

## **Statement on behalf of the Scottish Directors of Public Health on the release of the Report of the UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights in the United Kingdom**

The final report of the UN Special Rapporteur released today presents a stark picture of the impact of poverty on the everyday lives of people in the UK and the communities in which they live.

As Directors of Public Health, we recognise that the health of the population is determined by the types of social, economic, and cultural factors described in the report. We understand the importance of taking action which will help protect the health of those who are already living in extreme poverty. At the same time, we also recognise the need to work across civic society to address the factors that create or sustain such inequality.

We welcome the fact that the Special Rapporteur recognises that in Scotland there is a real opportunity to use the powers vested in the Scottish Government to address the underlying social and economic determinants of poverty and to foster human rights based approaches to health and wellbeing.

The Scottish Directors of Public Health have already committed themselves and their teams to work with others to help reduce inequality and protect children from the impacts of poverty. Work is underway to outline how we can strengthen our existing contributions to these endeavours.

Central to this will be to embed our contributions in the context of the Public Health Priorities for Scotland. These shared priorities provide a unique opportunity to work with our partners in the public and third sectors, and communities affected by poverty to reduce its impacts on health. They also drive actions that can change the social and economic factors that lead to poverty and ill-health in the first place.

We will work over the summer to set out more fully what we as Directors of Public Health in Scotland will contribute to meeting the challenges that are identified in this important report.

**Dr Andrew Fraser**  
**Chair, Scottish Directors of Public Health Group**

**23<sup>rd</sup> May 2019**

