

SAMH'S VIEW:

COUNSELLING IN SCHOOLS

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POLICY LEAD

CAROLYN
LOCHHEAD

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ABOUT THE SAMH'S VIEW SERIES

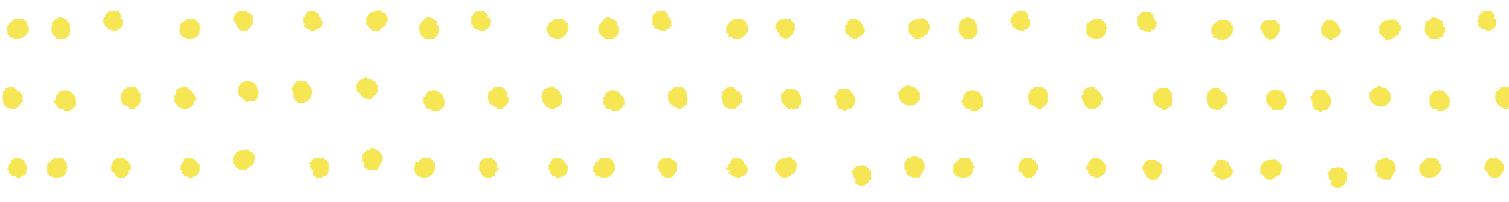
SAMH's View statements set out SAMH's position on a particular policy topic. They are produced by the Public Affairs team.

Context

The Scottish Government's Programme for Scotland 2018-2019 committed to investing £60 million in additional school counselling services.¹ This will include 350 school counsellors and 250 school nurses to support the wellbeing of pupils. Children and young people in Northern Ireland and Wales have had access to school-based counselling since 2007 and 2008 respectively.

Key points

- In Northern Ireland school based counselling was introduced in all post primary schools in 2007 and in Welsh secondary schools from 2008.²
- In England the Department for Education has issued guidance stating that over time, all schools should make counselling services available to their pupils.³
- An evaluation of schools-based counselling in Wales showed that counselling was associated with significant reductions in psychological distress across each of the areas in which it was introduced.⁴
- Other organisations, such as the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy⁵, the Scottish Children's Service Coalition (SCSC)⁶ and Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights)⁷, support the provision of counselling in secondary schools.
- More than 250,000 children in Scotland have no access to school-based counselling services, and fourteen local authorities have no on-site counsellors.⁸
- Based on costs from England, SAMH estimates that providing counselling in all Scotland's secondary schools would require an initial investment of £9m.



SAMH calls for:

- By 2020, counselling services to be provided across Scotland's secondary schools.

Further detail:

OFFICIAL GUIDANCE	SAMH RESEARCH	FURTHER INFO
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Scottish Government, Mental Health Strategy 2017-2027Scottish Government, The Mental Health of Children and Young People, 2005UK Government, Counselling in schools: a blueprint for the future, 2015Welsh Assembly Government, School-based Counselling Services in Wales a National Strategy, 2008Northern Ireland Executive, Independent Counselling Service for Schools (ICSS), Handbook, 2012Scottish Government, Delivering for Today, Investing for Tomorrow, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none">In Their Own Words: the mental health of children and young people in Scotland (2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Prof Mick Cooper, University of Strathclyde, School-based counselling in UK Secondary Schools: A review and critical evaluation, 2013BACP, School Based Counselling For All, 2015

Notes

¹ Scottish Government, [Delivering for Today, Investing for Tomorrow](#), September 2018

² Prof Mick Cooper, University of Strathclyde, [School-based counselling in UK Secondary Schools: A review and critical evaluation](#), 2013

³ Department for Education, [Counselling in Schools: a Blueprint for the Future](#), 2016

⁴ Welsh Government, [Evaluation of the Welsh School-Based Counselling Strategy](#), 2011

⁵ BACP, [Media release 31/03/17](#)

⁶ SCSC, [Manifesto for the Scottish Local Authority Elections May 2017](#), 2017

⁷ Together, [Scottish Schools lacking mental health provision](#), 2017

⁸ BBC Investigation, [School Counselling Support "Patchy"](#), August 2017