**Scottish Directors of Public Health / Scottish Health Promotion Managers**

**High Level Statement on Public Health Priority 3:**

**Good Mental Wellbeing**

The Scottish Directors of Public Health and Health Promotion Managers welcome the focus within the Scottish Public Health Priorities on good mental health and wellbeing for the people of Scotland.

Mental health has historically been neglected and remains proportionately under resourced, less well researched and stigmatised in comparison to physical health. However, there is increasing recognition of its importance.

Inequality is strongly associated with poor mental health both as a cause and a consequence. A human right’s-based approach is important in driving improvement in population mental health and if we can achieve better population mental health this will reduce inequalities, improve physical health and lead to greater cohesion within society.

Currently there is growing demand for mental health support. Prevention and early intervention are crucial in relation to mental health disorders due to onset in young adulthood and their recurring nature.

Building on the strategic direction set out in Scottish Government’s Mental Health Strategy 2017-2027, the Scottish Directors of Public Health and Health Promotion Managers will lead and support:

* steering national direction further towards prevention; through actions in all sectors and policy areas that promote population mental health;
* building the capacity and partnership approaches for promoting positive mental health through and with key structures including Health Boards, Health and Social Care Partnerships, Community Planning Partnerships, Local Authorities, community and voluntary sector networks and with the private sector
* developing linkages between mental health and wellbeing and the other five PHPs to ensure that the priority given to mental health and wellbeing increases and improvements are delivered through all public health priority areas;
* creating better infrastructures and capacity across all local areas in Scotland to improve public mental health;
* using existing resources more effectively, with Scottish Directors of Public Health and Health Promotion Managers committing to being advocates within local systems to develop more preventative and sustainable mental health and wellbeing services.
* ensuring that an explicit focus on responding to mental health inequalities and addressing equality and diversity dimensions of the development agenda as an integral part of the whole system approach;
* developing further, the body of evidence-based approaches to good public mental health through support for research and innovation, including strengthening collaborations with the academic and allied sectors

In committing to these actions, the Scottish Directors of Public Health and Health Promotion Managers recognise that an important aspect of delivery is in translating evidenced local needs and research into meaningful intervention. The national agencies such as Public Health Scotland will therefore have a crucial role in supporting transformational change.