# Aberdeen doctor highlights severe health impacts of Raac housing crisis in Torry



An Aberdeen doctor has disclosed the severe health consequences experienced by patients amid the ongoing Raac housing crisis in the Torry area. Dr Adrian Crofton, the lead clinician at Torry Medical Practice, spoke with The Press and Journal as part of their Trapped by Raac campaign, outlining the considerable impact on physical and mental wellbeing faced by residents living in homes affected by Raac.

Torry Medical Practice, the largest primary care provider in the area, serves over 7,000 patients. Following the revelation that 504 households were living in Raac-affected properties, the practice has identified numerous individuals requiring enhanced medical intervention. Dr Crofton explained, “We have now implemented a code so we can track the people who have a health issue as a direct result of Raac. This isn’t for people who, say, have a pre-existing condition and live in a Raac house. This is about people who now have a health issue that we are actively treating because of the Raac crisis.” At the time of the interview, 60 patients were known to be directly suffering from Raac-related health problems.

Dr Crofton conveyed the heavy psychological toll the crisis has taken. He noted a significant increase in prescriptions for sedatives, sleeping aids, and antidepressants among patients who would otherwise not have required such medication. “We are prescribing sedatives, sleeping medications and antidepressants to people who would not otherwise have needed these. And these are not medications we use needlessly,” he said, pointing to widespread distress characterised by feelings of betrayal, uncertainty, powerlessness, and community loss. “There’s a lot of anger,” he added.

Apart from medication, Dr Crofton reported patients resorting to alcohol as a coping mechanism. “We know that being under stress can make you relapse. You’ll see… well, we are seeing, people slipping back into the things they had become free from. It’s common in consultations to hear of people reaching for a drink to help them sleep.” He highlighted the growing concerns over alcohol misuse and its severe effects on health, noting “we have some very young people with seriously advanced alcohol issues.”

The doctor also addressed the broader familial and social disruptions caused by the crisis. Young parents expressed fears for their children’s safety and the absence of local friendship networks following population displacement. Many families have experienced breakdowns, often triggered by relocating in order to care for relatives, only to face upheaval as housing options became uncertain. This upheaval has affected access to employment, schooling, and childcare, with increased social care costs anticipated. Dr Crofton remarked, “I really don’t think they estimated or had any imaginative attempt to consider these effects when they were considering options.”

Dr Crofton criticised Aberdeen City Council (ACC) for what he described as a lack of adequate consideration of health outcomes during decision-making. Torry Medical Practice was not consulted about the health implications in the options appraisal process concerning whether to repair or demolish Raac-affected houses. “I attended meetings at the time, and looked at the correspondence. Nobody came to us to ask what we thought the effects of this would be. In fact, we had to go to the council and say, by the way, health is an issue here.” In early 2024, the practice formally raised concerns, emphasising safe patient transfers and practice viability amid displacement. Dr Crofton questioned the absence of a detailed health impact assessment, stating, “It feels pretty reckless. How can you not have a careful, detailed health impact assessment as part of your options appraisal?”

In response, an Aberdeen City Council spokeswoman said, “An integrated impact assessment was undertaken as options were explored. Discussions were undertaken at senior level with the Integrated Joint Board.”

Reflecting on community attitudes, Dr Crofton spoke about perceptions of residents in Raac homes, noting instances of disparaging remarks by some councillors towards the constituency. “Most of the time when you visit these homes you meet hardworking people, in well-maintained homes, who are good, good people. The cheap stereotyping does not help.” He concluded, “The health and wellbeing of Torry people is suffering. It’s pretty grim.”

Regarding support services, the council confirmed ongoing engagement with residents through Housing Support Officers and the commissioning of mental health services from Scotland Action for Mental Health (SAMH). These services are accessible to any resident or family member affected by the issues linked to Raac properties in Balnagask.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)