

PREVENTING CHILD POVERTY TO REDUCE HEALTH INEQUALITIES

EuroHealthNet Country Exchange Visit

Date: 19 – 20 June 2024

Location: Glasgow, Scotland

Introduction

Children living in poverty face inadequate nutrition, substandard housing, limited healthcare access, and heightened exposure to pollution, resulting in poorer health. Consequently, they constitute one of the most vulnerable demographics, necessitating targeted efforts to overcome health inequalities. Given that 24.7% of children in the EU faced the risk of poverty or social exclusion in 2022¹, measures destined to tackle child poverty across Europe are urgent.

The introduction of the [European Child Guarantee](#) (ECG) in 2021 underscores the EU's commitment to support breaking the cycle of inequality, with the health sector playing a crucial role in implementing multi-sectoral policies to uplift communities and improve health outcomes. The ECG aims to support children in need across various domains including ensuring access to free early childhood education and care, education, healthcare, as well as ensuring effective access to healthy nutrition and adequate housing. Leveraging the ECG presents an opportunity to alleviate child poverty and mitigate associated health inequalities effectively.

Elevating children out of poverty requires a multifaceted, intersectoral approach, acknowledging the diverse factors contributing to this societal challenge. Factors such as low parental wages, limited education, or residing in rural areas can contribute to children growing up in poverty. However, health services often adopt conventional approaches, focusing on the resolution of existing issues over preventive measures to address child poverty and its effects.

Scotland's adoption of a whole-government approach stands as a commendable model in this regard, exemplified by the [Child Poverty \(Scotland\) Act 2017](#) and its statutory targets. Through this lens, participants will examine innovative policy frameworks and evidence-based interventions, fostering cross-border exchange to drive tangible progress in addressing child poverty and reducing health inequalities across Europe. Emphasising prevention over reactionary measures, participants will explore the transformative role of health service

¹ [25% of children at risk of poverty or social exclusion in 2022 - Eurostat \(europa.eu\)](#)

providers and public health initiatives in addressing the socio-economic determinants of child poverty, paving the way for sustainable change and improved health outcomes.

In this context, this Country Exchange Visit (CEV), hosted by our member [Public Health Scotland](#), offers a platform for representatives of national or regional public health agencies from across the EU to:

- Explore the main challenges in addressing and mitigating child poverty and its associated health inequalities on local, national and European levels.
- Share best practices in tackling child poverty as a public health challenge.
- Examine Scotland's innovative approach to addressing child poverty through intersectoral collaboration, and how this model can be adapted and implemented by other health services.
- Strategise on how to foster an environment conducive to addressing child poverty through collaborative and targeted efforts.

Additionally, participants will learn about Glasgow's pioneering initiatives aimed at promoting child health in cities, where poverty eradication is integrated into all policies, thus emphasising its significance. Furthermore, attendees will have the opportunity to visit an organisation offering support to vulnerable pregnant women through financial guidance, aiming to prevent them and their children from slipping into poverty. Lastly, participants will hear from NHS Scotland, discovering how health services serve as anchor's for communities, empowering them to take a proactive stance in combating child poverty.

About Country Exchange Visits

EuroHealthNet Country Exchange Visits are member-only events that are open to senior delegates. Participants should be comfortable making contributions in English.

The aim is two-fold, namely (1) to exchange good practices and policies on selected core themes and showcase members' work to a selection of senior European colleagues and, at the same time, (2) discuss how related EU policy instruments may support at national, regional and local levels.

This event is free to attend, but places are limited. For any questions or to express interest to participate, please contact [Lina Papartyte](#).

Travel and accommodation can be reimbursed for a limited number of participants, get in touch with [Lina Papartyte](#) to check your eligibility.



