
Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by LYDIA REID - 2008/07/14 10:41

An article in the Daily Mail Saturday
Tried to get the link but left it too late.

Scots have always been known as an intelligent race and worthy of their reputation as inventors.

Did you know we invented all this.

William Cullen The refrigerator 1748

The decimal point

Dolly the sheep cloning

The adhesive postage stamp

ATM machines

Anaesthetic

Antiseptics

Television

The fax machine

Tarmac roads

The Mac Macintosh raincoats

The Bicycle

Pneumatic Tyre

James Watts steam engine

His descendant steam combustion

Beta Blocker Drugs

The ultrasound scanner

MRI scanning

Gas Masks

The speedometer

Penicillin

Ronald Ross who identified the mosquito as the carrier of Malaria

John McLeod Insulin

Sir John Crofton Found a treatment for tuberculosis 1950

Elaine Steven recently won an award for a locking chain device for keeping her class safe on outings

The Internet

Thermodynamics

The Marine Compass

Sonar depth sounding

The telegraph

William Patterson in 1694 founded the Bank of England

(They tell us Scotland could not survive on its own)

The overhead valve engine

The lawnmower

The Gun

The tank

Radar

Fingerprints

The Kaleidoscope

A small list of the Scottish achievements

In medicine the list would literally take days to write down. In engineering in other countries the list is also seemingly endless.

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Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by dws - 2008/07/14 14:02

We also gave the world Fran and Anna, Sydney Devine and that gem of a rousing song, "Don't come home too soon".

Just to add a bit of balance, you understand...:silly: ;)

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by Clare - 2008/07/14 14:34

dws wrote:

We also gave the world Fran and Anna, Sydney Devine and that gem of a rousing song, "Don't come home too soon".

Just to add a bit of balance, you understand...:silly: ;)

and we made Buckfast famous

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by LYDIA REID - 2008/07/14 14:43

Whisky was omitted from the list and good government from the SNP

and

Harry Potter
Sean Connery
The big yin
need I go on

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by Bananaman - 2008/07/15 17:01

Yeah but you forgot

Tony Blair,
Gordon Brown,
The Krankies,
Deep Fried mars bars,
The massacre at Glencoe,
Ravenscraig,
Midges,
Tennants Breaker,
and
Burn's Suppers

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by dws - 2008/07/15 17:29

Bananaman wrote:
Yeah but you forgot

Tony Blair,
Gordon Brown,
The Krankies,
Deep Fried mars bars,
The massacre at Glencoe,
Ravenscraig,
Midges,
Tennants Breaker,

and
Burn's Suppers

Haw you! Whats wrong wi Burn's Suppers?:blink:

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by LYDIA REID - 2008/07/15 21:44

fish and chips
chippy suppers
chip rolls
anybody guess I have just had chips

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by Bananaman - 2008/07/16 21:53

The numpties who attend them in general,
present company excepted

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by scunnert - 2008/07/17 03:04

I went to a Burns Supper here in Ontario some years ago hosted by a group that titled themselves "Sons of Scotland". They started off with God Save the Queen. Never went back.

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by LYDIA REID - 2008/07/17 10:37

scunnert wrote:
I went to a Burns Supper here in Ontario some years ago hosted by a group that titled themselves "Sons of Scotland". They started off with God Save the Queen. Never went back.

Why did you not start singing Scotland the Brave or Flower of Scotland?

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by dws - 2008/07/19 18:29

LYDIA REID wrote:
Why did you not start singing Scotland the Brave or Flower of Scotland?

Scunnert's a quiet retiring type, he wouldn't like to draw attention to himself.;

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by Robin T Cox - 2008/07/19 20:03

Are Scots to blame for the world we live in?

Yes, of course.

Are Scots wholly to blame for the world we live in?

No, of course not.

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Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by Clare - 2008/07/21 13:58

"Scunnert's a quiet retiring type, he wouldn't like to draw attention to himself.;"

Eh? Has Scunny a twin we haven't met yet?

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Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by Martin - 2008/07/23 13:08

According to last night's news, we are also responsible for multiple sclerosis.

What next!!! :(

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Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by LYDIA REID - 2008/07/23 13:59

Martin wrote:

According to last night's news, we are also responsible for multiple sclerosis.

What next!!! :(

What was that about Martin I did not see the news are you serious

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Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by Martin - 2008/07/23 14:54

I was trying to find a link, but could not find one.

Apparently, the incidence is much higher in Scotland and in areas with a high level of Scottish immigrants. They reckon it could be genetic!!

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Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by DoricMan - 2008/07/23 16:53

Yawn.

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Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by LYDIA REID - 2008/07/23 17:57

Martin wrote:

I was trying to find a link, but could not find one.

Apparently, the incidence is much higher in Scotland and in areas with a high level of Scottish immigrants. They reckon it could be genetic!!

Thanks for that Martin I could not find any links either but interesting

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Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by Clare - 2008/07/23 18:01

No one said we are responsible for Multiple Sclerosis. What was said was that Scotland has the highest number of sufferers. That is a serious point and not a matter to joke about. My brother in law is 53 years old and is totally paralysed by that disease. It isn't a trendy disease like AIDS that attracts massive funding or research. No one particularly cares. I believe there is a programme on the BBC tonight featuring JK Rowling whose mother died at 45 from that illness. Watch it Martin and Lydia, I'm sure it will give you both a good laugh!

=====

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by LYDIA REID - 2008/07/23 18:22

Martin wrote:

I was trying to find a link, but could not find one.

Apparently, the incidence is much higher in Scotland and in areas with a high level of Scottish immigrants. They reckon it could be genetic!!

found this one

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/7513747.stm>

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Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by Martin - 2008/07/29 09:52

Clare wrote:

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That's a fair comment, Clare!!:blush:

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Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by Clare - 2008/07/29 12:07

Martin wrote:

Clare wrote:

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that illness. Watch it Martin and Lydia, I'm sure it will give you both a good laugh!

That's a fair comment, Clare!!:blush:

Martin. It probably wasn't a fair comment on my part actually. The subject just hit a raw nerve with me. Sorry.

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Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by Martin - 2008/07/29 12:34

I really didn't want to get into the pros and cons of my post(s). I realised when reading them back that they could be read as flippant. My intention was to have a go at the immoderate comments I heard from some of the scientists who were saying that the Scots had spread MS throughout the world through colonisation, rather than saying we have a genetic disposition to the disease. However, without the link, I really can't back that up.

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Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by Clare - 2008/07/29 13:16

Martin
Immoderate comments on the subject of MS are a regular thing in my own experience. I have a close friend with the disease and a brother-in-law. Their respective strains of the disease are quite different in that my friend has had it for some twelve years now and suffers few symptoms. He finds he simply has to rest now and then. My brother-in-law on the other hand suffers a more serious strain which advanced very rapidly indeed. It was heartbreaking as they had two very young children at the time. I never fail to be astonished by the complete disinterest there is in the condition given the terrible consequences for some. I remember when AIDS became "trendy" some years back and the (then) government committed Â£20 million immediately towards research. No such luck for MS or indeed similar illnesses of the central nervous system. It sucks! The other thing I find irritating is when people comment that "It's all down to attitude." That is utter rubbish. People often say that about cancer too. "I am going to beat this!" I remember a football player declaring that he wouldn't "allow" MS to beat him. Oh yes? If he had a mild strain of the disease then maybe but it isn't ever down to us when it comes to an illness like that. For if you have the more serious strain even the most determined character cannot stop its advance and I think so many insult sick people with comments like that by implying they just didn't "fight" hard enough.

