

# ABOUT US

## OUR CORE OBJECTIVES

We're committed to advancing the health and wellbeing of children and young people across Scotland. Our Strategic Plan 2024-30 outlines three core objectives that guide our work and impact:

## HEALTH RIGHTS DEFENDERS

We champion the healthcare rights of children and young people, inspired by the UNCRC and the EACH Charter. Through education, advocacy, and collaboration, we empower children, parents, and carers to understand and defend their rights. We work alongside our young volunteers to ensure their voices are at the centre of our work and of health rights development and promotion in Scotland.

## EMPOWERING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

We deliver tailored Programmes and Training to improve life experiences for children—especially those with health conditions or care experience. Our approach promotes management, resilience, and informed choices. By integrating health-related and age-appropriate resources, we help children understand their health and wellbeing, enabling them to thrive and become the best version of themselves.

## COLLABORATION FOR CHANGE

We lead and facilitate partnerships across sectors to nurture good practice and influence policy. By working with families, professionals, and national bodies, we advocate for child-centred services and transition support. Our collaborative efforts aim to shape inclusive, trauma-informed, and rights-based systems that reflect the lived experiences of children and their carers.

These objectives reflect our **vision**: the right of every child to the best possible health.



Day to day management and operations are delegated to the Chief Executive Officer and Company Secretary, Helen Forrest, who is accountable through the line management structure to the Board which is made up of the Directors as registered on Companies House.

## THE BOARD

The Directors during the year and at the date of this report were:

Chair	Maggie Simpson
Vice Chair	Euan Forbes (stepped down 14 August 2024)
Treasurer	Derek Quirk
Trustee	Helen Bauld (stepped down 30 June 2025)
Trustee	Patricia Jackson
Trustee	Katherine McKay (stepped down 12 October 2024)
Trustee	Andy Young
Trustee	Albert Yeung (appointed 12 October 2024)
Trustee	Layla Robinson (appointed 6 January 2025)
Trustee	Julia Whitaker (appointed 6 January 2025)
Trustee	Jenny Price (appointed 27 February 2025)

# INTRODUCTION MAGGIE SIMPSON, CHAIR

This year has marked a pivotal moment for Children's Health Scotland as we began implementing our new Strategic Plan 2024-2030. It's a bold and ambitious roadmap that builds on our legacy while setting a clear direction for the future—ensuring every child in Scotland has the right to the best possible health.

As Chair, I've had the privilege of meeting many of the children, young people, carers, and professionals we support. Their stories are powerful reminders of why our work matters. Whether it's a young person learning to advocate for their healthcare rights or a carer gaining confidence through our training, the impact of our services is both profound and personal.

We are proud to be Scotland's only charity dedicated to promoting, informing, and campaigning on the healthcare needs and rights of children and young people with health conditions. Our work is rooted in Article 24 of the UNCRC, which enshrines every child's right to the highest attainable standard of health. But rights only matter if children and families know they exist—and feel empowered to act on them. That's where we come in.

Over the past year, we've focused on five strategic priorities:

- Expertise and Information
- Voice
- Improving Life Experiences
- Training and Resources
- Health-Related Play

These priorities guide everything we do—from our Health Rights Service and Self-Management Skills Programmes to our support for care-experienced children and young people. Each service is designed to be inclusive, responsive, and impactful, helping children and families navigate healthcare with confidence and clarity.

Despite the ongoing cost-of-living crisis, we've remained financially resilient. This year, we achieved a gross income of £343,165 and an expenditure of £335,485. Our funds under management remain satisfactory,

thanks to careful stewardship and the unwavering commitment of our staff, volunteers, and supporters. We are especially grateful to our funders—including the Scottish Government through the Children, Young People and Families Early Intervention Fund (administered by CORRA), The Robertson Trust, the National Lottery Community Fund, the Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (ALLIANCE), NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde, and the Agnes Hunter Trust. We also thank the many other trusts, foundations, and donors whose generous contributions—large and small—enable us to support the health and wellbeing of children, young people, and families across Scotland.

Looking ahead, we're preparing to celebrate our 50th anniversary in October 2026—a milestone that invites reflection and renewal. Our new Strategy will continue to guide us through the next five years, reinforcing our ambition to be the leading children's health charity in Scotland. We've also updated our Constitution to ensure our governance remains strong and fit for purpose.

