



Formal Resignation from the Long Covid Strategic Network

Ministers and colleagues,

It is with regret that **Long Covid Scotland** and **Long Covid Kids** must formally tender our resignation from the Strategic Long Covid Network, due to critical failures in communication, coordination and delivery.

We entered 2025 with the welcome news of further investment.

"...for those suffering from Long Covid, additional £4.5 million to deliver new specialist support across the country for Long Covid, ME, Chronic Fatigue, and other similar conditions"

Shona Robison MSP - Draft Budget 25-26¹

Six months into 2025, the Scottish Government is still debating how to use the £4.5 million in non-recurring, one-year funding.

Despite Health Boards submitting plans as requested, no allocation has been made, and there has been no communication from National Services Scotland (NSS) or Scottish Government on what happens next.

¹ Robinson, S. December 4th 2024, Draft Budget Page 12.

<https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/corporate-report/2024/12/scottish-budget-2025-2026/documents/scottish-budget-2025-26/scottish-budget-2025-26/govscot%3Adocument/scottish-budget-2025-26.pdf>



What was framed as a hopeful investment in December 2024 now stands as a symbol of stalled progress and unmet promises in August 2025.

Meanwhile, services are being decommissioned, waiting lists stretch six months beyond service termination, and multiple Boards have warned of imminent closure – with still no provision at all for children and young people in most areas.

Despite sustained engagement via the Lived Experience Workstream, NSS and Scottish Government have failed to deliver on core network objectives, including:

1. Failure to Respond to Reports

There has been no formal or transparent response from the Scottish Government or NSS – nor any visible action – on key reports including:

- [Accessing Long Covid Services](#) The ALLIANCE²
- [One in Five](#) (CHSS)³

This is especially concerning given that one of these reports was commissioned by the Network's own clinical adviser. Among the findings:

- **82%** struggle to access services
- **72%** lack the necessary support

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<https://www.alliance-scotland.org.uk/blog/resources/long-covid-report-accessing-long-covid-services-in-scotland-to-be-believed-listened-to-and-supported>

³ <https://www.chss.org.uk/documents/2018/10/one-in-five-report-pdf.pdf>



2. Failure to Communicate with the Public

No action on signposting services, despite repeated action requests to align with workplans. Patients still can't find services; GPs continue to say "nothing exists". We were recently told by NSS to direct stakeholders to "use Google".

3. Failure to Align on Milestones and Monitoring

There is very little demonstrated progress on repeated requests in the planning group to align actions to milestones or risk logs.

Little clarity or action on minimum standards, monitoring or accountability – from either NSS or the Scottish Government.

4. Failure to Engage Stakeholders

Most Health Boards have now disengaged from the network. Yet there has been:

- No escalation or intervention from Scottish Government
- No enforcement of its own Long Covid Service Policy
- No re-engagement strategy in place

Third sector partners are also now walking away.

Concerns about unsustainable levels of attrition have been raised, but no changes have been made.



5. Failure to Recognise Lived Experience

Lived experience input has been consistently sidelined in strategic work plans – including key contributions from the Network's own Research Symposium. This, combined with a lack of transparency from the Strategic Oversight Board, has eroded trust and made meaningful co-production impossible.

6. Failure of Transparency

No public awareness measures have been implemented despite multiple requests to address this with Public Health Scotland or Health Boards – despite availability of zero-cost, existing infrastructure, an issue repeatedly raised.

Some workstreams have stalled or ceased without explanation. "Wind down" and "rollback" have been cited internally, despite the Network still running till March 2026.

Health Boards, third sector partners and people living with Long Covid don't know what is currently happening with promised NSS and Scottish Government Long Covid funding. Despite assurances from December 2024, faith has been lost, and those with Long Covid are once again being failed – whilst well-documented issues repeat and go unaddressed.

The Scottish Government remains functionally absent from the network: no oversight, no leadership, and no enforcement of its own Long Covid Service policy requirements.



Faith has been lost.

Too many times we have listened to assurances within the network followed by inaction. Scots with Long Covid have been repeatedly let down, while well-documented issues persist, remain unaddressed, and worsen.

This failure violates [Article 24 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#).⁴ Ignoring the needs of those disabled by Long Covid contradicts the core principles it claims to uphold. And also undermines the Scottish Government's own [Disability Equality Plan](#),⁵ which commits to co-production, accountability, and equitable access to care.

The promise of a '[Once for Scotland](#)'⁶ approach has collapsed. Expertise has been lost, trust has been squandered, and the current situation now represents a significant political and reputational crisis.

We do regret our resignation, but within the Network, our repeated warnings are first ignored and then proven true.

We now call for urgent intervention before services disappear entirely, which would inevitably exacerbate an already dire situation.

Long Covid Scotland

Long Covid Kids

⁴ <https://www.cypcs.org.uk/rights/uncrc/articles/article-24/>

⁵ <https://www.gov.scot/news/disability-equality-plan-published/>

⁶ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/rehabilitation-recovery-once-scotland-person-centred-approach-rehabilitation-post-covid-era/>