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Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by LYDIA REID - 2008/07/29 14:06

Clare wrote:
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Claire I know because I have been told recently from a very reliable source that the research on MS is in a very advanced state. I am hopeful, I hope that is helpful.

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Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by Clare - 2008/07/29 15:31

Lydia

Thanks for that. It is helpful of course but it is also sad that diseases like this aren't considered trendy enough to be more important. They have been around for such a long time and long before AIDS. It must be very difficult for those suffering such illnesses being in that situation.

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Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by LYDIA REID - 2008/07/29 19:39

I know that it must feel so frustrating. Often research depends on whether or not it is trendy, but controlling factors also include researchers with the ideas and the expertise, even then they must raise the finance and prove their idea may work or at least is a positive line of inquiry.

Chance plays a huge part. Just recently a chance discovery showed a drug used to reduce cholesterol seems to be working well for early alzheimer's patients.

Or this one for alzheimer's

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/7525115.stm>

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Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by Clare - 2008/07/30 14:28

Chance didn't feature in the race to take AIDS on. Governments were throwing millions at it almost immediately. Oh, and the trendies in the rock world who donated plenty of cash for AIDS weren't concerned so much for the plague it is in Africa, it was more about preserving their sexual freedom.

The documentary on TV last week by Elizabeth Quigley who is John Swinney's wife and who suffers herself from MS was quite astonishing because of the clear link with this part of the world. Yet no government here has even bothered to set up an MS register to study the figures here or research why Scotland has the highest number of sufferers anywhere in the world. Canada on the other hand has done much more, Canada, where so many Scots from the islands emigrated to so long ago. Their figures are very high too. It does make you wonder about the "Union". Was the connection with Scotland considered not important enough for any Westminster government to look into? If London, or any other area in England, threw up such a clear connection with such a terrible disease, would more not have been done a long time ago to get to the root of it? I actually think it would.

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Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by LYDIA REID - 2008/07/30 18:41

I agree with your point on Aids Claire and I believe it was about freedom sexually but I also believe Aids was made trendy by famous people including Princess Diana. It annoys me more than I can say that so much money is spent on research and treatment for this disease and on all sexually transmitted diseases. Also the money staff and subsequent treatments needed for and after abortion. The reason it annoys me so much is that the likes of your particular issue of MS and other diseases like children's cancer and cancer in general all lose out because of this.

I suppose I would be happier if it was evenly distributed but it is not.

The other point of view that must be taken into account is that some people are innocent victims of Aids. Some have

received a blood transfusion and been infected that way. Some women have been infected by husbands and some by wives. These people are not promiscuous.

=====

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by Clare - 2008/07/30 19:21

LYDIA REID wrote:

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I know what you're saying Lydia and it is true. My sis has taken care of her hubby since MS finally beat him. They raised two fine children who from they were children knew how to help with their dad. My brother in law is a good man, he worked all his life until MS finished that too. His priorities were work and family. He is now stuck in his wheelchair and is a mere shadow of the man I knew before. It is soul-destroying. When I watched the Elizabeth Quigley documentary I cried my eyes out when she met that woman on Orkney. Her hubby is devoted to her care. It made me so bloody angry. We waste so much money on crap and here are these people desperately needing answers and no one is even looking. I think it is a terribly unfair world.

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Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by LYDIA REID - 2008/07/30 22:10

I feel for your brother -in - law, we can only hope that the current info is correct.

I watched that programme, John Swinney's wife is a brave woman too. She has no idea what the future will bring.

I am conscious that if a particular disease affects our own we are more interested, it is not that we have less sympathy for others but our personal knowledge encourages the passion we feel for a cure for that particular disease or condition.

I feel the way you do about cancer.

If a drug could make a lot of money then drug companies will fund research but someone must show reasonable proof that that this may work.

The NHS does not have the money now to fund research in a big way, to be fair our abilities as a country to find cures has outstripped our ability to pay. We pay so much for drugs from abroad which are so expensive.

=====

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by Clare - 2008/08/03 01:31

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The NHS does not have the money now to fund research in a big way, to be fair our abilities as a country to find cures has outstripped our ability to pay. We pay so much for drugs from abroad which are so expensive.

Lydia, if you find an article Elizabeth Quigley wrote for the Sunday Herald or the Herald (I found it on Google) you will also see comments attached to it questioning some of the things she said. One issue was about how easily she got access to beta-interferon something many MS sufferers find difficult if not downright impossible. That drug can reduce and even wipe out relapses for the sufferer. It is denied usually on the basis of cost. Elizabeth is eight years into her illness and admitted herself the drug appeared to have slowed her relapses considerably.

I am not "conscious" of this disease simply because I have someone in my family who suffers from it. I am simply passionate in my belief that we are all equal and I am equally passionate about the NHS treating patients and giving them the best chance possible when fighting a condition such as this. Beta-interferon had been researched and tested yet the basis for not prescribing it was cost. The same goes for cancer. How many times do we see particular drugs being rationed when people are living under a death sentence? Yet suddenly AIDS appeared and they couldn't stop throwing money at it. Look at the advances they have made on AIDS alone since it first came into the spotlight. All because the money was poured in for that trendy disease from day one. There was no "reasonable proof" on anything, the money initially went into raw research to find the answer to AIDS. But they got the money to begin it and the investment continues.

NHS patients pay their way through their working lives and the NHS is not a charity. Governments are responsible for the NHS and goodness knows they take enough in taxes and NI from us. It's our money, not theirs.

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Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by dws - 2008/08/03 20:12

What's the opinion of posters on the taking of cannabis relating to MS?

=====

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by LYDIA REID - 2008/08/03 21:50

The government should have by now put the money into the much needed research to take the parts of cannabis that help MS and make it into a drug that will relieve pain. Enough research exists to show this is possible. Why should people be made criminals to ease their pain. I have real problems with pain relief because of stomach problems and it may be that this would help. I am very sure some worse than me are buying this and it is helping. I am also sure there are many like me who would not take it as it exists at the moment, one because it may not be safe, I would not know whether it is or not. In its present form it can cause mental health problems. Two because it is illegal.

=====

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by Clare - 2008/08/03 22:17

dws wrote:

What's the opinion of posters on the taking of cannabis relating to MS?

I understand it can provide relief for some symptoms of MS although I'm not sure cannabis helps for more general pain relief. I think if MS sufferers find it helps them then they should be able to use it. Ultimately real research into real solutions is what is needed for MS. This country has the numbers (in terms of sufferers) to justify extensive research long before now. I don't see cannabis as a real solution. Beta-interferon should be available to MS patients when its benefits are already known.

