

	Chief Executive's Report 6 April 2023 Board Meeting Professor Caroline Hiscox	
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Purpose of this report

As part of our continuous improvement of Board reporting and transparency, a written Chief Executive report is provided at each Board meeting to update Board members on priority issues since the last Board meeting which are not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

1. System Pressures

Since our last Board meeting in February, capacity and demand pressures have continued at a very high level, with contributory factors including a high number of acutely ill patients arriving at hospital, increased staffing pressures and challenges achieving the required rate of discharges into community to achieve the capacity needed in acute settings. A Hospital Major Incident was declared for a short period on 22 February because of hospital congestion, causing particular pressures on the Emergency Department and the Acute Medical Initial Assessment Unit that day and a significant impact on Scottish Ambulance Service. Declaring a Hospital Major Incident allowed us to recover the position by drawing in staff who were not rostered to work and providing additional leadership capacity on site to allow the hospital to operate as safely as possible. That incident was stood down early in the morning on 23 February and since then the position continues to be very challenging for colleagues and citizens. There was a debrief on 24 March to ensure that the lessons learned are captured and reflected in future planning for high demand scenarios.

Our colleagues are making extraordinary efforts to provide quality care in the most challenging circumstances and they have my ongoing thanks and admiration for all that they are doing. I understand and share the distress at the impact this prolonged period of pressure is having on everyone's wellbeing. We also know from patient feedback that many patients and their families and friends understand the challenges at the moment and are very appreciative of the quality of care that is being provided.

I continue to prioritise spending time speaking with as many teams as possible to hear issues first hand and to feed those into our response, planning and learning. The 'Ask Caroline' Q&As have restarted, and these sessions are an invaluable opportunity for me to hear directly about the current issues most affecting my colleagues. I have also been fortunate to participate in a couple of 'Brew and Blether' sessions- thank you to everyone that chatted to me about what matters to you to be well at work.

2. Review of capacity at ARI

One of the messages coming through very clearly to me and my colleagues in the Chief Executive Team is the need for reform to provide hope that the current situation is not the new norm.

My Chief Executive Team have assessed the underlying factors causing the continued pressures and we have concluded that our bed base within ARI needs reviewed to ensure we have the right capacity in the right places to cope with changing patterns of demand for acute care in certain specialities. We intend to complete this review of capacity by autumn this year to provide a firm foundation for colleagues for the winter 2023/24 demand pressures that we know will materialise. Providing the right capacity in the right place within ARI will meet one of the main immediate needs identified from colleague feedback on the current conditions and give headroom for the redesign work needed on pathways of care, to create a sustainable system for the future.

The review of capacity in one hospital site is part of a wider piece of work of fundamental home to home pathway redesign that will require 3-5 years to implement fully. This will require transformational partnership working with Primary Care, Health and Social Care Partnerships (HSCPs) and the Scottish Ambulance Service, and will also include capacity reviews at other locations as required.

We are committed to public engagement activity to explain fully the need for change to our citizens and design the future pathways together. We will review the resources required to do that work, learning valuable lessons from the engagement work carried out on Moray Maternity services discussed below.

The Board's Performance Assurance, Finance & Infrastructure and Clinical Governance Committees will be kept updated on the process and conclusions of the capacity review. The Board will receive a report on the outputs from the review later in the year as part of the assurance on preparations for Winter 23/24.

3. Moray Maternity Services

We are delighted that the Scottish Government approved our Moray Maternity Services Plan on 1 March, after it was endorsed by the Board last December. This formal approval releases £6.6 million of additional funding to enable us to start the recruitment process as soon as possible to provide the necessary expertise required at Dr Gray's Hospital in Elgin. We are looking forward to working in partnership with NHS Highland on the planned networked model, which will help deliver services across the region and lead to elective caesarean births recommencing at Dr Gray's Hospital in 2025 with full consultant-led services returning in 2026.

