

Towards a Spinal Cord Injury Strategy

Presented by
Mark Ridler, Director of programmes, SIA

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The beginning



sia50
1974 - 2024
for life after spinal cord injury

A CALL FOR ACTION

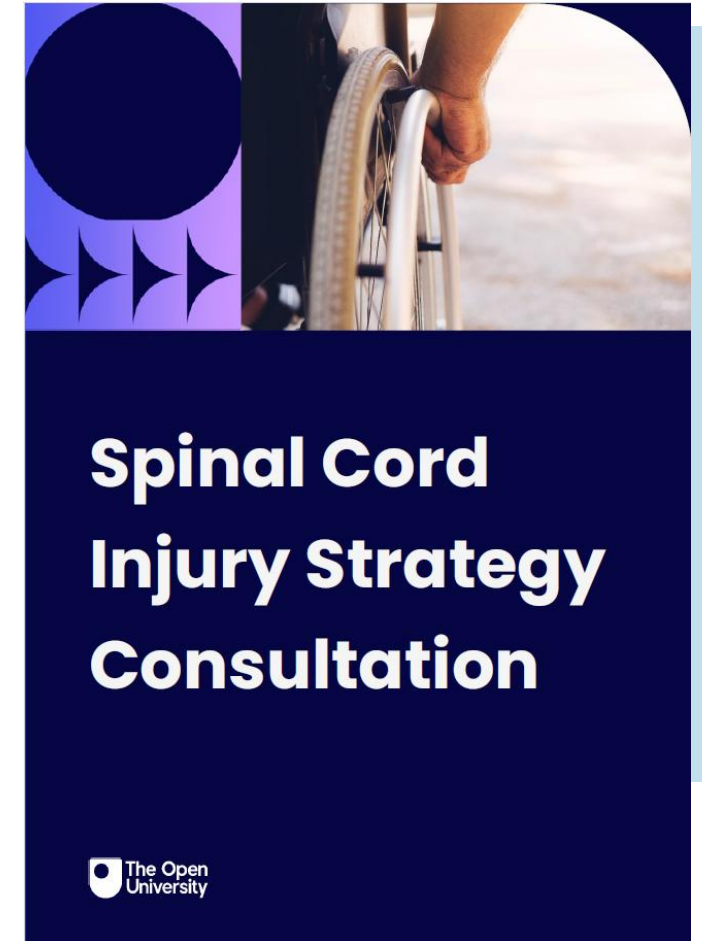


Seeking to address health inequalities for the spinal cord injured population, working in collaboration with the NHS and other key partners.

spinal.co.uk

National Consultation - Key findings

- **98% of professionals and over 88% of people with lived experience support nationally defined rehabilitation pathways — including clear admission criteria, wait time expectations, and staffing standards — to end the postcode lottery in access to care.**
- **Only 54% of professionals believe SCI services are equitably accessible across the UK, while 79% of people with lived experience say equitable access to spinal injury centres is currently lacking — a clear indicator of regional disparities.**
- **96% of both groups agree that access to housing, wheelchairs, and mental health services must be addressed in a national strategy — yet only 3% of people with SCI believe accessible housing is currently adequate.**



Key findings

- 93% of professionals and 99% of people with lived experience support mandatory, standardised training in SCI care across the NHS — a shared call to end inconsistent knowledge and care quality across regions.
- 94% of people with lived experience and 86% of professionals believe a national SCI strategy could significantly improve physical and mental health outcomes — a powerful consensus on the need for urgent, coordinated change.

11 Recommendations

1. Establish national rehabilitation pathways
2. Expand community and life-long care
3. Empower the SCI-trained workforce
4. Address housing, equipment and reintegration barriers
5. Ensure equitable mental health and psychological support
6. Strengthen paediatric and transitional care for children and young people
7. Meet the needs of an ageing population
8. Invest in research, innovation and outcome measurement
9. Strengthen data and infrastructure
10. Establish a National Patient Representative Network
11. Improve governance and accountability



<https://www.spinal.co.uk/get-involved/national-spinal-cord-injury-strategy/>



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

**Message from the Prime Minister the Rt Hon Sir Keir Starmer
and the Minister for Public Health and Prevention, Ashley Dalton
MP**

(To be read at the opening of the Spinal Injuries Association's conference Rebuilding Lives)

We are pleased to send our support to everyone gathered for Rebuilding Lives 2025. While we cannot be with you in person, we want to recognise the vital role this event plays in bringing together patients, families, clinicians, and campaigners to shape the future of spinal cord injury care.