=====

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by InfrequentAllele - 2008/08/06 15:01

I have personal experience of both MS, and HIV - I have two close friends with MS, my first lover died of AIDS and I have a couple of other friends who are HIV+. I wouldn't say one ill person was less deserving of treatment than another because I personally happen to find how they acquired their illness to be a bit distasteful. In fact it's pretty distasteful (and goes against medical ethics) to make such a suggestion.

Some posters above are confusing two quite different types of health funding. Firstly there is money spent on public health promotion and health awareness campaigns. This is most usually government money. These campaigns are directed at conditions where a change in behaviour can produce a significant reduction in the incidence of the illness.

A public health campaign promoting safer sex greatly reduces the incidence of HIV infection in the community, which in turn means fewer people develop AIDS and less overall cost to the NHS. Public awareness programmes have prevented Scotland from having a rate of HIV infection like Swaziland's, where 38.8% of the population is HIV+. I think that's money well spent.

The amount of money spent on a campaign is based on the potential risk of the illness or disease concerned. The potential risk to the public health of HIV infection is vastly greater than the threat of MS. There is no threat of an MS epidemic affecting almost 40% of the population. That is a simple medical fact.

From the point of view of public health, it is not cost effective to mount an MS awareness campaign. MS is not infectious, can't be prevented by making simple changes to behaviour, and greater public awareness isn't going to stop anyone developing it.

Money spent researching a cure or a preventative vaccine is quite different. Most of this money comes from the private sector, from pharmaceutical companies. The big drug companies base their investment on what they see as the likely financial return. More money is going to be spent on conditions which have a known cause because then there's more chance of success. The potential market for a vaccine against HIV is enormous (everyone who is sexually active, medical staff, anyone requiring a blood transfusion, etc.), and there is a known cause. The potential market for a vaccine or cure for MS is tiny by comparison, and the cause remains unknown (but is highly unlikely to be something as simple as infection with a virus). Relatively little research money comes from the public purse, but just like in the private sector, spending decisions are made according to cost/benefit and risk analyses based on medical advice.

But back to the topic of this thread. Are Scots responsible for the world we live in?

No. Bad boys done it and ran away.

=====

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by LYDIA REID - 2008/08/06 18:22

<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/performance/files/wp18-%20HIV-study.pdf>

http://www.mssociety.org.uk/research/research_grants/index.html

The above posts detail money spent on both diseases I would say that is quite definitely against medical ethics. The disparity is obvious. Research into Aids attracts a great deal more government money than MS would.

I could find no article stating that the British or Scottish Government has put any money into any research for MS, obviously, because I cannot find it does not mean that it does not exist.

The figures given in the programme so many of us watched, I think, gave the figure of one in four or one in five people in Scotland will in varying degrees get MS. The figure stated by the BBC is one in every 500.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/7519850.stm>

The point we made about the difference is, MS strikes without any deliberate contributing factors from the person who contracts it. Aids is different. It is a sexually transmitted disease. It comes under the same heading as me smoking. I am intelligent enough to know the dangers. Many years ago when I started smoking less was known, I cannot make that

excuse now. Smoking kills through heart disease, lung cancer, asthma and many other illnesses. I am a strong enough person to stop if I want to and I don't I have made that choice.

Should research into smoking related diseases take precedence over research into MS my answer would be no. Hard as it sounds, it is true and fair.

Before you jump to any conclusions about my post of course, I am not stating that once a person has contracted Aids they should not be treated. The ethos of our NHS is one I agree with that if a person is ill they should be treated.

If we look though at the Â£millions spent on abortion, if some of that had been directed at MS research or cancer research then we may have found the cures by now. Abortion is also a life choice in many cases. Men and women decide to have sex then decide they do not want to live with the consequences of that choice. Obviously there are a few exceptions but they are exceptions to the general rule.

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by InfrequentAllele - 2008/08/06 20:48

Hi Lydia - Thanks for replying. I did point out in my previous post why it is that HIV / AIDS research gets more funding than MS research. It's because HIV / AIDS presents a potential threat to public health in a way that MS doesn't. That's the reason for the funding disparity you point out. Most of the funding detailed in the link you posted about HIV relates to public awareness and disease prevention programmes. That particular document was published by the Dept for International Development and details funding on HIV / AIDS prevention and control strategies abroad, the funding is part of the UK's foreign aid budget and doesn't come from the NHS.

I explained above why MS isn't responsive to health awareness or disease prevention programmes and so similar strategies for MS would be a waste of money. It's entirely to do with the clinical differences between MS and HIV.

MS isn't the only medical condition to lose out this way. There is very little public funding a whole range of diseases, such as Motor Neurone Disease, Duchenne's Muscular Dystrophy, Spina Bifida, Cystic Fibrosis and many others. What all these illnesses have in common is that they appear in the population at a fairly constant and predictable rate which is low in comparison to many other diseases, and none will show a reduced rate of incidence because of a public awareness or disease prevention programme.

Equally, if no action is taken none of these conditions are likely to show a sudden huge increase in the number of people diagnosed. We're not faced with a possible major epidemic of MS or Motor Neurone Disease. The health service can predict in advance approximately how many people will be diagnosed with each of these conditions every year and budget accordingly.

Government funding into cures depends upon the number of people the cure is likely to benefit, and the impact on cost to the health service. The bottom line is that it may well cost vastly more to fund a serious attempt to find a cure for MS or Cystic Fibrosis than it does to provide care for those people who already have the illness, so the public health service is unwilling to pay for the research. It's not cost effective when the total research budget is so limited. And while the research is going on, the health service still has to find the funds to pay for the treatment of those diagnosed with the condition.

On the other hand it's much harder to predict how many people will be diagnosed HIV positive or diagnosed with some types of cancer or heart disease. It's therefore more of a priority to find ways of curing or controlling these conditions because costs could potentially go through the roof if no action is taken. Even more importantly, if no action is taken costs related to these conditions WILL rise, due to the clinical nature of the conditions.

The entire government budget for health research in the UK is Â£500 million a year. That's for all health research, not just research into cures or vaccines for cancer or AIDS or anything else. It also includes things like pilot studies, information gathering exercises, patient surveys and the like.

All this means conditions like MS and Motor Neurone Disease are lower down the priority scale when it comes to public funding. I'm not saying this is fair, I'm just explaining how it works when health funding is a finite resource.

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by LYDIA REID - 2008/08/06 23:45

Hi IA

First I would be interested where you get your figures from.

I can understand the point you are making but I just don't agree with spending so much on what amounts to advertising campaigns. Do you really believe that there are many people "on earth" who do not know what Aids is and how you get it? If they exist, I think they must be very few. Money down the drain.

Money that could be spent on finding a cure for all the above diseases that you mentioned. The diseases that people can do nothing about. As far as we know, it makes no difference to MS, Motor Neurone Disease, Duchenne's Muscular Dystrophy, Spina Bifida, and Cystic Fibrosis if people do not smoke or have sex. So your point does have merit from this angle, this money is spent on advertising campaigns and that this type of advertising would not make a difference to all those other diseases you mention., but it is still money spent on Aids that could be spent on finding a cure for diseases that are not self-inflicted. It is my view that the potential health threat from aids will not be averted by advertising.

