



Scottish
Communities
for Health
& Wellbeing

Communities with the Power to Build Health

Communities play a crucial role in tackling health inequalities and in promoting health and well-being. The Covid-19 pandemic has seen an outpouring of mutual aid and volunteering. This has often been most effective where there are already local organisations whose central focus is on improving the health of their communities.

Scottish Communities for Health and Wellbeing (SCHW) is a partnership for all community led organisations who share that central focus on health. We are currently 71 organisations from all over Scotland. We are independent organisations, rooted in our communities.

We often play a key 'anchor' role in communities, building capacity for wider action, not focusing on only one issue or group.

Our organisations

(Based upon a survey of our network organisations in autumn 2019)

We all provide activities in our communities that preserve and improve **health** and **well-being**. For most of us these are the main focus of our work.



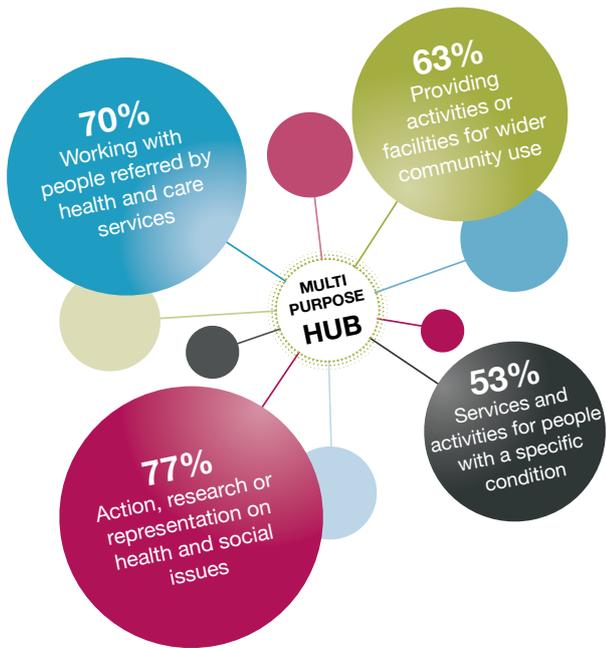
OUR MAIN FOCUS

70%



MOST OR SOME ACTIVITIES

97%



But we are also **multi-purpose hubs** for our communities, involved in a wide range of community activity.

We are **rooted in the communities** that we serve; a high proportion of our Boards belong to them

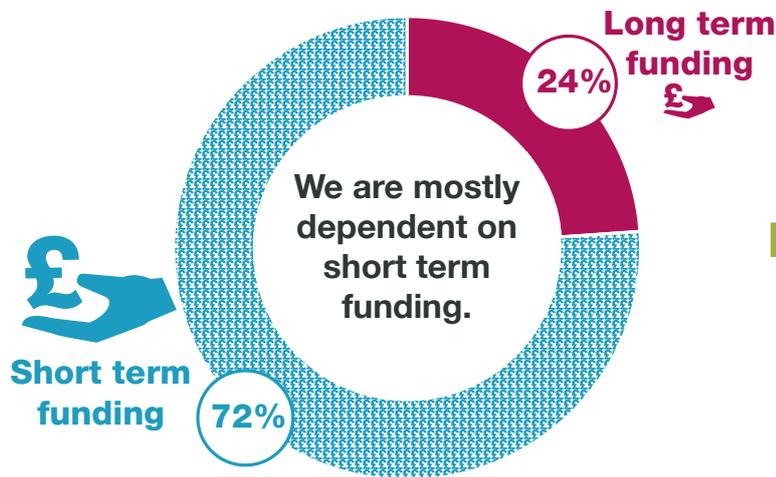


We **reach hundreds of thousands** of people in our communities each year



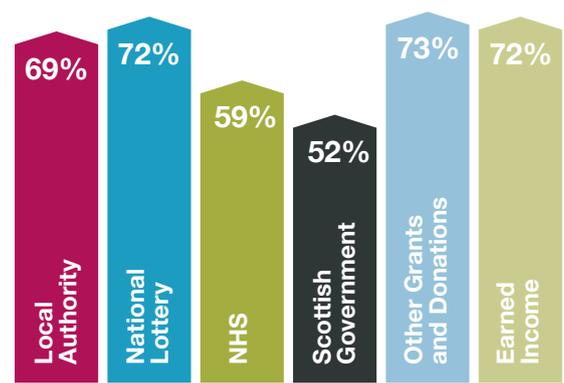
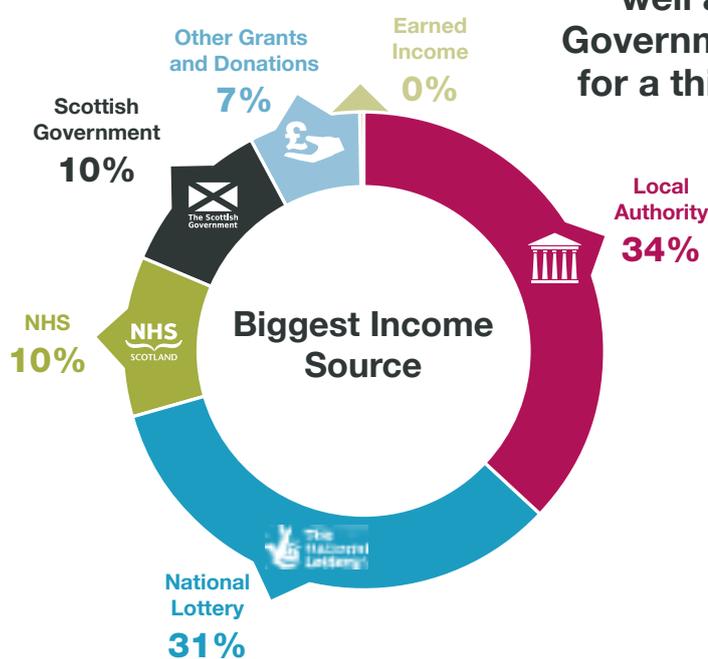
250,000 People

take part in or benefit directly from our activities



Almost all of us say that **funding is one of the biggest challenges** that we face in sustaining our work and organisations.

