

**Meeting:** Highland Health & Social Care Committee

**Meeting date:** 15 January 2025

**Title:** Engagement Framework update

**Responsible Executive/Non-Executive:** Gareth Adkins, Director of People and Culture

**Report Author:** Marie McIlwraith, Community Engagement Manager

**1 Purpose**

This is presented to the Board for:

- Assurance
- Awareness

This report relates to a:

- 5 Year Strategy, Together We Care, with you, for you.
- Legal requirement

This report will align to the following NHS Scotland quality ambition(s):

Safe, Effective and Person Centred

This report relates to the following Strategic Outcome(s)

Start Well	Thrive Well	x	Stay Well		Anchor Well	x
Grow Well	Listen Well	x	Nurture Well		Plan Well	x
Care Well	Live Well	x	Respond Well		Treat Well	
Journey Well	Age Well		End Well		Value Well	x
Perform well	Progress well					

**2 Report summary**

**2.1 Situation**

Over the last 12 months, we have completed the ambitions within the Communications and Engagement Strategy 2021-24, specifically relating to the

creation and implementation of the Engagement Framework and have started to action the aims listed within the 2024-27 strategy.

**2.2 Background**

NHS Highland has a statutory duty to involve and engage people in decisions and outcomes that affect them.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1978/29/contents>

The [2024-27 Communications and Engagement Strategy](#) set out a three-year plan for NHS Highland, including the following aims for Engagement;

- *‘Community contacts network maintained, signposting services to relevant interest groups*
- *Customer Management System in place to help services manage and report engagement*
- *Highland 100 Panel supported*
- *Training, guides, and templates available*
- *Focus on training and upskilling workstream leads for service redesign’*

**2.3 Assessment**

This report provides an overview of the progress made over the last 12 months, against the engagement aims above. It highlights:

- Progress of embedding the [Engagement Framework](#) and Highland 100 panel
- Progress with the development of the Customer Management System
- Training, signposting and support available
- Next steps and future focus

**Progress of embedding the Engagement Framework,**

2.3.1 The engagement framework continues to be embedded within NHS Highland’s processes and cultures. We have seen an increase in awareness of our engagement duties in various departments within the organisation and an increase in request for support within our team. The update of Planning with People [guidance](#) provided a useful springboard to raise awareness of our statutory duties and the NHS Highland Engagement Framework.

The refreshed guidance provided multiple opportunities to:

- access and signpost colleagues to external briefings sessions regarding the changes to the statutory guidance

- share examples of good practice, methods, and research, relating to engagement and co-designing change
- provide networking opportunities with other professionals and clinical leads that are planning or delivering meaningful engagement to support plans and transformational change across the country, for example, through the [HIS Engagement Practitioners Network](#)

2.3.2 The NHS Highland Engagement Framework has been adopted by key departments within NHS Highland, including the Strategy and Transformation Team. The Team have incorporated communications and engagement planning and Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA) within their project planning template. This ensures relative impacts and proportionate engagements with relevant stakeholders are considered and form an integral part of their process. Their approach supports the ethos of meaningful engagement within our work at all levels, and underpins the value-based approach to improvement and development within our projects, in a business-as-usual manner across the organisation.

We are currently working with the team to develop workshops to improve colleague skills, confidence, and experience in applying the Planning with People guidance and the Engagement Framework into their practice. The sessions will focus on our duties relating to non-major service change and developing and appraising options and future solutions in line with the guidance. We expect these to take place early in 2025.

2.3.3 The use of Care Opinion as an option to receive feedback to inform improvements is a further example of the Engagement Framework being used in practice. In March 2024, the ongoing support and management of Care Opinion returned to the Feedback and Complaints Team, following the successful trials with Sexual Health Services and the Radiology Team, who were supported by the Engagement Team in 2022/23.

2.3.4 In January 2024 the Highland 100 Panel completed a survey to gauge people's experience and perception of NHS Highland as well as to establish how people would like to engage with us (see Appendix 2). This feedback was used to start the development of the Engagement Hub and will provide a baseline for perceptions of the organisation.

Additional engagement opportunities were shared with panel members who had indicated they would like to take part in wider topics.

The work and main functions of the panel have recently transferred to the Engagement Hub. Rather than a 'panel' that individuals formally join, the Hub is available for all stakeholders to engage with NHS Highland as and when they choose, on topics of their choosing. It also allows them to sign up to receive notifications. Information and signposting to the Engagement Hub is on the NHS Highland [website](#).

### Progress of Developing a Customer Management System

2.3.4 In June 2024 NHS Highland procured an engagement platform, through Engagement HQ, for the term of three years. The platform will host the majority of our online engagement and will support the management of our contacts database.