We live in this selfish and self-centred world. A world that includes many who think it is ok to abuse their body and expect the government and NHS to pick up the tab. I include myself in that description. If I developed lung cancer, tomorrow I would expect treatment. So back to the original point for me it is not fair to spend so much on Aids and so little on the diseases that are not self-inflicted.

If the Government did not spend this money on the foreign aid budget, it could spend it on our own country in research. The reason the budget is so large is that they wanted to put money into advertising to tell people that having unprotected sex could lead to aids. Total waste of money.

To make another point, why, should our country put so much money into telling people in other countries not to have unprotected sex, particularly when this has not worked in our own country?

I have often wondered what the reaction from the general public would be if the government spent money on advertising, which simply said in so many years from this date any person, contracting Aids from unprotected sex would not be treated. No woman can have an abortion other than for rape or a real medical emergency unless you pay for the abortion. Smokers do not get treatment for lung cancer, unless you stop smoking from today. Drinkers do not get liver transplants unless you stop drinking from today, do you get the idea.

The money saved will be put into research for all the above diseases that are contracted by people who have no control over whether they get them or not.

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Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by Clare - 2008/08/07 01:41

InfrequentAllele wrote:

Hi Lydia - Thanks for replying. I did point out in my previous post why it is that HIV / AIDS research gets more funding than MS research. It's because HIV / AIDS presents a potential threat to public health in a way that MS doesn't. That's the reason for the funding disparity you point out. Most of the funding detailed in the link you posted about HIV relates to public awareness and disease prevention programmes. That particular document was published by the Dept for International Development and details funding on HIV / AIDS prevention and control strategies abroad, the funding is part of the UK's foreign aid budget and doesn't come from the NHS.

I explained above why MS isn't responsive to health awareness or disease prevention programmes and so similar strategies for MS would be a waste of money. It's entirely to do with the clinical differences between MS and HIV.

MS isn't the only medical condition to lose out this way. There is very little public funding a whole range of diseases, such as Motor Neurone Disease, Duchenne's Muscular Dystrophy, Spina Bifida, Cystic Fibrosis and many others. What all these illnesses have in common is that they appear in the population at a fairly constant and predictable rate which is low in comparison to many other diseases, and none will show a reduced rate of incidence because of a public awareness or disease prevention programme.

Equally, if no action is taken none of these conditions are likely to show a sudden huge increase in the number of people diagnosed. We're not faced with a possible major epidemic of MS or Motor Neurone Disease. The health service can predict in advance approximately how many people will be diagnosed with each of these conditions every year and budget accordingly.

Government funding into cures depends upon the number of people the cure is likely to benefit, and the impact on cost to the health service. The bottom line is that it may well cost vastly more to fund a serious attempt to find a cure for MS or Cystic Fibrosis than it does to provide care for those people who already have the illness, so the public health service is unwilling to pay for the research. It's not cost effective when the total research budget is so limited. And while the research is going on, the health service still has to find the funds to pay for the treatment of those diagnosed with the condition.

On the other hand it's much harder to predict how many people will be diagnosed HIV positive or diagnosed with some types of cancer or heart disease. It's therefore more of a priority to find ways of curing or controlling these conditions because costs could potentially go through the roof if no action is taken. Even more importantly, if no action is taken costs related to these conditions WILL rise, due to the clinical nature of the conditions.

The entire government budget for health research in the UK is Â£500 million a year. That's for all health research, not just research into cures or vaccines for cancer or AIDS or anything else. It also includes things like pilot studies, information gathering exercises, patient surveys and the like.

All this means conditions like MS and Motor Neurone Disease are lower down the priority scale when it comes to public funding. I'm not saying this is fair, I'm just explaining how it works when health funding is a finite resource.

Can I just say this is complete CRAP!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

=====

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by Clare - 2008/08/07 01:49

Clare wrote:

InfrequentAllele wrote:

Hi Lydia - Thanks for replying. I did point out in my previous post why it is that HIV / AIDS research gets more funding than MS research. It's because HIV / AIDS presents a potential threat to public health in a way that MS doesn't. That's the reason for the funding disparity you point out. Most of the funding detailed in the link you posted about HIV relates to public awareness and disease prevention programmes. That particular document was published by the Dept for International Development and details funding on HIV / AIDS prevention and control strategies abroad, the funding is part of the UK's foreign aid budget and doesn't come from the NHS.

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gathering exercises, patient surveys and the like.

All this means conditions like MS and Motor Neurone Disease are lower down the priority scale when it comes to public funding. I'm not saying this is fair, I'm just explaining how it works when health funding is a finite resource.

Can I just say this is complete CRAP!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Infrequent whoever, can you explain in what capacity you DARE to dismiss MS as being less important than AIDS? I would like that clarified at once if you don't mind.

The fact is that you are talking complete crap. AIDS had money thrown at it because of bodies campaigning for it because of the groups affected. IE Homosexuals. IE Not the poor of Africa, just homosexuals. Groups like Stonewall or whatever they are called.

FACT MS has been around a lot longer and got no funding. Your post made me so bloody angry. How dare you dismiss people with illnesses such as MS with such indifference. I feel for the poor in Africa who have AIDS because it is not their fault. I do not feel for those who have this illness because of their lifestyle and I deeply resent your inference that YOU are more important than those who have an illness like MS through no fault of their own. I think your arrogance is astonishing and breathtaking but more importantly I find your casual explanation downright offensive. Call me homophobic if you want. I am not. I will call you self-centred and downright selfish. Your post is appalling in its blatant disregard for those who have suffered far longer than AIDS sufferers have and yet you abandon them because they are not a "priority". You people? You make me sick! You are all about you and your little group and you do not give a toss for anyone else!

=====

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by Clare - 2008/08/07 01:58

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENT TO ALL TAXPAYERS. YOU MAY WORK AND PAY YOUR TAXES BUT HEY, IF YOU DON'T HAVE A "TRENDY" ILLNESS, SOD YA! RESEARCH IS OUT THE WINDOW. GET OVER IT!

=====

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by TLJ - 2008/08/07 07:45

Clare, you're letting your prejudice totally blind you .

What A I said is perfectly true - an issue with a public health aspect will always be given priority and, in my view, quite rightly so.

A I appreciates the unfairness of it and I also recognise that that is so.. Nevertheless, it is fact.

Moreover, in your tirades, do remember that HIV / AIDS is not sexuality specific and nor does its contraction necessarily imply any abuse of the body of a sufferer.

=====

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by Meg - 2008/08/07 09:15

TLJ wrote:

Clare, you're letting your prejudice totally blind you .

What A I said is perfectly true - an issue with a public health aspect will always be given priority and, in my view, quite rightly so.

A I appreciates the unfairness of it and I also recognise that that is so.. Nevertheless, it is fact.

Moreover, in your tirades, do remember that HIV / AIDS is not sexuality specific and nor does its contraction necessarily

imply any abuse of the body of a sufferer.

Could I just associate myself with your comments TLJ. The prejudice in some of the comments posted here have left me speechless.

=====

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by DoricMan - 2008/08/07 11:35

dws wrote:

What's the opinion of posters on the taking of cannabis relating to MS?I often wonder if cannabis or some of its constituents would benefit me in my daily contest with my spinal trauma.

