

and care services to help keep people safe in their own homes for as long as possible.

We've already committed £15 million to a mental health innovation fund and, as part of our proposals for higher health spending, will seek to increase this investment to £100 million over the next 5 years. Resources will be directed towards projects that will improve mental health treatments in the primary care sector. The fund will also enable further investment in child and adolescent mental health services. Scotland was the first country in the UK to introduce waiting time targets for these services, and we have increased the workforce by 45 per cent.

We are also investing a further £100 million over the next 3 years to help tackle delayed discharges in our hospitals. This will ensure more spaces are available for hospital admissions and enable boards and local councils to deliver quality care for people where they live. Our plans also include an extra £40 million for new medicines.

We will invest more in specialist nursing care, with a commitment to new spending of £2.5 million, with the first allocation going to support patients with motor-neurone disease. We also support calls to double research funding across the UK to find a cure for motor-neurone disease, with Scotland well placed to play a central role in taking forward new research in this area.

Our approach to education is based on giving our young people the skills they need to flourish, now and in later life. The introduction of Curriculum for Excellence is a big

part of this, but we are also working to improve the learning environment and to remove barriers to education for our youngest pupils and for those entering higher and further education.

Our decision to introduce free school meals for all pupils in primary 1 to 3 is providing a welcome boost to the wellbeing of thousands of children, boosting their capacity to learn and helping to reduce educational inequalities. It is also saving thousands of families, many on low incomes, over £300 each year.

Our school building programme will continue, so we can further improve the teaching and learning environment. So far we have seen 526 schools rebuilt or refurnished under the SNP - almost 200 more than were delivered in the eight years of Labour and the Lib-Dems. Through our **£1.8 billion Schools for the Future programme we will continue to invest, delivering almost 100 more new and improved buildings by 2020**, on top of projects delivered through capital expenditure by local councils.

We will deliver increased investment in the year ahead to fund an additional 250 teacher training places - the fourth year in a row we have delivered an increase. And we are providing additional resources to local councils to maintain teacher numbers.

Our new Education (Scotland) Bill will focus on ways we can improve attainment, especially among Scotland's most disadvantaged children. Councils will have a statutory duty to narrow the attainment gap. The Bill includes a range of other measures, including steps to ensure all teachers are appropriately trained and qualified.