Finance Committee

Alcohol (Licensing, Public Health and Criminal Justice) (Scotland) Bill

Submission from RCGP Scotland

The Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) is the academic organisation in the UK for general practitioners. Its aim is to encourage and maintain the highest standards of general medical practice and act as the ‘voice’ of general practitioners on education, training and issues around standards of care for patients.

The College in Scotland came into existence in 1953 (one year after the UK College), when a Scottish Council was created to take forward the College’s interests within the Scottish Health Service. We currently represent over 5100 GP members and Associates in Training throughout Scotland. In addition to a base in Edinburgh, the College in Scotland is represented through five regional faculty offices in Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Inverness, Dundee and Glasgow.

Consultation

1. Did you take part in any consultation exercise preceding the Bill and, if so, did you comment on the financial assumptions made?

Contribution through collaboration but no reference was made to financial assumptions.

2. If applicable, do you believe your comments on the financial assumptions have been accurately reflected in the FM?

N/A

3. Did you have sufficient time to contribute to the consultation exercise?

No.

Costs

4. If the Bill has any financial implications for your organisation, do you believe that they have been accurately reflected in the FM? If not, please provide details.

No.

Section 31 – Offences involving alcohol: notification of offender’s GP:

In addition to the concerns already expressed by RCGP Scotland in earlier consultation about the unintended consequences of this statutory change and the potential implications of having such information in patients’ medical records, the terms of this Bill do not mandate but imply expectation for how this information will
be managed by GPs. The impact of this on both administrative and clinical workload and resource is untested with no account of cost or planning to manage the potential financial cost to GP Practices. RCGP Scotland believes that the costs and further pressure on current resources cannot be accommodated within GP practices' normal working hours. RCGP has highlighted the current concerns with workforce in A Blueprint for Scottish General Practice. Any further impact on resource would need significant financial support from Scottish Government.

5. **Do you consider that the estimated costs and savings set out in the FM are reasonable and accurate?**

RCGP Scotland believes that section 31 merits further investigation in the costs to GP’s.

6. **If applicable, are you content that your organization can meet any financial costs that it might incur as a result of the Bill? If not, how do you think these costs should be met?**

As above, any further impact on resource would need significant financial support from Scottish Government.

7. **Does the FM accurately reflect the margins of uncertainty associated with the Bill’s estimated costs and with the timescales over which they would be expected to arise?**

Not in the context of the comments already made.

**Wider Issues**

8. **Do you believe that the FM reasonably captures any costs associated with the Bill? If not, which other costs might be incurred and by whom?**

As above.