The UK has a proud legacy in this field, built on the pioneering work of Sir Ludwig Guttmann at Stoke Mandeville. That spirit of innovation and compassion still guides us today.

We know that spinal cord injury is life-changing, not just for individuals but for their families and communities. Too often, people face delays in rehabilitation, a lack of suitable housing or equipment, and barriers to returning to work and education. What matters most is care that is joined-up, compassionate, and focused on independence: timely rehabilitation, safe housing, strong psychological support, and opportunities to rebuild lives.

Rebuilding Lives 25

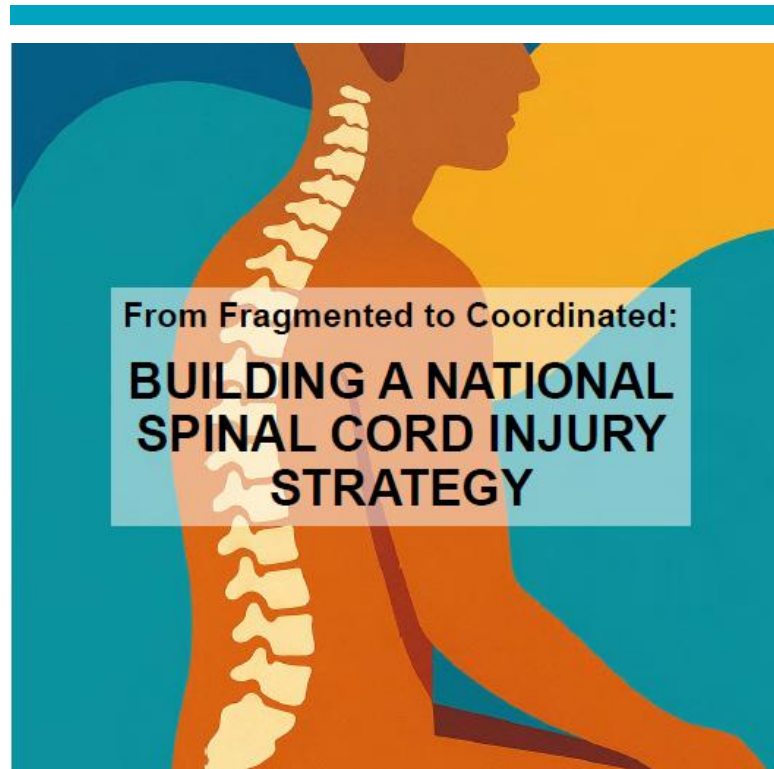
Consultation report launched

That is why *Fit for the Future: The 10-Year Health Plan* for England is so important. It sets out a vision for care that is closer to home, more joined-up across hospital and community services, and better supported through technology. With neighbourhood health teams, personal health budgets, personal care plans and an enhanced NHS App, we want people with long-term conditions including spinal cord injury, to have more control, more choice, and more support in managing their lives.

We also want to acknowledge the essential role played by charities like the Spinal Injuries Association in filling gaps, supporting families, and amplifying the voice of those living with spinal cord injury. That contribution is why the Government has introduced Diagnosis Connect to ensure that from the moment of diagnosis, people can be linked with trusted charities and support organisations alongside NHS care.

We commend the Spinal Injuries Association for its leadership and commitment in ensuring that the voice of the spinal cord injured community is heard loud and clear. This conference is a powerful reminder of what can be achieved when patients, clinicians, and policymakers work together.

On behalf of the Government, we wish you a productive and inspiring two days.



APPG INQUIRY – REPORT
LAUNCH 27 OCTOBER 2025



**Immediate Priorities
(1–2 years):**

Stabilise the System

- Embed national standards and accountability**
- Fix the data deficit**
- Secure specialist capacity and safety**
- Strengthen patient voice and early support**
- Tackle preventable delays in discharge**

**Medium-Term Reforms
(3–5 years):**

Build Resilient Infrastructure

- Expand specialist rehabilitation capacity**
- Establish integrated regional SCI networks**
- Develop a national workforce strategy**
- Embed psychological and vocational support**
- Integrate third-sector partners**

**Long-Term Transformation
(5–10 years):**

Deliver a National SCI Strategy

- Research and innovation leadership**
- Digital and data integration**
- Whole-life care model**
- Prevention and population health**

Next Steps

- Await DHSC response
- Ministerial meeting promised in House of Commons
- 10 year plan (including care passports for long term conditions)
- Service Specification
- Diagnosis Connect
- Lobbying for funding of SCI Database

<https://www.spinal.co.uk/news/building-a-national-strategy-for-spinal-cord-injury-report/>