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## POSTER ABSTRACT

# Co-designing a human rights-based approach to drive policy change and service improvement across drug and alcohol services in Scotland

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**Background:** Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE) is a strategic partner with the National Collaborative in Scotland, and our key role was to facilitate the work of a group of 15 people affected by substance use (rights holders), duty bearers and rights defenders, known as the Change Team, to integrate a human rights based approach into drug and alcohol policy to assure better outcomes for people affected by substance use in Scotland.

**Approach:** The Change Team were recruited in 2022 to co-design an action plan for the National Collaborative. This saw their development and launch of a Charter of Rights for people affected by substance use in December 2024.

**Development of the charter** was led by the Change Team, facilitated by the ALLIANCE. Their workplan and decision-making was informed by a Call for Evidence which took place over several months in 2023 to better understand the experiences of people affected by substance use. A draft charter was then published in December 2023, followed by a six-month public consultation. In summer 2024, the ALLIANCE led the design and delivery of a robust co-analysis process to support the Change Team to thematically analyse all consultation feedback, and agree the necessary actions to improve and finalise the charter itself, as well as develop an implementation toolkit to help support Duty Bearers and Rights Holders to utilise the Charter to best effect.

**Results:** The finalised Charter and Toolkit was launched on 11 December 2024. The National Collaborative are now working in partnership with Scottish Government to assure effective implementation of the Charter across Alcohol and Drugs Services in Scotland throughout 2025 and beyond.

**Implications:** People affected by substance use in Scotland will have greater awareness of their human rights, with increased support to claim and assert their rights. Policy changes and service improvements across Drugs and Alcohol Services in Scotland will be driven via adoption of a human rights based approach – wholly designed around the experiences, views and feedback of a historically stigmatised and discriminated community of people impacted by substance use across Scotland.