

SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL

This report by the RCN in Scotland on the outsourcing of health services from prisons to NHS Scotland is an important contribution to our continued advocacy for an improvement in the way we care for vulnerable people in our society.

Soroptimists in Scotland are involved with the Scottish Government to change the way in which women involved with the Criminal Justice System (CJS) are treated.

Community Orders are far more cost-effective than imprisonment for those women. It is of great concern therefore that the health facilities needed by so many are not available even within the prisons. In theory availability of services in the community should be better, but it is all too commonplace for them to be lacking there as well.

As community programmes for women in the CJS roll out this lack of provision must be addressed urgently otherwise vulnerable women will continue to be unable to access appropriate support services.

Women both in and out of prison (and men as well) should be treated and managed appropriately for their drug, alcohol, mental health and all health issues. Unless we do so many will continue to re-offend. This is not acceptable for the individuals concerned, their families nor society at large.

I urge the RCN to continue to evaluate health care provision and to lobby for the improvements needed so badly both inside and outside prison. I am sure that Soroptimists in Scotland will continue to lobby for appropriate facilities within and outwith prison.

Dr J Kay Richmond FRCGP FFPHM

Chairman

UK Programme Action Committee

Soroptimist International

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