However, I would only accept proven medication that is legal.

=====

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by DoricMan - 2008/08/07 11:37

TLJ wrote:

Clare, you're letting your prejudice totally blind you .

What A I said is perfectly true - an issue with a public health aspect will always be given priority and, in my view, quite rightly so.

A I appreciates the unfairness of it and I also recognise that that is so.. Nevertheless, it is fact.

Moreover, in your tirades, do remember that HIV / AIDS is not sexuality specific and nor does its contraction necessarily imply any abuse of the body of a sufferer.May I also add my displeasure at Clare's tirades in this serious topic.

=====

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by Clare - 2008/08/07 11:40

TLJ wrote:

Clare, you're letting your prejudice totally blind you .

What A I said is perfectly true - an issue with a public health aspect will always be given priority and, in my view, quite rightly so.

A I appreciates the unfairness of it and I also recognise that that is so.. Nevertheless, it is fact.

Moreover, in your tirades, do remember that HIV / AIDS is not sexuality specific and nor does its contraction necessarily imply any abuse of the body of a sufferer.

Fine I accept your views. Can I just add something? I am not prejudiced. I'm saying what many actually think and lack the guts to say. What I also am is absolutely furious that single issue politics now plays such a major role in this country. Tirades T? Is that what my contribution is because you do not agree with it?

To dismiss illnesses like MS in the way Aelle has in that post is the real disgrace. Much has been posted elsewhere about MS on this same thread and it has been established that for decades the illness and the numbers suffering from it have been ignored. Yet the numbers who suffer from it here in Scotland and the clear connection with Scotland needs to be investigated further. Other aspects need addressed to like the refusal to prescribe drugs that clearly help the condition.

Finally I know AIDS isn't just related to one section of the community however it is an absolute fact that millions was thrown at research early on when it first became known to us in this country and that many very rich celebrities set up all sorts of trusts to campaign solely from the point of view of the gay community. If stating this makes me prejudiced so be it. Personally it is becoming a joke in this country that to criticise one particular group leaves one open to the usual accusations of prejudice while the majority prefer to go the politically correct route and keep their mouths firmly shut for

fear of upsetting anyone.

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by Levenax - 2008/08/07 14:24

Clare wrote:

Personally it is becoming a joke in this country that to criticise one particular group leaves one open to the usual accusations of prejudice while the majority prefer to go the politically correct route and keep their mouths firmly shut for fear of upsetting anyone.

Occasionally I and some others have criticised the Roman Church or its policies during discussions on this forum and you have suggested that we might be prejudiced or even bigoted because of it. Why is it OK for you to critical of something and not me?

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by InfrequentAllele - 2008/08/07 14:37

Clare - Your posts are not a tirade because people disagree with them, they are a tirade because they are ill-informed, prejudiced, and ignorant. At no point have I "dismissed MS". You are obviously incapable of seeing beyond your narrow minded prejudices in order to understand what I posted or to engage in reasoned debate on this topic.

Lydia - The figure of Â£500 million NHS spending on health research came from the document you posted the link to. It's mentioned on page 6. "The Department of Health (DOH) report (Bickley, 2005) that they allocate around Â£500m to National Health Service (NHS) trusts for health-related research." - I imagine the figure relates to England and Wales. Based on this figure, the NHS in Scotland ought to have somewhere under Â£50m annually for all health-related research. It's not a huge amount of money.

The reason so much is spent on what are basically glorified advertising campaigns is that it would end up costing the health service a whole lot more if they didn't spend the money on them. And these campaigns can be proven to be effective. Scotland has a rate of HIV infection of around 0.1%, in South Africa it's 10.8%, in Swaziland it's 38.8%. Swaziland is what happens when HIV infection is allowed to run unchecked. Can you imagine the costs to the health service if Scotland had the same rate of infection as Swaziland? The Scottish health system would collapse. In fact much of Scottish society would collapse. It's because there's a possibility of a disaster of such magnitude that money is spent to prevent it happening.

Scotland was quick off the mark with HIV / AIDS education and prevention programmes, and as a result Scotland has one of the lowest rates of HIV infection in the developed world. The average infection rate in Western Europe is 0.3%, almost three times the Scottish figure. In Spain the figure is 0.5%. In the USA there was more of a focus on preaching sexual abstinence as a form of HIV prevention - yet their infection rate is 0.7%, almost seven times higher than ours.

Figures for HIV infection rates are widely available online. Wikipedia has some good statistics but lumps Scotland in with the rest of the UK. I calculated the Scottish infection rate based on information here - <http://www.hivscotland.com/stats.htm> As of December 2007 there were 3882 people known to be living with HIV in Scotland. To those should be added another 1900 or so (based on standard estimates) who are HIV positive but are unaware of their HIV status. That gives a current infection rate of slightly over 0.1%. (3882, plus 1900, divided by the population of Scotland - 5,116,000 - gives 0.113%, to be more exact.)

Ask anyone who works in health and they'll tell you health messages have to be repeated constantly. In Scotland the potential threat from AIDS has been averted due to health promotion and HIV prevention programmes which take a realistic view of human nature. Our very low HIV infection rate of 0.1% proves the success of this strategy and untold thousands of Scots are alive, healthy and HIV negative as a result. It's a Scottish success story we should be proud of.

Whether or not the UK government should be spending more or less on international aid, and what it should be spent on, is a different subject entirely.

You have more of a point with smoking. (And I'm a sad nicotine addict too.)

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by LYDIA REID - 2008/08/07 16:46

Lets just for a moment set aside the fact that Aids is generally but I agree not exclusively now, a sexually transmitted disease. Let's set aside the fact that as far as we know when a person contracts MS the disease has no sexually contributing factors. I say as far as we know, because in the beginning we had no knowledge that cervical cancer can be caused by a virus passed sexually. We have no idea what will come out of the research into MS. I suspect though that research so far confirms that this is caused by genes, which no person can control.

http://www.mssociety.org.uk/about_ms/index.html

5415 people in Scotland currently are HIV positive. As of Dec 2007

85.000 people in the UK have MS

10,500 people in Scotland currently have MS

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/7508087.stm>

That is prejudice. That is disparity, double the amount of sufferers and a lot less money spent to relieve symptoms or research the cause.

Will you call that prejudice, will you call that prejudice against a persons sexuality.

These are facts.

=====

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by TLJ - 2008/08/07 18:27

LYDIA REID wrote:

That is prejudice. That is disparity, double the amount of sufferers and a lot less money spent to relieve symptoms or research the cause.

The disparity in funding does not necessarily imply intrinsic prejudice but reflects priorities when distributing scarce resources. As has been said, public health issues will always be given priority over other issues because of the potential repercussions for society as a whole.

=====

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by LYDIA REID - 2008/08/07 19:10

The potential repercussion's are the result of a selfish way of life. Go out into the street TLJ and find me one person in Scotland who is unaware that unprotected sex could lead to Aids or sexually transmitted disease or pregnancy. They decide to have sex and do not protect themselves.

