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Mr McCabe welcomed the report's recognition of the Executive's investment in the NHS, pointing to tangible improvements. He also stressed that Ministers had made it clear to the NHS that they had to improve coverage and quality of management information further. Follow-up in several of the Sundays (8 August) included a *Sunday Mail* piece asking "Where are our millions Malcolm?"

7. The issue of **slopping out** was the subject of a number of reports during the week, starting with reports on Monday (2 August) of a failed legal bid by seven 'A' Hall inmates at Saughton Prison to prevent them having to slop out. On Thursday, 5 August Ms Jamieson announced that the practice had ended at **Barlinnie**, following the transfer of prisoners to a newly refurbished 'A' Hall; the Minister described the move as an "important step forward for the Scottish Prison Service". It was also reported however that the practice continued in four other Scottish prisons. The publication (also on Thursday, 5 August) of the Chief Inspector of Prisons' report into **Polmont Young Offenders Institution** also generated significant media interest. Dr McLellan's description of the conditions in 2 halls where slopping out continued as "very bad" were carried widely in the press and broadcast media, alongside the assertion that "there was not enough food for young men".

8. Other items generating interest in the Scottish media included the news that the first Scottish Parliament staff had moved to the new **Parliament building** after safety certificates were issued; confirmation from the **Fire Brigades Union** that it would go ahead with a ballot for industrial action following the failure of pay talks with local authority employers; and the publication of figures revealing that **fewer tourists were visiting Scotland** while other UK areas enjoyed increases, leading to criticism of VisitScotland strategies. At the UK level media attention focused on the arrest of 13 **terrorist suspects** in raids across England; and the fears that more people could be susceptible to **variant CJD** than previously thought. Following a *Daily Telegraph* splash (Saturday, 7 August) government plans to introduce a new **five-in-one vaccine for babies** were reported widely in the Sundays, with *Scotland on Sunday*, the *Sunday Post* and the *Sunday Herald* warning of a MMR-style boycott; a formal announcement was made on Monday, 9 August. (See paragraph 14 for further details)

**Strategic Developments*****Cabinet Business***

9. The table at **Annex A** details the issues that have so far been identified as likely to come before Cabinet on 30 August and 9 September, those currently being considered in Cabinet Correspondence and those likely to be dealt with in Cabinet Correspondence shortly. It also details the Cabinet Sub-Committee, Delivery Group and Ad Hoc Group meetings that are scheduled to take place over the same period.

***Current Issues***

10. Allegations have been made of **abuse at residential institutions in Scotland** over the last 40 years. There have been a number of convictions of staff from Quarriers and List D schools. Ministers decided not to hold a public inquiry into these allegations as the system has changed greatly since the events alleged, but have decided on a range of other steps, such as improving the services available to adult survivors of abuse and releasing information held by the Executive on these institutions. This information will be available by the end of the year. There are a number of civil claims also proceeding through the courts, in which the

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Executive is a defender. There has been adverse reaction from some survivors to the Executive's decision, including criticism of the length of time it took to reach that decision. Mr Peacock is due to appear before the Public Petitions Committee on Wednesday, 29 September to discuss the reasons behind the decision. This has been a lengthy process due to the difficult and sensitive issues that were raised when considering whether or not to hold an inquiry. There were also internal procedures which did not work as they should. There is also a risk of renewed pressure depending on the outcome of current police investigations of allegations of abuse at both **Kerelaw and Kibble residential schools**. Kerelaw is a Glasgow Council residential and secure unit for those under 16. Kibble is an independent residential school for looked after children and will be providing 18 of the Executive's 29 new secure places. The Kibble allegations appear to be contained in number and nature and the police privately think their inquiries will conclude within a few weeks. The Kerelaw allegations go back to 1979, are numerous, wide-ranging and serious. Police work there may take up to 2 years. Separately, the Care Commission is leading a team looking at the current care regime and management issues dating back to 2002. Kerelaw is closed (secure and open units) to new admissions. The secure unit currently has 21 residents (out of 24 places). Since the average stay in secure accommodation is around 14 weeks there is likely to be a national shortage of 24 places by the end of October. Officials are considering options.

11. On Friday, 2 July, the Procurator Fiscal informed **people charged with sexual offences against 3 children (girls) from the same family on the Western Isles**, that the cases were not being proceeded with. The children and their foster parents were told the day before. The Crown Office provided the Social Work Department and the Children's Reporter with relevant information to ensure the ongoing care of the children. There are issues around police and social work procedures and the medical evidence which contributed to the decision not to proceed. There has been extensive media coverage of those who had been accused and their complaints as to the conduct of the investigation. The Western Isles Council has invited Social Work Services Inspectorate (SWSI) to conduct an independent review of the involvement of the local authority in this case as a first step to ensuring that lessons are learned by all the agencies involved. That work is underway and an initial report will go to the Child Protection Committee meeting on Thursday, 19 August. Decisions will be made at that time as to whether and how further enquiries are made thereafter. Northern Constabulary is co-operating and assisting with the review commissioned by the Western Isles Council.

12. **The Bichard Inquiry** was set up following the trial of Ian Huntley for the murders of Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman. Despite having been investigated for numerous alleged sexual offences Huntley was employed as a caretaker at Soham Village School. The Inquiry investigated child protection procedures in Humberside and Cambridgeshire Constabularies, assessed the effectiveness of intelligence-based record keeping and vetting and the system for information sharing with other agencies. The Inquiry Report, published on 22 June, makes 31 recommendations all of which were accepted in principle by the Home Secretary. The recommendations have been considered for their relevance to Scotland and Ministers have approved initial responses to each. A Bichard Programme Implementation Board has been set up by the Home Office with a co-ordinating group and 4 working groups. The Executive will be represented on all of these either by Education or Justice Department officials to ensure cross border compatibility in taking forward this work. There may also be implications for Health and Finance and Central Services Departments and a structure for progressing this in Scotland and ensuring that all policy interests are aware of developments and are able to contribute will be put in place shortly.

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