



together

Scottish Alliance for
Children's Rights

Mr Duncan McNeil MSP
Health and Sport Committee
T3.60, Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

21st April 2015

Dear Mr McNeil MSP

Re: Call for views on the Carers (Scotland) Bill

Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights) is an alliance of children's charities that works to improve the awareness, understanding and implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in Scotland. With over 260 members, our key aims include progressing children's rights at a local and national level through the provision of support and expertise, and providing robust monitoring of UNCRC implementation in Scotland at a national and international level.

With reference to the Carers (Scotland) Bill, our 2014 *State of Children's Rights* report stated that: "*Children's organisations have called for a child rights approach to be taken in the development of this legislation and for it to be used as an opportunity to improve the identification of, and assessment and support for young carers*"ⁱ I have enclosed a copy of this report for your interest.

Therefore, I would like to recommend that the Health and Sport Committee considers in its scrutiny:

- **Undertaking a Child Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA):** A CRIA should be undertaken to ensure that the Bill is fully assessed in terms of its impact on the rights of children.ⁱⁱ This will help to predict, monitor, and if necessary, avoid or mitigate the impact of the Bill on young carers. It will also help the Committee to determine the extent to which the Bill can enhance the identification, assessment of and support for young carers. The Health and

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Sport Committee should refer to the CRIA model which the Scottish Government is currently developing in relation to the new UNCRC duties on Ministers introduced through the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act.

- **Integration with the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act and other legislation:** Furthermore, scrutiny of the Carers (Scotland) Bill should focus on integration with the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act and corresponding guidance. In order to protect, respect and fulfil the rights of young carers, the Carers Bill must be consistent with, and complementary to, existing duties to promote the rights and wellbeing of children and young people. In addition, consideration must be given as to how the Carers (Scotland) Bill interacts with the Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act and the integration of health and social care through the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act.

Please let me know if the Health and Sport Committee would like the support of Together to ensure a child rights approach is taken in scrutinising the Bill and furthering the recommendations included above.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely,



Juliet Harris
Director

ⁱ Together (2014). *State of Children's Rights in Scotland* (pg 46)

ⁱⁱ As highlighted in Together's response to the previous consultation on Carers legislation:
<http://togetherscotland.org.uk/pdfs/Together%20Carers%20Consultation%20Response%20Final.pdf>