgh.

7. Adoption of Innovation in Health and Social Care: The Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care (Neil Gray) moved S6M-16777—That the Parliament believes that there are significant health and economic benefits in supporting and adopting innovation in the health and social care service; recognises the urgent and critical need for health and social care recovery and renewal to meet the changing demands on the NHS whilst protecting its founding principles of remaining in the hands of the public and free at the point of need; agrees that reform can and must be accelerated by scientific and technological innovation and that rapid national adoption of research-proven innovations are essential to drive further improvements for patients, and welcomes partnership working between Scotland's world class academic institutions, life sciences and technology businesses, the public sector and the NHS to improve health outcomes and support a thriving economy.

Sandesh Gulhane moved amendment S6M-16777.1—

As an amendment to motion S6M-16777 in the name of Neil Gray (Adoption of Innovation in Health and Social Care), insert at end “; acknowledges that much of the NHS's existing IT infrastructure is outdated and suffers from interoperability issues, which harm productivity and create an additional burden on NHS staff; further acknowledges that a lack of modern, effective IT infrastructure has created challenges for GP practices and patients, including difficulties in easily booking appointments or ordering repeat prescriptions; believes that the introduction of an NHS Scotland app, a universal software architecture platform and a single shared digital patient records system to enable seamless transfer of medical information within and between NHS boards, local authorities and other care providers, would be transformational for

all aspects of health and social care; understands the vast potential of artificial intelligence within health and social care to accelerate diagnosis, increase productivity and improve patient outcomes; recognises the significantly greater progress made in other parts of the UK and in European nations in developing and implementing these technologies, and considers it vital to the future of Scotland's health and social care provision that adoption and innovation of new technologies within the sector is accelerated.”

After debate, the amendment was agreed to (DT).

Paul Sweeney moved amendment S6M-16777.2—

As an amendment to motion S6M-16777 in the name of Neil Gray (Adoption of Innovation in Health and Social Care), insert at end “; regrets that the Scottish National Party administration has, after almost 18 years in office, allowed Scotland's NHS to lag behind in adopting innovation, with end-to-end paperless and e-prescribing policies undelivered and dated medical diagnostics equipment still in use, and calls on the Scottish Government to move Scotland's NHS and social care sector from analogue working to the digital age, starting by creating a shared care record system and empowering patients through an NHS app.”

After debate, the amendment was disagreed to ((DT) by division: For 47, Against 63 (including 4 proxy votes), Abstentions 0).

The motion, as amended, was agreed to (DT).

Accordingly, the Parliament resolved—

That the Parliament believes that there are significant health and economic benefits in supporting and adopting innovation in the health and social care service; recognises the urgent and critical need for health and social care recovery and renewal to meet the changing demands on the NHS whilst protecting its founding principles of remaining in the hands of the public and free at the point of need; agrees that reform can and must be accelerated by scientific and technological innovation and that rapid national adoption of research-proven innovations are essential to drive further improvements for patients; welcomes partnership working between Scotland's world class academic institutions, life sciences and technology businesses, the public sector and the NHS to improve health outcomes and support a thriving economy; acknowledges that much of the NHS's existing IT infrastructure is outdated and suffers from interoperability issues, which harm productivity and create an additional burden on NHS staff; further acknowledges that a lack of modern, effective IT infrastructure has created challenges for GP practices and patients, including difficulties in easily booking appointments or ordering repeat prescriptions; believes that the introduction of an NHS Scotland app, a universal software architecture platform and a single shared digital patient records system to enable seamless transfer of medical information within and between NHS boards, local authorities and other care providers, would be transformational for all aspects of health and social care; understands the vast potential of artificial intelligence within health and social care to accelerate diagnosis, increase productivity and

improve patient outcomes; recognises the significantly greater progress made in other parts of the UK and in European nations in developing and implementing these technologies, and considers it vital to the future of Scotland's health and social care provision that adoption and innovation of new technologies within the sector is accelerated.

8. Decision Time: The Parliament took a decision on item 6 as noted above.

The meeting closed at 5.06 pm.

David McGill
Clerk of the Parliament
13 March 2025

Appendix

(Note: this Appendix does not form part of the Minutes)

Subordinate Legislation

Negative Instruments

The following instrument was laid before the Parliament on 13 March 2025 and is subject to the negative procedure—

Recognition of Overseas Qualifications (Charges) (Scotland) Regulations 2025 (SSI 2025/67)

laid under section 56 of the Finance Act 1973

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