



Meeting: Highland Health & Social Care Committee

Meeting date: 05 March 2025

Title: Chief Officer Assurance Report

Responsible Executive/Non-Executive: Pamela Stott, Chief Officer

Report Author: Pamela Stott, Chief Officer

1.	<p>Purpose</p> <p>To provide assurance and updates on key areas of Adult Health and Social Care in Highland.</p>
2.	<p>Service Redesign</p> <p>Skye Lochalsh and West Ross</p> <p>The work done by the Sir Lewis Ritchie Steering Group in North Skye is being shared and spread to the wider community. An Urgent Care Group for Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross has been set up and in tandem with the Communications Group will ensure that the community in the area has a chance to communicate and see improvements in the service provided</p> <p>It is proposed and under discussion that the Steering Group will continue to focus on Urgent Care going forward and the work to conclude the 15 Recommendations will be delivered going forward in line with organisation structures and community engagement with Skye Lochalsh and West Ross citizens via the District Planning Group Process that will deliver the ongoing redesign and the local implementation of the Joint Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Lochaber</p> <p>Lochaber Community is ready to publicly advertise its Single Point of Access project as part of the Lochaber redesign of services. This project has taken a year to recruit and train staff to focus the public on one number for access to all services in Lochaber. Pilots and soft opening has proved successful with work feeding into the Community work being done to prevent hospital admission including a Falls workstream.</p> <p>Drug and Alcohol Recovery Services</p> <p>The joint tender (between DARS and HADP) for a new digital support service to create more opportunities for individuals on their alcohol or drug related recovery journey has now been published and we are hopeful that a new service will be established in early May.</p>

3. Joint Inspection

The Care Inspectorate (CI) and Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS) are conducting a Joint Inspection of Adult Services in Highland over the next 6 months. The inspection question is "How effectively is the partnership working together, strategically and operationally, to deliver seamless services that achieve good health and wellbeing outcomes for adults?" and will focus on people living with mental illness and their unpaid carers.

4. System Pressure

There have been significant pressures experienced in New Craigs that are currently being managed through a critical pressure escalation process. Although this has been a difficult time for staff and managers, new opportunities are being recognised from the increased collaborative working with community colleagues. Communication pathways are improved, a day of care workshop is planned to explore alternative options for individuals that are delayed in New Craigs and bed reconfiguration work is underway to respond to the changing demands.

5. Recruitment Success

Skye Lochalsh and West Ross

A recruitment group consisting of community and NHS Highland volunteers has been successful in recruiting and welcoming new staff to Skye. The 'Work On Skye' group provides pre-application support and post-application meetings with staff to ensure they are supplied with information and advice about settling in Skye. The accommodation available in the area is also shared with prospective applicants and the range of roles advertised includes NHS Highland roles but also the opportunities around Self Directed Support and the employment of personal assistants. It has also been possible to open all beds in Broadford Hospital for the first time due to the success of this group.

The group has also assisted with the recruitment of midwives on Skye and we are now able to offer on-call birthing in Skye from 3rd March 2025, after a suspension of this service due to staffing constraints.

Strathburn Care Home in Gairloch has been successful in recruiting a Manager and a Deputy Manager as well as some additional staff. The care home has been closed since last July due to staffing constraints and is currently preparing to open its doors with the addition of local staff and those moving in from out with Wester Ross. The community have offered accommodation to new staff and the reopening is being celebrated in the community. There are still some posts to fill but the outlook is much more positive and will ensure that care is provided locally for the public.

Skye Lochalsh and Wester Ross have also been successful in recruiting to the Integrated Team Manager post which has been vacant since September last year. The new recruit is an existing team lead and a positive outcome of staff development programmes.

Staff in the MacMillan service in Skye have recently passed the NMC independent Prescribing course which will be a great asset to the team and a way to support the public and assist those on a cancer journey

Lochaber

Five extra care home beds have been opened in Invernevis House, Fort William as community access beds and have proved very successful in allowing emergency access with 70 % being admitted from home and therefore avoiding a possible acute hospital admission with over 50% of patients returning home after a period of rehabilitation. These beds have now been funded and will remain as a Community Access Service to work across the District with GP's to keep people at home for longer.

Lochaber supported the Musculoskeletal Community Appointment day in Inverness and are now in the process of planning multiple events here to replicate this positive event.

Alness & Invergordon Medical Practice

When the Practice came under Board-management in 2022, it was solely run on locum GPs. Dr Paul Treon, Clinical Director and Aileen Cuthbert, Primary Care Manager have led a transformation process and have successfully recruited 9 GPs along with other key posts. The GPs have special interests in - education and training; lifestyle medicine; use of AI to help workload and improve communication and innovation; minor surgery list; drug and alcohol recovery support; child health; women's health.

A range of education activities are in place with a view to the Alness site being a training hub with support from NES. There is a joint initiative with SAS, with advanced paramedic practitioners now part of the core primary healthcare team. There is a joint initiative with community services to develop, mentor and support all advanced practitioners under a single leadership structure and provide rotational posts for staff to develop into the role of advanced practitioner.