People may make the excuse that this type of behaviour in underdeveloped nations is ignorance and should be dealt with by education. Can you honestly say this is the case in Scotland or the UK as a whole.

Give me a good reason why people who go out and have unprotected sex should take precedence over people who get a disease that they have absolutely no control over. That in my view is the prejudice, the fact that in the same way that organ donation is the current "passion" even though their are many diseases that kill more people so is the research into aids. No consideration into if we find a cure for the diseases that kill most people we will save money on treatment. Instead we in this country have "in" diseases and "passions". This is neither fair nor is it financially sensible.

=====

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by TLJ - 2008/08/07 19:42

LYDIA REID wrote:

The potential repercussion's are the result of a selfish way of life. Go out into the street TLJ and find me one person in Scotland who is unaware that unprotected sex could lead to Aids or sexually transmitted disease or pregnancy. They decide to have sex and do not protect themselves.

And those infected by an unfaithful partner ? Those infected by contaminated blood-products ? Those infected by stabbing by a discarded needle ?

That's why it's a public health issue.

=====

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by LYDIA REID - 2008/08/07 20:21

Yes, I agree there are people in that situation, even in a few cases innocent babies infected by mothers, but do they outnumber the others in Scotland stricken by all these other dreadful neurological diseases. By comparison is their plight any worse than the people who contract all these other diseases. How do these numbers compare to cancer TLJ?

Watching someone, waste away from Aids must be dreadful, particularly if you love them. Is that any worse than watching a loved one die slowly from MS, cancer, losing their mind through Alzheimer's. Losing limbs through diabetes. Palliative care is expensive even if a person is cared for at home. At sometime fairness and finance must take precedence over this "passion culture" that currently rules the world of research. Claire has a point when she states that money was thrown indiscriminately into research for Aids and it was raw research in the beginning. It was made popular by stars and Princess Diana.

Cancer, MS and many other dreadful killer diseases destroyed lives long before Aids, I did not notice stars and Princess Diana holding their hands, I did not see any huge input of money into other sexually transmitted diseases.

=====

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by Clare - 2008/08/07 20:26

InfrequentAllele

Don't respond to me in future. You invited questions in your first post on this site and I asked a question. You came back dismissing everything I said. You also stated you did not wish your sexual orientation to dominate the debate and yet you went on to do exactly that. You also told me I was more or less to drop the subject in your "lecture". Fine. In future don't invite questions and then throw your toys out of the pram if you don't like those questions!

Your dismissal of MS - for that is what it was - is deplorable. We have talked elsewhere of a programme about MS which was televised only last week where the statistics proved it is not a minor issue in the UK because of the high number of sufferers especially in Scotland.

And don't call me prejudiced because I am not. I am not narrow-minded either. Usual stereo-typing claptrap I see. If anyone disagrees just use the usual labels and go on the attack. I'm just waiting for the homophobe word. I expressed a view and I am entitled to do so as we all are. I will not be dictated to as to how I should think either.

=====

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by InfrequentAllele - 2008/08/07 21:47

Lydia - It seems that your basic issue is that you find it distasteful that conditions which are the patient's "own fault" are treated equally to those when the patient is "innocent". It's fundamental to medical ethics that patients are treated

according to their clinical needs. It is NOT the job of a doctor to make treatment decisions based upon his or her understanding of the moral choices of the patient. Doctors are qualified to treat disease, they are not qualified to judge innocence and guilt.

If doctors were allowed to discriminate on the grounds of the moral choices of the patient, then it would be perfectly permissible for a doctor to insist that he or she was first going to treat the minor wounds of the passengers in a car which crashed, and only then, if at all, treat the life-threatening injuries of the driver who caused the accident.

If society allows doctors to determine treatment based upon the personal morality of the patient, there is nothing to stop a doctor from refusing to treat women who had abortions in the past, people who belong to a different religion, unmarried people who are sexually active, or any other person whom the doctor claims is offensive to his or her moral sensibilities.

What you are proposing would destroy medical ethics as we understand them and replace them with a mish-mash of decisions made according to the personal moral codes of individual doctors.

Here's a brief guide to medical ethics from the General Medical Council
http://www.gmc-uk.org/guidance/good_medical_practice/duties_of_a_doctor.asp

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Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by LYDIA REID - 2008/08/07 22:17

I do object to the inequality.

I think you have just shot your self in the foot.

Why is it there are so many Aids patients given priority? Why is so much money spent on abortion? Why is so much money spent on sexually transmitted diseases?

These people do not travel hundreds of miles with lives put in danger to find a cot, as do babies born prematurely. They are not refused drugs that will halt the progress of the disease, as are cancer patients. Just today, we heard of four drugs that have been refused by NICE which would give extra months to cancer patients. Scotland refused drugs for bowel cancer patients not so long ago.

Moreover, yes I do object to this in particular because Aids, abortion and sexually transmitted diseases are caused by a selfish and self-centred way of life.

Babies do not ask to be born early they have no control over this funding. Many bowel cancers and throat cancers are not caused by smoking, drinking or a selfish way of life.

To summarise yes I do object and strongly to the fact that Aids, Abortion and sexually transmitted diseases take priority over diseases that are no fault of the person who contracts them. If doctors were truly paying attention to their Hippocratic Oath they would want equality for all, and they would not allow vulnerable babies, cancer patients, and all the other group of afflictions to suffer because of this craze to cure Aids and support this countries selfish ways of having sex and allowing the country to pay for the results.

=====

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by Levenax - 2008/08/07 23:06

LYDIA REID wrote:

....yes I do object to this in particular because Aids, abortion and sexually transmitted diseases are caused by a selfish and self-centred way of life.

You're reasoning is a bit agley there Lydia. What about morbidly obese people, folk with alcoholic liver disease or others with the hundred and one horrible things that smokers suffer from? All three groups have entirely unnecessary self inflicted injuries from eating, drinking or smoking. Are they any less culpable than the sodomite who contracts AIDS or syphilis or gonorrhoea of the tonsils?

I do however agree that the amount of money spent on AIDS research is disproportionate when one considers the very

small numbers of sufferers in the developed world. The catastrophic AIDS epidemic that's killing millions in the third world will not be ameliorated in any way by better treatments or vaccines. We have to teach them about the folly of promiscuity and be deaf to the maanderings of the so called liberal left who peddle the lie that it's a cultural thing to copulate with anything that has a pulse.

=====

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by Clare - 2008/08/08 12:03

Levenax wrote:

Clare wrote:

Personally it is becoming a joke in this country that to criticise one particular group leaves one open to the usual accusations of prejudice while the majority prefer to go the politically correct route and keep their mouths firmly shut for fear of upsetting anyone.

Occasionally I and some others have criticised the Roman Church or its policies during discussions on this forum and you have suggested that we might be prejudiced or even bigoted because of it. Why is it OK for you to critical of something and not me?

Lev

I have contributed on this site on many issues and yes, I have at various times felt that some were not listening to what I was saying simply because they know my religion and were, rather than reading my posts, responding depending on their view of the church I belong to. They also appeared to be suggesting that a person who does have a religion was not capable of contributing a "balanced" view. I don't speak on behalf of any church and never have. I speak for me and at the times I have felt people were using particular issues just to "have a go" at religion I have said so. I think that is honest. I have disagreed with you often and agreed with you too and I respect your contributions. I have never called them "laughably stupid" and openly ridiculed you. I don't think that sort of thing is necessary on a site like this.

