

Parliamentary round-up

Children and young people represent RCPCH &Us in parliamentary events across the UK every year. Here's a flavour of those that took place in 2025

Blueprint Parliamentary Roundtable

Westminster, London • 22 January 2025



Hanin, aged 20

As co-chair, I helped facilitate the involvement of children and young people from RCPCH &Us,

Association for Young People's Health (AYPH) and Barnardo's in discussions with healthcare professionals and policymakers. We explored how to prioritise children and young people's needs both locally and nationally, particularly in relation to the NHS 10 Year Health Plan.

The group worked towards a consensus statement that highlighted the need for early investment in child health, stronger mental health support, better health education and reduced waiting times.

Despite the formal setting, I felt heard, valued and reassured as a young person. I felt I was able to meaningfully influence future child health policy through both my perspective and those shared by other children and young people. This experience reaffirmed the importance of involving us in these conversations, not only because we understand firsthand the gaps in care, but also because these discussions help build trust and drive positive change.

RCPCH Collaborative Healthcare in Scotland report launch

Holyrood, Edinburgh • 15 May 2025



Skye, aged 16

The event was led by Dr Mairi Stark, RCPCH Officer for Scotland, to introduce a new report addressing

concerns about healthcare in Scotland. The report covered five main points, each with a recommended solution to improve the quality of healthcare for children and

young people, including: (1) the urgent need for data (2) creating a sustainable child health workforce (3) collaborative care (4) positive transitions to adult services and (5) neurodevelopmental services.

RCPCH regularly consults the views and ideas of Scotland's children and young people, which is clear as you digest the report where their thoughts and opinions shine through. Children and young people clearly know what needs to change; they just need representation where the critical decisions about them and the healthcare they are entitled to are made.

Community child health parliamentary event

Stormont, Belfast • 26 June 2025



Rory, aged 15

This conference asked politicians how they plan to improve paediatric healthcare. I found it quite

informative. I listened to politicians discuss the issues and asked a question regarding how they plan to use the underutilised Children's Services Cooperation Act 2015 (NI). All the politicians said they would ensure the act was fully utilised in the future, though the details were vague. I enjoyed the event. The atmosphere was friendly and positive. It's important for children and young people to participate in events such as these, not only to have their voices heard, but also so they realise their voices matter, and that they can be a part of change and reform.

RCPCH Vaccines report launch

Westminster, London • 1 July 2025



Noor, aged 19

Being present at the report launch was a fantastic follow-up to an online session last October, where

Dr Anna Rossiter and Clinical Lead Dr Helen Stewart met with RCPCH &Us to gather our views on vaccination, and I had an opportunity to ask a question during the Q&A session.

I think it's vital for children and young people to take up space in such settings, to represent our views and voices as well as to show policymakers and doctors that we want to actively contribute to improving the healthcare services we use, rather than just act as passive recipients of policy changes and decisions.

Advocacy begins with access – ensuring that young people get the chance to step into the spaces where decisions that directly affect them are made.

RCPCH Election Manifesto launch Senedd, Cardiff • 2 July 2025



Rebecca, aged 24

I took part in discussions about how healthcare can better meet the needs of children and

young people in Wales. I shared my own experiences and helped explore ways that services could become more inclusive, accessible and responsive to young people's real lives.

I felt heard, respected and genuinely valued. It's not always common for young people to be invited into these spaces, especially when it comes to influencing healthcare policy. Being part of it made me feel empowered.

I think it's important that children and young people attend these kinds of events – they are directly affected by decisions made in healthcare, so their voices should be central to shaping those systems. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) says that every child has the right to be heard and taken seriously in all matters that affect them, so this isn't just a nice idea; it's a right. 