



Fiona Davies,
Chief Executive NHS Highland

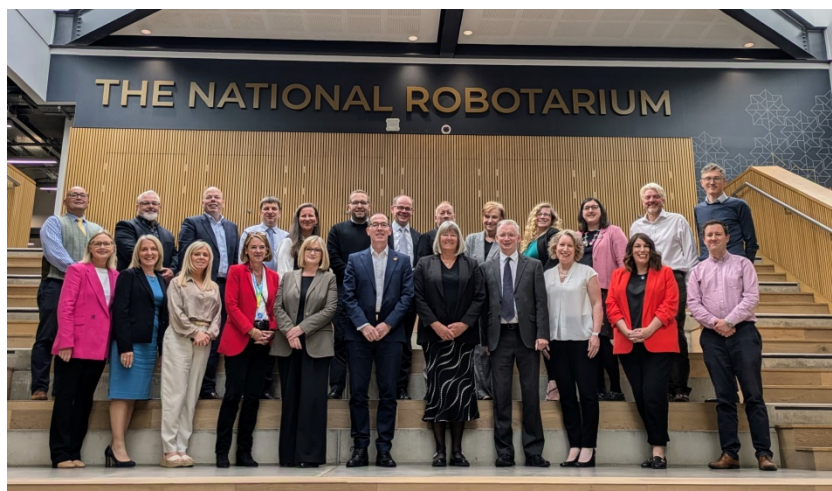
System capacity and efficiency

We have been working for some time to try and make sure that people receive care in the right place at the right time. Despite this, we know we still have people in our hospitals when they no longer need to be there because more suitable care, at home or elsewhere, isn't available. That's why we've recently renewed efforts in this area, bringing together social care, acute and community colleagues to proactively tackle the issue.

Actions include reviewing capacity across Care Homes, Care at Home and Community Hospitals and understanding where the opportunities may lie to increase capacity closer to home or in a more homely setting. This work responds to the Scottish

Governments National Mission to reduce the numbers of patients delayed to hospital discharge. Part of this work is examining enablers to allow more efficient and effective patient pathways, an example being the introduction of refreshed pathways that are Allied Health Professional enabled and will support the avoidance of admission wherever possible for the frailer population and to help ensure in-patient lengths of stay are kept as short as possible. Technology enabled patient pathways and making use of available eHealth infrastructure will also support this work.. This is complex work that takes time, but I am pleased to say we are seeing some initial results. We must continue to focus on this area, which is vital to the health and wellbeing of our population.

When we look at increasing efficiency and trying to minimise costs, making use of technology is a recurring theme. While I know many colleagues are early adopters, keen to make use of digital tools, the NHS and indeed the public sector can be risk averse when it comes to innovation. This was brought home to me recently when I joined other NHS Scotland Chief Executives to visit the National Robotarium at Heriot Watt University. There we heard of a pressing need to be more entrepreneurial, and open to working with researchers and businesses to reduce barriers to developing new products.



Inclusive care

Ensuring both our colleagues and the people we care for feel included and understood is hugely important for their wellbeing. Two topics in particular have recently highlighted this.

NHS Highland hosted a conference on the subject of Trauma-Informed Care, which revealed how many more people than we previously realised are affected by past traumatic events. We learnt that whole systems and organisations need to be trauma-informed, so that both staff and people using our services can be empowered to ask for and offer choices and ways to manage situations which could re-ignite trauma.

More recently, the Cabinet Secretary has drawn attention to the need to confront and tackle racism in the NHS. I have spoken before about my determination to offer a warm Highland welcome to staff and visitors from other countries and cultures, and am pleased that we have established an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Oversight Group to develop and NHS Highland Equality and Diversity Strategy. I look forward to seeing the impact of this work.

Visits and forthcoming events



I have been travelling widely across the NHS Highland area as usual, meeting our staff, contractors and communities. This included trips to Caithness to visit GP surgeries, Caithness General Hospital, and meet with members of the Women's Health Hub; visits to Lorn and Islands, Ross Memorial and Raigmore Hospitals; GPs in the Black Isle; and meetings with colleagues at both the Highland and Argyll and Bute Councils. It is always a pleasure to see our teams in action and it contributes to my understanding of the challenges and opportunities we encounter every day.

I also met with the Cabinet Secretary Neil Gray and Minister for Public Health and Women's Health Jenni Minto during their visit to Islay in August. Primary care was high on the agenda here, as we explained that in a remote and rural context pathways can be more important than service models, and support and training for generalism across both health and social care is key.

Mr Gray will be back on our patch next month, visiting the Belford Hospital in Fort William, and I know teams there will be keen to share their work.

We also have some events to look forward to. Speak Up Week, starting on 30 September, will see Directors, Staffside colleagues and the Guardian Service, our confidential contacts, touring the area to listen to staff and share information on ways to speak up about concerns.

On 19 November we will hold our annual review. This will be in the Argyll and Bute Council Chambers in Lochgilphead, and information on how members of the public can ask questions and attend in person or virtually will be shared in coming weeks.

Congratulations

Our quarterly Values in Practice staff awards are continuing to grow. The most recent nominees exemplify the very best of NHS Highland and I don't envy the judges the difficult task of choosing the winners:

- **Care and Compassion:** Holly McGettigan-Scott, Community CAMHS Nurse, Phoenix Centre
- **Dignity and Respect:** Mairi Wotherspoon, Advanced Dietetic Practitioner; Specialist Weight and Health Services, The Town and County Hospital, Nairn
- **Openness, Honesty and Responsibility:** Megan Cormack, Pharmacy Support Worker, Caithness General Hospital
- **Quality and Teamwork:** Jane Wylie, Clinical Pharmacy Team Lead - Surgery, Women and Children, Raigmore Hospital
- **Team Award - joint winners:** Roving Community Mental Health Team and Finance Team

Finally, congratulations to Evan Beswick, who has been appointed to the substantive role of Chief Officer for Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership. Evan had been filling the position on an interim basis and I am delighted to welcome him to the permanent job.

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