Children's Health Scotland exists to ensure that every child—regardless of background, ability, or circumstance—can access the healthcare, education, and support they need to thrive. As we move forward, we remain committed to delivering services that are visionary, brave, informed, and above all, compassionate.

Thank you for being part of this journey.

*MASimp*  
**Maggie Simpson**  
Chair, Children's Health Scotland



## THE NUMBERS WHICH ADD UP TO FUND OUR WORK IN SCOTLAND

Treasurer Finance Officer: Derek Quirk, Alison Glass FCCA  
Independent Examiner Bankers: Jeffrey Crawford & Co, Royal Bank of Scotland

	2025	2024
<b>INCOME</b>		
Voluntary Income	£310,334	£304,324
Charitable Income	£24,418	£35,975
Investments	£4,607	£2,866
	£339,359	£343,165
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Raising Funds	£30,855	£27,449
Charitable Activities	£290,127	£308,036
	£320,982	£335,485
<b>ASSETS AND LIABILITIES</b>		
Current Assets	£187,101	£203,892
Current Liabilities	£12,592	£52,488
Net Current Assets	£174,509	£151,404
Fixed Assets	£2,820	£7,548
<b>TOTAL CHARITY FUNDS</b>	£177,329	£158,952

## RESERVES POLICY

It is the policy of the charity to maintain unrestricted reserves—our free reserves—at a level that ensures financial stability and continuity of operations. The Board of Directors considers an appropriate level to be between three and six months of operational expenditure. Based on the budgeted expenditure for the year ending 31 March 2026, our current reserves remain broadly within this target range.

## A HUGE THANK YOU AND BIG HUGS TO ALL OUR FUNDERS

We are sincerely grateful to all the funders who make our work possible. Our main sources of funding over the past year have included the Scottish Government through the Children, Young People and Families Early Intervention Fund (administered by CORRA), The Robertson Trust, the National Lottery Community Fund, the Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (ALLIANCE), NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde, and the Agnes Hunter Trust. We also thank the many other trusts, foundations, and donors whose generous contributions—large and small—enable us to support the health and wellbeing of children, young people, and families across Scotland.

## THE ROBERTSON TRUST

Thanks to The Robertson Trust's generous unrestricted funding, we've been able to deliver vital services to carers, families, and children and young people across Scotland. Their support enables us to respond where need is greatest—helping carers build resilience, nurture relationships, and strengthen emotional wellbeing through trauma-informed workshops and programmes. From self-management skills for children with health conditions to inclusive family events and rights-based support, we create safe spaces where families feel connected, informed, and empowered. We're deeply grateful to The Robertson Trust for helping us to champion dignity, fairness, and the right to the best possible health.



**Registered office:**  
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Find us on:



We acknowledge the support of the Scottish Government through CYPFIF and ALEC Fund Grant.



## OUR ANNUAL REVIEW AND IMPACT REPORT 2024-25

Our values reflect the way we want to work.  
We are visionary, friendly, brave, informed, and skilled.





# HEALTH RIGHTS SERVICE



Every child and young person has the right to the best possible health—regardless of who they are, where they live, or what they believe. But rights only matter when they're understood and acted upon. Our Health Rights Service helps children, families, and carers understand their healthcare rights and feel confident in using them. Grounded in Article 24 of the UNCRC and the EACH Charter, we work to ensure no child is denied access to the care they need. Through advocacy, education, and collaboration, we make healthcare rights visible, accessible, and empowering.



**36,468**  
PEOPLE RECEIVED  
LEAFLETS AND  
PUBLICATIONS.

## HEALTHCARE RIGHTS

**21,026**  
PEOPLE SUPPORTED  
WITH HEALTHCARE  
RIGHTS  
INFORMATION.



**7,185**  
FAMILIES RECEIVED  
HEALTHCARE  
RIGHTS  
INFORMATION.

**7,866**  
CHILDREN  
SUPPORTED  
WITH  
HEALTHCARE  
RIGHTS.



**906**  
PROFESSIONALS  
ATTENDED CHS  
EVENTS ON RIGHTS.

**3,524**  
PROFESSIONALS RECEIVED  
INFORMATION VIA DELEGATE  
PACKS, LEAFLETS, AND TOOLKITS.

WE NETWORKED WITH  
ORGANISATIONS TAKING  
FORWARD THE RIGHTS OF  
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE  
WITH HEALTH CONDITIONS.