Engagement with local communities across Moray is essential to ensure that maternity services are developed collaboratively, particularly with those with lived experience. The recently published Community Engagement and Feedback Report is an example of our commitment to engage more effectively about services and

understand the needs of the communities we are here to serve. NHS Grampian appointed a Community Engagement Manager for Maternity Services in summer 2022 and she has visited many community groups and locations to gather the experiences which are detailed in the report. We will learn from the very positive and extensive engagement achieved by going to the places where our patients and families live and work, in future engagement about services.

The Engagement and Feedback Report highlighted recurring themes of accessibility, wellbeing and choice, with much praise for the services provided by the midwife-led unit and strong demand for the consultant-led maternity services that we are now working to deliver at Dr Gray's Hospital. The report can be read here: <https://bit.ly/MorayMatCommEngagementFeedback>

4. Audit Scotland Report NHS in Scotland 2022

The Annual Audit Scotland review of the NHS in Scotland has attracted significant media coverage and was discussed by our Audit & Risk Committee on 14 March – the report can be read here: [NHS in Scotland 2022 \(audit-scotland.gov.uk\)](https://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/reports/nhs-in-scotland-2022).

The observations and conclusions drawn by the Auditor General are not a surprise, and reaffirm that NHS Grampian's strategic aim to create a more sustainable health and care system by focusing on people, places and pathways is the right approach to deal with the challenges we face.

Key NHS Grampian initiatives already underway that are aligned to the four recommendations for NHS Boards in the Audit Scotland report are detailed in Appendix 1, attached.

My Chief Executive Team will continue to prioritise collaboration with partners to achieve whole system transformation, and will be a constructive partner with Scottish Government to deliver the priorities of the Recovery Plan within the resources available to us.

Professor Caroline Hiscox, Chief Executive
30 March 2023

APPENDIX 1 – NHS Grampian initiatives aligned to Audit Scotland recommendations

Audit Scotland recommended that the Scottish Government and NHS Boards should:

work with partners in the social care sector to progress a long-term, sustainable solution for reducing delayed discharges from hospital (paragraph 39)

ensure focus on staff retention measures is maintained, including wellbeing support, and continually look at ways to increase the impact of these measures (paragraph 50)

work together more collaboratively on boards' delivery, financial and workforce plans to maximise boards' potential to achieve the ambitions in the NHS Recovery Plan, by balancing national and local priorities against available resources and capacity and setting realistic expectations for the public (paragraph 78)

NHS Grampian

- is prioritising improvement of whole system working to improve flow across the system, with alignment of strategic planning with IJBs and daily tactical and operational collaboration through the Daily System Connect meetings
- has continued investment in We Care which includes evaluation of initiatives and regular reporting to GAPF and the Staff Governance Committee,
- is prioritising Culture Matters work, highlighted in a Spotlight Report in the How Are We Doing report at item 6 on the agenda today
- will act on the findings of the BPA survey of nursing and facilities and estates colleagues in 2022 and widen the BPA survey to the whole organisation in 2023/24
- has developed the Medium Term Financial Framework, item 7 on the agenda today
- is developing the Annual Delivery Plan priorities for 2023 – 2026 collaboratively with HSCPs against the financial, workforce and infrastructure capacities available, and taking account of the need to transform and re-align those capacities in an ambitious but realistic timeframe

urgently implement a programme of engagement with the public to enable an open discussion about the challenges facing the health sector in Scotland and help inform future priorities and how the delivery of services will change (paragraph 139)

- started the process of engaging with the public on the future shape of health and care with the work on Plan for the Future in 2021/22
- will continue to refine its processes for citizen, community and colleague engagement for each version of the Annual Delivery Plan, with the next version coming to the open Board meeting in August 2023 after approval by Scottish Government
- Is widening out the opportunities for co-creation of services, as described in Plan for the Future, with early examples including the work on Moray Maternity services and the New Pitsligo project
- will continue to provide opportunities for debate and discussion about Board priorities at open meetings of the Board which are recorded and available on the website