

# Youth Commission on Mental Health Services

## Introduction:

- Scottish Government's Mental Health Strategy 2017-27 calls for a whole system approach to reviewing child and adolescent mental health services.
- Scottish Government had a desire to create services that better meet the mental health needs of young people.
- Young Scot and the Scottish Association for Mental Health worked with young people to get their opinions on mental health services.

## Aims & objectives:

- The project aimed to ensure that young people have a voice and can share their perspectives on improving mental health services.
- Allowing young people to lead this process meant that they would be at the heart of influencing the improvement of services.
- Success looks like 'young people's voices are heard, and they can share their perspectives when it comes to improving mental health services'.

## Implementation & approach:

- The partnership used the Young Scot Co-design approach.
- Twenty-three 15-25-year olds formed a youth commission which lasted 16 months.
- Young people were supported to develop informed insights, ideas, recommendations and solutions for policy and practice.

## Outputs:

- 16 months
- 2,200 hours
- 40 events & workshops
- 250 stakeholders & young people directly engaged with
- 36 recommendations
- 65 actions



[youngscot.net/observatory](http://youngscot.net/observatory)

## Themes:

- Services
- Training
- Education
- Finance, policy and rights
- Community and public opinions

## Outcomes:

- The youth commission took part in discussions, encouraged debate and gathered evidence.
- They produced recommendations on how services can be developed and improved – both now and in the future.
- The young people represented the voices and experiences of other young people and had their say on how mental health services can and should be improved.

## Conclusions:

- It was vital that support was in place for the young people to explore their views, as well as support in place for the partners and stakeholders engaging with them.
- Young people are the experts of their own experiences. They should be involved at the beginning of any process to create policy or services to support them.