"My Health, My Rights is important because it shows children, no matter if we are sick, that we matter and have a voice. It helps us feel seen and heard, and reminds adults that our health and wellbeing should be respected. Knowing our rights means we can speak up, ask questions, and feel safe when we need help. It's not just about being healthy—it's about being understood and treated fairly. Every child deserves that."

— S1 pupil, Bishopbriggs Academy

## SANDY MEETS THE TEDDY HOSPITAL

This is a beautifully illustrated children's book that helps young readers feel more confident about medical experiences. Sandy, age 5, is nervous about getting his blood taken. With support from Health Play Specialist Melody and Bear, he visits the Teddy Hospital to explore medical equipment through play and learn about his health rights. The story gently introduces children to healthcare settings, while a dedicated section for adults offers practical advice on supporting anxious children. This rights-based resource promotes understanding, resilience, and empowerment—making healthcare less scary and more child-friendly.



# HEALTH AND WELLBEING SERVICE



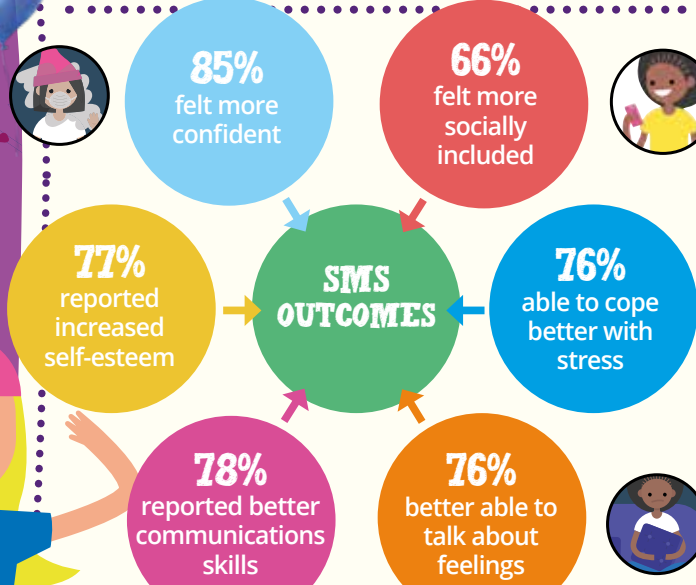
Our Health and Wellbeing Service supports children, young people, and families across Scotland to feel confident and informed in any healthcare setting—whether visiting a doctor, dentist, hospital, or specialist. Alongside our award-winning Self-Management Skills (SMS) Programmes, we offer tailored 1:1 support, health-related play, and practical resources to reduce anxiety and build resilience. This rights-based approach reflects Article 24 of the UNCRC, the EACH Charter, and Scotland's Promise—ensuring children are informed, involved, and respected in their care. We help children feel safe, included, and empowered to manage their health and wellbeing.

## SMS PROGRAMMES

**128**  
children & young people

**100%**  
made progress towards their personal goals

**91%**  
know more about health rights



## HEALTH & WELLBEING

**12** SMS:HUB sessions attended by  
**186** CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

**3,191** CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE and **3,343** FAMILIES supported through our CYP Health and Wellbeing Service.

SMS Programmes delivered to children and young people across Scotland. **123**

**1** FLOURISH Programme delivered in partnership with the Dundee International Women's Centre.



## HEALTH RIGHTS DEFENDERS

Over the past year we've established a vibrant group of young volunteers—our Health Rights Defenders. These children and young people, many of whom have completed an SMS Programme, are now actively shaping our work. From supporting peers to contributing to events like Scottish Children's Health Week and our Parliamentary Reception, they're helping develop resources like the My Health, My Rights Charter and ensuring youth voices are heard across healthcare.

"SMS:CONNECT is a high-quality, evidence-based resource that fills a vital gap in support for children and young people with chronic health conditions. In our Paediatric Psychology and Neurology services, we regularly recommend this service for those who may not meet CAMHS thresholds but are still vulnerable. The programme helps build resilience, reduces isolation, and promotes wellbeing. The positive, accepting atmosphere is transformative for many young people. SMS:CONNECT is now a core part of our referral pathway—and its continued availability is essential for improving long-term outcomes."

— Dr Kirsten Verity, Paediatric Neuropsychology Service Lead

# CARE EXPERIENCED SERVICE



We support carers with managing the health issues of children and young people in their care. We offer a range of services, help, information, and activities including: workshops, mini/taster sessions and one-to-one support. We also develop resources to support carers to combat the unique range of vulnerabilities of children and young people in their care.