=====

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by InfrequentAllele - 2008/08/08 13:06

Lydia - I've shot myself in the foot by pointing out that doctors can't discriminate? I don't see how you manage to arrive at that conclusion unless you believe that people with HIV get preferential treatment on the NHS, but that's simply untrue. Perhaps you confuse the public visibility of HIV / AIDS with favouritism. I've already explained at great length why it is that there are such public awareness campaigns for HIV but not for MS. I've already explained how funding for health research works.

If a new and expensive drug for HIV patients were to come onto the market tomorrow, HIV patients would experience the exact same problems getting it as MS patients currently experience getting Beta-Interferon. When the anti-HIV drug Retrovir and other advanced antivirals were first put on the market some years back, the NHS refused to pay for them. The NHS used the same arguments they're currently using to avoid paying for Beta-Interferon for MS. Every time any new and expensive drug first becomes available we see these arguments about funding and access. Just last year it was a new drug for breast cancer patients which made the news.

There is an article about this very subject in today's Independent about the NHS refusing to fund new drugs for kidney cancer. It explains the process of drug approval quite well.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-wellbeing/health-news/the-big-question-can-it-ever-be-right-for-the-nhs-to-reject-drugs-that-could-extend-life-888232.html>

"Moreover, yes I do object to this in particular because Aids, abortion and sexually transmitted diseases are caused by a selfish and self-centred way of life."

What you're saying is that when funding is limited we should make decisions about health spending based upon the morality of patients. Your moral standards aren't mine, and neither of us have the same moral standards as the guy along the road. So who gets to decide what's moral in medical care?

I find it strange that you are proposing to stop funding the treatment of illnesses which can be fatal, but not proposing that the NHS should reduce funding for something like psoriasis. Psoriasis can be painful, distressing and unsightly, but it's

not going to kill anyone. (And before I'm accused of disrespecting the suffering of psoriasis patients, I have psoriasis myself.) If you want to have a discussion about NHS funding priorities, why aren't you talking about reducing spending on non-fatal conditions?

HIV infection is strongly associated with unprotected sex. Throat cancer is strongly associated with alcohol intake and smoking. Bowel cancer is strongly associated with an unhealthy diet. Breast cancer is strongly associated with failure to check regularly for lumps. We are all responsible for our own well-being, and we all make bad choices sometimes. But you seem to be proposing to make sure that people's mistakes will kill them.

=====

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by Levenax - 2008/08/08 13:34

Clare wrote:

They also appeared to be suggesting that a person who does have a religion was not capable of contributing a "balanced" view. I don't speak on behalf of any church and never have. I speak for me and at the times I have felt people were using particular issues just to "have a go" at religion I have said so. I think that is honest. I have disagreed with you often and agreed with you too and I respect your contributions. I have never called them "laughably stupid" and openly ridiculed you. I don't think that sort of thing is necessary on a site like this.

Clare also wrote:

Lev, I'm suspicious of the motives of a government that wants to give twelve year old girls an injection which ensures they can start having sex with whoever they like there and then and hopefully dodge the risk of cervical cancer!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Sod the law that says having sex with a twelve year old is illegal eh? And makes you a paedophile eh? To hell with law etc.....

Now come on! Are you really suggesting that the goverment wants to give young girls HPV vaccine to facilitate their participation in under age sex?

And what does the truly odd "And makes you a paedophile eh?" mean? I'm flummoxed by that one.

The law against under age sex is quite explicit and as far as I can see quite rigorously enforced.

So if the word stupid doesn't fit I'll substitute it with unbalanced which is a sort of synonym for deranged. If your contribution was neither of these things perhaps you would like to explain why not and then I might withdraw what I said. No offence meant of course. ;)

=====

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by LYDIA REID - 2008/08/08 21:53

Levenax wrote:

LYDIA REID wrote:

...yes I do object to this in particular because Aids, abortion and sexually transmitted diseases are caused by a selfish and self-centred way of life.

You're reasoning is a bit aghast there Lydia. What about morbidly obese people, folk with alcoholic liver disease or others with the hundred and one horrible things that smokers suffer from? All three groups have entirely unnecessary self inflicted injuries from eating, drinking or smoking. Are they any less culpable than the sodomite who contracts AIDS or syphilis or gonorrhoea of the tonsils?

I do however agree that the amount of money spent on AIDS research is disproportionate when one considers the very small numbers of sufferers in the developed world. The catastrophic AIDS epidemic that's killing millions in the third world will not be ameliorated in any way by better treatments or vaccines. We have to teach them about the folly of promiscuity and be deaf to the maunderings of the so called liberal left who peddle the lie that it's a cultural thing to copulate with anything that has a pulse.#

I do object to the as you put it disproportionate amount of money spent on Aids.

Yes as you say there are many other diseases, which may very well have an element of selfish living involved in the contracting of the disease but they struggle to get funding, not one of these diseases gets millions thrown at it.

If some degree of fairness instead of current trend was involved in the decision making of research finance I would be happier.

I do feel that health problems connected to sexually contracted problems such as Abortion Aids and sexually transmitted diseases take up a huge amount of the NHS budget.

It is the fact that so much has been known for so long that gets to me. The health message about STDs Aids and pregnancy are all taught at School, are all spoken about so often in daily life and yet so many still take the chance with unprotected sex. This is not on a par with a diet or stopping smoking this is simple use of a condom.

Had you read my previous post I included myself in the selfish people because I am a heavy smoker, and yes, I am saying that we have a cheek expecting treatment, which takes away from the innocent victims. As I stated in my other post many years ago when I started smoking it may have been fair to say that little was known. We cannot say that now, I know all the dangers, I preach them all too any youngster within earshot, but still I smoke.

Even allowing for the people like me who are selfish and take up NHS resources, the amount we use or are allowed to use is a very small amount compared to Aids, Transplant and the latest crazes, which include the use of Embryos and creating Hybrid Embryos.

Absolutely unfair and uneven.

If the decisions were made on, a financially fair basis or common sense basis we would look at which diseases cost the country most start on them find the cure and work our way down.

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Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by Levenax - 2008/08/08 22:17

LYDIA REID wrote:

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Smoking is the worst thing any person can do to ruin their own health and that of those around them. It costs the NHS Â£Bs to treat the multitude of diseases it causes and the government spends more Â£Bs on sickness benefit and the costs of tens of thousands of folk dying in middle age.

I enjoy your company on this board and I genuinely hope you'll consider giving up what is a truly gruesome habit. I have friends who say that the Paul McKenna book on stopping smoking was a big help especially when combined with nicotine patches.

Alcohol is also a major public health problem. It kills thousands every year from cirrhosis which is a particularly nasty way to die and causes untold misery because of violence and family break up.

The combined morbidity of tobacco and alcohol dwarfs that of AIDS and STDs so you are wrong to assert that the amount of resources taken up by the first two is very small - it's not.