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Agenda

Day 1 – Wednesday 19 June 2024

Venue: The Studio, 67 Hope Street, Glasgow, G2 6AE

08.45 Registration

09.00 Welcome and Introductions

- Ruth Glassborow, Director, *Public Health Scotland*
- Caroline Costongs, Director, *EuroHealthNet*
- Tour de table, expectations for this visit

Session 1: Setting the scene: progress and challenges addressing child poverty for better health

Moderated by: [Caroline Costongs, Director, EuroHealthNet](#)

09.30 Setting the scene, *Ruth Glassborow, Public Health Scotland*

09.50 Understanding and overcoming intergenerational poverty, *tbc, Luxembourg Institute of Socio-Economic Research*

10.10 Tools and initiatives from EU Institutions, followed by a discussion on how they can be used to support (sub-)national organisations to tackle child poverty, *Lina Papartyte, EuroHealthNet*

10.30 Break (Tea/coffee)

10.45 **Roundtable discussion:**

- An overview of your country's progress and challenges in reducing the impact of child poverty on health (key points for sharing on 1 slide per participating organisation). Both in addressing child poverty for public health and addressing the health impact of child poverty.

11.55 Break

12.00 Scotland's approach to addressing Child Poverty, *Julie Humphries, Deputy Director, Tackling Child Poverty, Scottish Government*

- Setting the policy context to drive action. This session will include The Child Poverty Scotland (2017) Act, child poverty targets, the cross cutting nature of the work underway, breaking down silo working, aligning the work of Local Government and local Health Boards with Scottish Government, governance and lessons learned.
- Learning: How do you create the environment to address child poverty working in a collaborative and focused way, and move beyond simply generating child poverty targets?

Roundtable Discussion on Scotland's approach: inviting delegate's to critique and share knowledge and experience on addressing Child poverty as a Public Health and United Nations Convention of Childrens Rights (UNCRC) challenge.

13.15 Lunch

Session 2: Enhancing child health in cities

Moderated by: [Public Health Scotland](#)

Site visit 1: Glasgow City Council

13.45 Walk to Glasgow City Council, 38 Albion Street, Glasgow G1 1LH (20 minute walk approximately)

14.15 Glasgow City Council hosted by John Sherry

For the city of Glasgow, child poverty is no longer an item on the agenda, it is the agenda!

Poverty and health inequalities in Glasgow have been an intergenerational challenge. You will hear about the city's shift to preventing poverty which has been a long time in the making. A whole family, whole system, data and evidence informed approach to moving from "dealing with crisis" to "avoiding crisis" is being taken.

During this visit members will hear about the approach being taken to achieve a 10 year ambition to eradicate poverty in Glasgow.

This visit includes the opportunity to meet the Glasgow Helps Team, who will share some stories about the people they support.

Roundtable discussion: You will have the chance to share your own experiences and challenges associated with tackling child poverty to improve health in cities across Europe and to learn with colleagues who are working to eradicate child poverty in Glasgow.

17.00 End of the Day 1

19.00 Dinner in Glasgow restaurant

Day 2 – Thursday 20 June 2024

Session 3: Empowering health services: addressing child poverty as a public health imperative

Moderated by: Public Health Scotland

09.00 Site Visit 2: Maternity Matters Blossom Service, Govan

Venue: Money Matters, 18-20 Orkney Street, Govan, Glasgow, G51 2BX

Meet the NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Maternity Services and Money Matters teams collaborating to provide financial advice and support to maximise the income of vulnerable pregnant women.

10.30 Income Security Roundtable discussion

Approaches to ensure household income is not a barrier to good health for families with children. The role of health services in Scotland and across Europe.

11.15 Break (Tea/coffee)

11.30 Walk to Pearce Institute, 840-860 Govan Rd, Govan, Glasgow G51 3UU

11.45 Health Board actions to address the drivers of child poverty, Public Health Scotland

- Overview: Health Services as Anchor Institutions²
- Practical examples of NHS Scotland contributions to addressing the drivers of child poverty: input from Local Health Boards

12.30 Lunch

13.00 Final Discussion: reflecting on the visit

Moderated by: Caroline Costongs, Director, EuroHealthNet

- What have we learned from each other?
 - Addressing child poverty to improve health outcomes
 - Protecting and preventing health harms associated with child poverty
- How will we use this learning?

13.50 Closing Remarks

14.00 End

² "Anchor institutions are large, public sector organisations that are called such because they are unlikely to relocate and have a significant stake in a geographical area – they are effectively 'anchored' in their surrounding community. They have sizeable assets that can be used to support local community wealth building and development, through procurement and spending power, workforce and training, and buildings and land." The Health Foundation