The National Lottery is the most **common single source of funding**, well ahead of the NHS and Scottish Government. It's the biggest single funder for a third and almost three quarters get some funds from it.



Community-led health organisations tackle health inequalities, prevent ill health and improve well-being in distinctive ways:

- We reach people who require support that is different from traditional approaches
- We work with people to provide individual, holistic solutions to deep-seated multiple problems
- We offer people the opportunity to build a personal pathway to improving their health and well-being
- We foster social connections and overcome isolation.

During the Covid pandemic local health organisations have been able to mobilise and support action because they:

- Involve and are close to communities.
- Offer an established organisational base and a professional approach, where required.
- Have knowledge of, and commitment to tackling, individual and collective barriers to health and wellbeing and to health equality.

Our Blueprint for community-led action

We believe that the time has come to strengthen the future ability of communities to meet challenges, by recognising their continuing role in improving health and by providing them with sustainable support.

SCHW is therefore submitting a Blueprint to the Scottish Government. Developed in consultation with the whole SCHW network, our Blueprint is a proposal for long term national investment in the core costs of community health organisations. This would go directly into communities, not into a new intermediary body.

Our action plan

Our Blueprint proposes the establishment of a National Partnership Agreement between the Scottish Government and SCHW. This would set criteria for groups and their core costs to be supported by the programme. It would set out obligations for accountability and the management of quality and risk, for every group involved.

The first full year would see the Scottish Government investing £1.74 million in 25 community-led health improvement anchor organisations – generating overall benefits worth £10 million in health and wellbeing improvement straight into local communities. Using the experience of those already involved to build new capacity, we would grow this to 100 organisations. The cost would still represent less than 1% of Scottish Primary Care Services budgets.

Delivering national priorities

‘A strong and resilient community- led health sector has effectively contributed to policy and practice to improve the health and wellbeing of those in greatest need’

(‘A Fairer Healthier Scotland: 2017 – 2022’: Health and Social Care Delivery Plan).



Our Vision for the future

Starting with our Blueprint we want to work with the Scottish Government and the NHS to achieve a new vision: a Scotland in which in all of our most disadvantaged communities (and in others where needs are identified and agreed) there is the capacity to take action. A vision in which:

Communities have:

- Long term support that enables and empowers them to take responsibility for their health and wellbeing.
- Core resources which give them a base from which to develop actions to meet local challenges with local support
- Expertise which allows them and their partners to encourage and support new organisations in underrepresented communities.

Communities can:

- Respond speedily and flexibly to future crises and act as hubs for a broader response
- Have close, trusting working relationships with local health services
- Offer activities which raise wellbeing, prevent ill-health, and give support in the community
- Foster social connections, protecting people's long term mental and physical health
- Continue to reach out and include people who are 'easy to ignore'
- Encourage people to build personal pathways to improving their health and wellbeing
- Act directly on the social and economic causes of health inequality
- Facilitate and initiate community action for renewal and empowerment.

Government can:



1 More data in our Blueprint: [http://www.schw.co.uk/Blueprint layout V3.0 final.pdf](http://www.schw.co.uk/Blueprint%20layout%20V3.0%20final.pdf)

2 [http://www.schw.co.uk/SCHW final version Covid Case Studies \(1\).pdf](http://www.schw.co.uk/SCHW%20final%20version%20Covid%20Case%20Studies%20(1).pdf)

3 [http://www.schw.co.uk/Blueprint layout V3.0 final.pdf](http://www.schw.co.uk/Blueprint%20layout%20V3.0%20final.pdf)

What SCHW does now

SCHW has developed a successful consortium approach, bringing together different partnerships of organisations to co design and seek funding for larger programmes,

This offers organisations the opportunity to:

- Secure contracts or funding that would not otherwise be available.
- Extend their service provision into new fields.
- Gain new expertise or extend their activities

Social prescribing

Currently our major partnership is SPRING Social Prescribing. We are working with the Northern Ireland Healthy Living Centres Alliance, and funded by the National Lottery Community Fund. In Scotland nine local groups around the country are developing and demonstrating the benefits of a community-led approach to social prescribing.

Key elements of community led social prescribing

- All delivery partners are locally run organisations working with and for communities
- The social prescriber is an integral part of the local anchor organisation
- Social prescriptions are co-created with the participant – devising a personal ‘health pathway’
- Delivery organisations adopt a community development approach to health care
- Sharing learning across all partners throughout project
- Maximum flexibility is built in through the funding model to facilitate local developments



Join us

If you are involved in a community-led organisation delivering services and activities that tackle health inequalities, prevent ill-health and promote well-being, please consider becoming part of our alliance. Details are on our website.



An alliance of community-led health improvement organisations

@ScotCommHW
www.schw.co.uk

SPRING: <https://www.springsp.org>

For further information contact: john@schw.co.uk

Registered Scottish Charity: No SC044327