**893** professionals including local authorities and Independent Fostering Providers received our training resources.

**1,391** parents or carers received healthcare rights information.

**127** professionals attended our events.

## BEAR'S BIG ADVENTURE DAYS

These are joyful, rights-based events designed for kinship families to connect, play, and learn together. Delivered as part of our Looking After Family and Self (LAFS) programme, these days support families to explore self-management skills in fun, inclusive ways—building resilience, confidence, and emotional wellbeing. With activities that promote health rights, shared learning, and peer support, children and carers strengthen their bonds while gaining tools to manage health and stress together. These events are made possible thanks to combined support from a range of funders such as ALLIANCE Scotland and the CYPFEI Fund all of whom are committed to improving outcomes for care-experienced children and their families.



**3,500** Households received information on Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing through the Fostering Network Magazine.

## I'M A STRONG SUPPORTER AND ADVOCATE OF CHILDREN'S HEALTH SCOTLAND

"Always so enthusiastic and friendly to children, parents, and carers. Their events are informative to adults and children and we all learn about the children's rights charter. This helps us to enable children to be confident in speaking up for themselves and knowing they have rights and choices too, regardless of their age. Personally I've found it so helpful to be aware of the child's rights in dealing with different agencies concerning my part in raising a kinship child. The fun and memories we have made at their events will last a lifetime and it has been experiences I'd otherwise not be able to have. They always have a fun way for children to grasp the concept of their ownership over their choices and lives. I'll be a strong supporter and advocate for this group of beautiful people who put children's lives and rights first in all they do."

— Ness Kennedy, Kinship Carer

# CORPORATE SERVICES

Our Corporate Services team is dedicated to implementing best practices and responsible for all the background tasks of the charity. These include: Finance, Payroll, Corporate Governance, Human Resources, Marketing, Fundraising, PR and Community Engagement.

## PUBLICATIONS

**36,468** Children, young people, families, and professionals received our magazine, e-news, and our Annual Review and Impact Report.

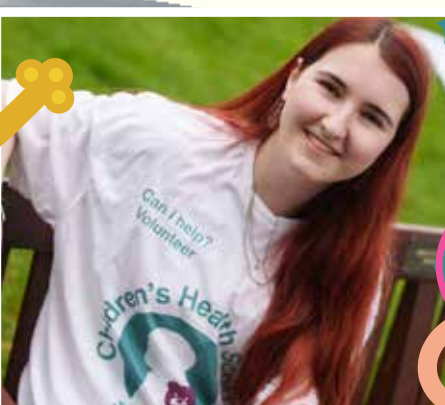


## SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEB

**102,700** Website Pageviews  
**89,182** people viewed our Facebook Posts  
**196,900** reached viewed our X (Twitter) Posts

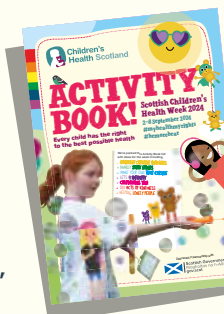
## PARLIAMENTARY RECEPTION

In September 2024, we hosted our My Health, My Rights Parliamentary Reception, sponsored by Ruth Maguire MSP, as part of Scottish Children's Health Week. The event celebrated our Health Rights Defenders—young volunteers living with health conditions—who helped shape our My Health, My Rights Charter. With keynote speeches from Nicola Killean, Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland, and our own Michelle Wilson, the reception highlighted the importance of children's health rights. Guests engaged in interactive activities, including rights-based games and creative displays, reinforcing our commitment to ensuring every child feels seen, heard, and supported in healthcare.



## SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S HEALTH WEEK & AWARDS

Scottish Children's Health Week 2024 celebrated five years of championing children's health rights with a vibrant week of themed activities. We distributed over 5,000 Activity Books packed with creative ideas and resources, thanks to our brilliant partners including Learning Through Landscapes, Winston's Wish, Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights), Family Fund, Action for Children, the British Red Cross, and the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland. Each day focused on a wellbeing theme—Be Active, Brave, Calm, Happy, Friendly, Kind, and Helpful—encouraging children and families to explore their health rights in fun, meaningful ways. Seven inspiring award winners were also celebrated at Bear's Tea Party hosted at the Balmoral Hotel!



## BEAR'S TEA PARTY

