

Funding to tackle Scotland's alcohol and drug crisis slashed

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Crucial funding to tackle Scotland's drugs and drink crisis has been cut across Scotland, new figures have revealed today.

In half of all Scotland's 14 Health Board areas, support for Alcohol and Drug Partnerships has fallen this year, the statistics show.

It contradicts a promise by Health Secretary Shona Robison to ensure that treatment would be maintained at "existing levels" across Scotland.

The cuts follow changes to the way drug and alcohol partnerships are funded.

Ministers have reduced their own funding but said earlier this year that Health Boards would top it up to ensure cash was maintained.

However, a Freedom of Information request by the Scottish Conservatives has shown that, in several health board areas in Scotland, this has not happened.

The biggest cut is in Lanarkshire. Spending from central government and the NHS board amounts to a cut of £700,000 on 2015-16. Funding has also gone down in Dumfries and Galloway, Fife, Grampian, Orkney, Shetland and the Western Isles.

This is despite the fact Ms Robison said in January that she would be "maintaining alcohol and drugs treatment performance at existing levels across ADP locales."

Scottish Conservative lifestyle spokesman Brian Whittle said:

"When she announced this changes, Shona Robsion could not have been clearer – overall spending on alcohol and substance misuse would be maintained at existing levels across Scotland.

"It has taken our own research to show this is simply not the case. A fall of nearly three quarters of a million pounds in some areas can only mean that support for drug and drink addiction is being cut.

"Cutting funding on alcohol and drug support is a false economy – because people with addictions often cost far more to the justice system and the NHS, not to mention to themselves, if they do not get treatment earlier on.

"Once again, we see SNP pledges falling apart at the seams.

"The Scottish Government must now urgently review the funding of this vital projects to assess whether people who need support are not getting it because of these cuts."

Please see a copy of Shona Robison's letter on ADP funding, dated January 16th.

In it, Robison wrote:

"From the increased board baseline budgets we would expect a total of £15 million to also go towards supporting these efforts and maintain the overall spending on addressing alcohol and substance misuse, maintaining alcohol and drugs treatment performance at existing levels across ADP locales."

Document including full figures of ADP funding:

<http://www.scottishconservatives.com/adp-funding/>

Spending cuts are as follows:

NHS Lanarkshire: -£693,740

NHS Grampian: -£243,922

NHS Dumfries and Galloway: -£233,834

NHS Western Isles: -£130,510

NHS Fife: -£125,000

NHS Orkney: -£68,843

NHS Shetland: -£66,515

[Debbie Abrahams response to Joseph Rowntree Foundation report showing Tory Government's two child benefit limit could push 200,000 children into poverty](#)

Debbie

Abrahams MP, Labour's Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary, commenting on the Joseph Rowntree Foundation report, which shows the Tory Government's two child benefit limit could push 200,000 children into poverty, said:

"Labour is calling on the Tories to scrap this inhumane policy, which will have a devastating impact upon many families on the lowest incomes in our society.

"An arbitrary cap on the number of children that the Government will help families to bring up is not only cruel, but is bad policy. This evidence shows that it will increase child poverty.

"As 90 per cent of lone parents are female it is a further example of how these six years of wasted austerity have been borne on the backs of low income mothers.

"That's why Labour will stand up for low income families, including providing free school meals to all primary school children."

Government must bring back sensible rules on term-time holidays

The Supreme Court has found in favour of a local authority that has fined a parent for taking his daughter on holiday during term-time.

A Labour Government would give leaseholders security from rip-off ground rents – Healey

John Healey MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Housing, commenting on new government statistics showing that there are four million leasehold dwellings in England, said:

"These new figures confirm for the first time the

scale of leasehold ownership in England.

“Home-owners who own their home as leaseholders are currently unprotected from rip-off rises in ‘ground rents’ from developers or management companies.

“At its worst this is little better than legalised extortion and too many leaseholders are having to pay hefty bills as a result.

Under a Labour Government this sharp practice would end.

“This is unfinished business for Labour – we gave leaseholders more protection in government, but the continuing problem now means we must do more.

“A Labour Government would give leaseholders security from rip-off ground rents and end the routine use of leasehold ownership in new housing developments.”

Working people deserve better than Tory failure – Andrew Gwynne

Andrew Gwynne MP, responding to Theresa May’s speech at the launch of the Tory local elections campaign, said:

“The Tories cannot give Britain the change we need. Theresa May talks of a country that works for everyone, but for the last seven years the Tories have failed ordinary working people and plunged our public services into crisis.

“When Theresa May says she has a plan for Britain, what she means is a plan to run the NHS into the ground, squeeze people’s living standards, reintroduce unfair selection in our schools and drive us towards a risky Brexit which threatens jobs, growth and workers’ rights.

“Theresa May’s claims on Council Tax are misleading. The truth is that where Labour controls the local council, households will pay on average £336 less next year than those living in Tory areas. People are better off with a Labour council.

“Working people deserve better than Tory failure – only Labour will stand up for them and their families.”