

# Public Understanding and Perceptions of Health Inequalities in Scotland: Topline Survey Results

Polling conducted by The Diffley Partnership for The Health  
Foundation

July 2022

Health inequalities in Scotland:  
An independent review



### Question 1

Thinking about people’s physical and mental health in Scotland, how large an impact would you say the following have on people’s health? Rate from 1 (small impact) to 5 (large impact)

Base: All (1,074)	Average
(Access to and quality of) healthcare services	4.39
Lifestyle and individual behaviours	4.34
Financial and professional circumstances (e.g. personal finances, employment, and income)	4.29
Personal circumstances (e.g. friends, family life, relationships and upbringing)	4.29
Environmental factors (e.g. housing, neighbourhood, and green space)	4.12
Genetics and family medical history	3.85
Inequalities in political participation and representation (e.g. involvement in shaping policies, public views being reflected by politicians)	3.36
Luck/chance	2.75

### Question 2

And from the following list, please select the 3 factors that you believe have the biggest impact on people’s physical and mental health in Scotland

Base: All (1,078)	Percentage
Their money & resources	79%
Work/employment	58%
Their friends & family	50%
Their surroundings and neighbourhood	40%
Housing	36%
Education	21%

The local community	7%
Their access to affordable and reliable transport	6%

### Question 3

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

Base: All (1,078)	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
	%	%	%	%	%	%
People in better off areas in Scotland tend to be healthier than people in worse off areas in Scotland	46	40	7	3	1	3
The difference between the health of those living in better off areas and the health of those living in worse off areas is a big problem in Scotland	39	37	14	3	1	5
The Scottish and UK Governments should do more to reduce the differences in health between different groups and areas.	56	30	8	2	1	1
In general, it is more efficient to prevent illnesses and poor health than to treat them.	64	26	5	2	1	2
The COVID-19 pandemic has made me more aware of the ways that health problems impact differently on different groups of people.	30	41	17	6	4	2
The COVID-19 pandemic has made me more aware of the ways in which our social, economic and personal circumstances can affect our health	33	38	18	6	4	2

## Question 4

'Health inequalities' refer to differences in the health status of different population groups. This includes, for example, differences in health between people in more affluent areas and people in more deprived areas. How effective or ineffective do you believe the following would be in reducing health inequalities in Scotland?

Base: All (1078)	Very Effective	Somewhat Effective	Not Very Effective	Not at all Effective	DK
	%	%	%	%	%
Initiatives to improve people's understanding of healthy living (e.g. anti-smoking and/or healthy-eating campaigns)	25	44	23	5	3
Investing in communities and tackling social exclusion (e.g. investing in community spaces, services and/or facilities)	38	45	10	2	4
Improving day-to-day living conditions (e.g. through improved housing)	51	39	6	2	2
Improving day-to-day working conditions (e.g. by making workplaces safer)	28	48	17	3	4
Policies to tackle poverty and income inequality (e.g. through tax policy and the benefits system)	44	31	13	7	5

### Technical details:

- The survey was designed by Diffley Partnership. and invitations were issued using the online ScotPulse panel.
- Results are based on a survey of 1,079 members of the Scottish adult (18+) population.
- Fieldwork was conducted between 28<sup>th</sup> April – 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2022.
- Results are weighted to the Scottish population by age and sex.



From many voices to smart choices

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