6. Time to Care

The Time to care Project Group are meeting weekly and are working to embed the productivity tools implemented with community Nursing, AHP, Social Work, Care at Home and Mental Health teams by Meridian Productivity. Teams are using a set of tools to identify expected activity levels related to direct care or treatment, and are completing information sheets daily. Team leads, operational and professional managers are analysing the data outputs to manage their workload and demand.

Meridian Productivity completed training with the teams in their final week with NHS Highland and the project group are focusing on supporting teams to embed the practice and complete a weekly summary report for the Project Group. This will include the percentage of direct clinical care time achieved against a norm and also a narrative to be provided by District detailing the actions taken, issues being experienced and escalations to the Project Group. The project Group will then provide a weekly report to the HSCP SLT.

7. MSK Physio community appointment day (CAD)

The CAD was held in Inverness leisure centre over 2 days (4th and 5th of Feb), testing a new model of delivering services between NHS and partner organisations as a 'one stop shop' to help people with many parts of their life, in one space. 370 people were invited by appointment to attend; over booking expected capacity with an expectation that not all would accept. In total, 220 attended. Partner organisations were NHS Pharmacy, NHS Dietetics and Nutrition, NHS OT , NHS Pelvic Health, Connecting carers, Change Mental Health, Smoking cessation and NHS screening services, High life highland, Samaritans,

My self-Management, Versus Arthritis UK, Highland Welfare services, Citizen's advice bureau, Telecare and support from the public health team
Evaluation will take over 6 months to allow for overall outcomes to be collated, however initial data demonstrates:

- Pre event waiting list in Inverness district =60 weeks, post event =10 weeks.
- 20% attending the event were completely discharged
- 42% will require a follow up appointment with a Physio
- 27% have an open discharge (PIR)
- Remainder had a range of outcomes (steroid injection, support from an assistant, onward referral)
- User feedback - 4.75 out of 5 for experience , with 121 asked for specific feedback - 119 felt their concerns were address on the day
- Only 35 out of those canvased attended physio only, with many people visiting multiple tables for partner organisations. i.e. 43% choose to engage with High Life Highland for a range of classes and support.

Overall feedback from staff and partner organsations was also positive with shared learning on roles and functions, as well and networking both for service user benefit, but also for staff to engage in support as well - Connecting for carers highlighted that a number of their conversations were with staff who didn't realise they came under the unpaid carers definition and therefore there was support available.

Further data needs to be collected on actual outcomes at 6 months post event and PIR take up, as well as financial review on cost/benefit to complete the evaluation. There will also be work on thematic analysis on those that were invited but didn't attend to improve targeting of future sessions. Replication is likely in other districts, but also for other patient pathways once more is known about the overall outcomes.

8. Staff awards and recognition / retirements

Building on the rich track record of mental health nursing leadership, for the third consecutive year, and following a competitive national selection process, Lesley Campbell (Advanced Practitioner, Caithness Drug and Alcohol Recovery Service) has been successful in selection to undertake the QNIS development programme. The 9 month programme will culminate in the award of title Queens Nurse.

The Associate Nurse Director for Mental Health and Learning Disability nursing was elected as co-chair of the national Mental Health Nurse Leads Scotland group for a two year term. This strategic nursing leadership group reports into CNO-SEND and informs, influences and leads the strategic direction for mental health nursing in Scotland.

9. Strategic Commissioning

Annually the HSCP work with a number of independent and third providers of care homes and care at home under a tender waiver approach. Reflecting on the current market challenges we seek to maximise potential of new providers to increase capacity in Highland. We have a live PIN Notice on Public Contracts Scotland for care homes and care at homes. We are aiming to reduce tender waivers over time and make improvements to existing processes and timelines. The Committee may wish a more detailed report and assurance to be brought to a future meeting.

10. Enhanced Services

As previously reported, 9 new contracts for Enhanced Services were agreed by NHS Highland and Highland LMC. These were subsequently issued to Practices in North Highland with the majority choosing to sign up to the new contracts. Between 1st October to 1st December 2024 Practices began to deliver services as per the new contract.

Work is also near completion which will refresh the Enhanced Service for Diabetes Care in North Highland. This has been a collaborative process with Specialist colleagues in Secondary Care, GP Sub Committee, Public Health and the Primary Care Team via a Short Life Working Group (SLWG). The outputs of the SLWG were then taken into discussions between Highland LMC and NHS Highland in preparation for final negotiations in November 2024.

Discussions continue with Highland LMC for an updated service specification for Diabetes; and one for Care Homes. A further enhanced service specification is in development, in partnership with the Urology department, for the monitoring of prostate cancer patients in primary care.

The Care Home Enhanced Service is the final one to be reviewed and refreshed in the New Year. The current contract being 'rolled over' to April 2025 for now.

11. National Care Service (NCS)

The key issue in relation to the National Care Service model for the HSCP remains regarding the uniformity of the integration model in relation to its unique Lead Agency Model.

A discussion was held at JMC Development Session on 13th December with subsequent position papers brought to The Highland Council Committee and NHS Highland Board to propose the development of a steering group to articulate what the next steps in the process would look like. The steering group will have membership of THC and NHSH and is planning an inaugural meeting in due course.