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Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by LYDIA REID - 2008/08/08 22:26

InfrequentAllele wrote:

Lydia - I've shot myself in the foot by pointing out that doctors can't discriminate? I don't see how you manage to arrive at that conclusion unless you believe that people with HIV get preferential treatment on the NHS, but that's simply untrue. Perhaps you confuse the public visibility of HIV / AIDS with favouritism. I've already explained at great length why it is that there are such public awareness campaigns for HIV but not for MS. I've already explained how funding for health research works.

If a new and expensive drug for HIV patients were to come onto the market tomorrow, HIV patients would experience the exact same problems getting it as MS patients currently experience getting Beta-Interferon. When the anti-HIV drug Retrovir and other advanced antivirals were first put on the market some years back, the NHS refused to pay for them. The NHS used the same arguments they're currently using to avoid paying for Beta-Interferon for MS. Every time any new and expensive drug first becomes available we see these arguments about funding and access. Just last year it was a new drug for breast cancer patients which made the news.

There is an article about this very subject in today's Independent about the NHS refusing to fund new drugs for kidney cancer. It explains the process of drug approval quite well.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-wellbeing/health-news/the-big-question-can-it-ever-be-right-for-the-nhs-to-reject-drugs-that-could-extend-life-888232.html>

"Moreover, yes I do object to this in particular because Aids, abortion and sexually transmitted diseases are caused by a selfish and self-centred way of life."

What you're saying is that when funding is limited we should make decisions about health spending based upon the morality of patients. Your moral standards aren't mine, and neither of us have the same moral standards as the guy along the road. So who gets to decide what's moral in medical care?

I find it strange that you are proposing to stop funding the treatment of illnesses which can be fatal, but not proposing that the NHS should reduce funding for something like psoriasis. Psoriasis can be painful, distressing and unsightly, but it's not going to kill anyone. (And before I'm accused of disrespecting the suffering of psoriasis patients, I have psoriasis myself.) If you want to have a discussion about NHS funding priorities, why aren't you talking about reducing spending on non-fatal conditions?

HIV infection is strongly associated with unprotected sex. Throat cancer is strongly associated with alcohol intake and smoking. Bowel cancer is strongly associated with an unhealthy diet. Breast cancer is strongly associated with failure to check regularly for lumps. We are all responsible for our own well-being, and we all make bad choices sometimes. But you seem to be proposing to make sure that people's mistakes will kill them.

Did I ever at any time suggest that people are not treated, it is research and the cost of the treatment that is under discussion but if doctors are supposed to treat all why then are they spending so much on Aids and so little on all the other deserving diseases. Why are they spending so much on transplant and not on MS, why are they spending millions on the use of Embryos when it is proven that stem cell research is producing results? And yes read my reply to Lev above I do think the amount spent on sexually gained diseases takes up a great deal of NHS money. As I replied in a previous post I believe that we live, a selfish life and I have included myself in that group. Considering the job I do I know as much if not more than you do about the funding for the NHS and how it relates to every day life I do not get all my information from the internet.

I can quote case histories where a young mum lost her twins because she drove from Helensburgh to Glasgow in an ambulance, the NHS closed the unit in her area. A young mum who tried for ten years to get pregnant and lost her baby on the way to a neonatal cot in Glasgow. People with bowel cancer and many other types of cancer wait for an appointment with a consultant, wait for a scan, cannot get the drugs which could save their lives, they die waiting, many are non smokers, non drinkers and have a good diet. Need I go on?

The people with sexually transmitted diseases and the women who want an abortion have facilities on their doorstep they do not wait for appointments they have every drug available. It may be that I missed it but I cannot remember any discussion over Aids patient waiting for any drug. I do remember they big hoo ha when the Aids drugs were discovered.

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Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by Clare - 2008/08/09 03:36

Levenax wrote:

LYDIA REID wrote:

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I enjoy your company on this board and I genuinely hope you'll consider giving up what is a truly gruesome habit. I have friends who say that the Paul McKenna book on stopping smoking was a big help especially when combined with nicotine patches.

Alcohol is also a major public health problem. It kills thousands every year from cirrhosis which is a particularly nasty way to die and causes untold misery because of violence and family break up.

The combined morbidity of tobacco and alcohol dwarfs that of AIDS and STDs so you are wrong to assert that the amount of resources taken up by the first two is very small - it's not.

Smokers give 85% of every pack of cigarettes purchased to the Treasury! We pay our way in addition to our taxes and if we all stop tonight Lev you are looking at 5% AT LEAST on the basic rate to recoup the loss to the Treasury!

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Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by LYDIA REID - 2008/08/09 12:25

Levenax wrote:

LYDIA REID wrote:

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Well thank you Lev I enjoy your company too.

I never smoke in front of anyone who is not a smoker adults or children, not that they would let me anyway, I have done my job too well on the kids.

I am the social outcast who goes outside or into the bathroom with the extract fan on if the weather is too bad or it is late at night.

My twelve year old grandson gives me a very hard time over smoking. He says things like "what will I do if you die". Normally I would move mountains to take away that worry from him but with smoking I don't. The real problem is I have no want to stop. I think you need to want too stop. I cannot argue with you about the harm smoking does.

That is not to say I am not going to argue with you about something. I got the figures from one of the SNP MSPs about two years ago, I know I have them and I know the cost of smoking and drinking is far outstripped by the cost of STDs Aids and abortion. They will be on an old disk somewhere I have a mission to find them now.

Re:Are Scots to blame for the world we live in

Posted by InfrequentAllele - 2008/08/09 14:33

Lydia - "Did I ever at any time suggest that people are not treated" - I got the impression you did, but I am very glad to be corrected and that you agree all patients should be treated according to their clinical needs.

The issue of embryos vs stem cells isn't primarily one of research costs so I'm not sure what you're getting at there. I've already pointed out most research funding comes from the private sector.

You can't look at a set of budget figures in isolation. Stopping medical intervention in one area has the effect of increasing costs in other areas. Banning abortions won't generate cost savings which could be spent on MS, because it would bring about an increase in costs in areas like prenatal and antenatal care, and surgical care for women who have had botched back-street abortions. Banning abortions increases costs in other areas of public spending too. So the total costs to the public purse would be greater and there would be even less money available to spend on expensive new drugs for people with MS.

Similar issues apply to not treating or preventing STDs.

It's fine to hold the moral opinions that you do, but financial or cost saving arguments don't back up your case, quite the reverse in fact.

Even so, you still need to answer the fundamental questions - Who gets to decide on how the personal morality of patients applies to medical care? What moral standard are we applying? We don't all take the same moral view of abortion or embryo research or sexual behaviour.

I don't get all my information from the Internet either. I admit that my experience with the NHS is out of date, and it was in England where regulations differ from Scotland, but I did work in the NHS. My job was to act as an independent advocate for patients who had complaints about their medical treatment. I had to prepare patients' cases and present them to panels of doctors and medical investigation committees. Many of these cases centred on funding issues.

After leaving that job I worked in the voluntary sector and represented community organisations on NHS health trust committees. I spent a lot of time arguing against spending cuts to mental health services.

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