A stakeholder group, made up of senior managers and team or project leads with input from service users, lay committee members and partners, supported early plans and the initial development of the platform. Members are currently developing plans to launch engagement opportunities to support and inform work taking place within their areas. The group’s membership and remit will be reviewed and widened at its next meeting. The role of the group will be to oversee the development of the platform and end results of engagement that has taken place to inform projects.

The approved DIPA and [EQIA](#) will be reviewed and updated, as plans develop, and the use of this platform evolves.

2.3.5 The [NHSH Engagement Hub](#) was launched on 28 November 2024, on a phased basis, starting with two of our established groups, The Listening and Learning Panel (now the NHSH Colleague Hub) and The Highland 100 Panel (now the NHSH Engagement Hub). We invited people to try out some of the functions on the platform, and share ideas and suggestions for how these can be used in the future. A staggered approach to awareness raising and distribution of the platform continues to take place, both internally via our internal staff newsletter, and with partners and wider community contacts through email and other channels.

Initial live projects on the site include:

**Public opportunities**

- NHS Highland Employability Strategy
- NHS Highland Equality Outcomes Strategy 2025-29
- Shaping our Digital Engagement and Online Communities consultation

**Colleague (internal) opportunities**

- Shaping our colleague online engagement and community
- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Workforce Strategy

We expect the structure of the platform to evolve over time and will use the feedback from the initial engagement projects, [Shaping our digital engagement and online communities](#) and [Shaping our digital engagement and online colleague communities](#) to inform the development of the different spaces and future use.

2.3.6 Protocols to access the platform, suitability criteria and accompanying guidance, will be drafted and reviewed by the stakeholder group, in early 2025.

New projects will be planned, scheduled, and launched in small groups, to help manage workloads and create a steady stream of engagement opportunities for people who choose to engage with us through the platform.

A measurement plan will be formed using the data collected on the use and membership of the platform. The benchmark created over the initial testing period will be used to develop measurement targets.

2.3.7 We will continue to work with partners and communities to reach those who may experience difficulties in engaging with us online and aim to host a focus group in early 2025 to further develop our engagement approaches both online and in other ways.

This will build on the information that is regularly collected through engaging with different groups. For example, we engaged with members who attend the Isobel Rhind Centre, to understand people’s preference and challenges with giving feedback to the services they use and with engaging with us in general (see appendix 3). This feedback shows the importance of continuing offline engagement, such as written, supported and face to face opportunities.

2.3.8 As part of the continued implementation of the Engagement Framework, we provide a range of tools and templates for colleagues to use on the [staff intranet page](#). We also provide bespoke meetings and briefing sessions, supporting colleagues to plan meaningful engagement as part of their project plans, change process or service delivery.

**Next steps and future focus**

2.3.9 As highlighted in this report there are many examples of where the ethos of the Engagement Framework has been embedded within everyday practice. We aim to progress this wider, at scale, through the introduction and rollout of the Engagement Platform. The supporting infrastructure around the development and ongoing oversight of these plans are in early development. The anticipated structural changes to the current Health and Social Care model will be factored into future plans.

2.3.10 A number of major programmes are underway, including the Lochaber Service Redesign (incorporating the replacement Belford Hospital), Skye Service Redesign, Primary Care Strategy and Programme Initial Agreement and Business Continuity Plan (PIA).

While the 2024-27 Communications and Engagement Strategy sets out that the corporate team has no resource to supply operational support to specific engagement,

there is an increasing demand for this type of support. A mapping exercise will take place in January and February 2025, to understand the current landscape, routes and governance of NHS Highland’s engagement channels and to identify any gaps.

2.3.11 A review of the Engagement Framework will take place during 2025, to ensure it remains relevant and in step with current guidance and good practice.

**2.4 Proposed level of Assurance**

This report proposes the following level of assurance:

Substantial	<input type="checkbox"/>	Moderate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Limited	<input type="checkbox"/>	None	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Comment on the level of assurance**

The adoption and implementation of the Engagement Framework can be demonstrated on several levels and plans to progress these further are well underway. Nevertheless, the substantial transformation required to develop sustainable services in NHS Highland and for the NHS Reform programme more widely will require high levels of engagement, and more work is required to quantify and support this.

The mapping exercise will increase our knowledge and understanding of our current engagement structures of NHS Highland, and potentially the A & B and North Highland HSCPs, and will inform the development of future plans and highlight resources required to fulfil these.

**3 Impact Analysis**

**3.1 Quality/ Patient Care**

Best practice engagement promotes the health and wellbeing of staff, patients and the wider community.

**3.2 Workforce**

This work supports the Staff Governance Standard, specifically

- Well informed
- Involved in decisions

The development of colleague communication and engagement channels supports a workforce that is informed and involved in important decisions. It also encourages engagement and for colleagues to suggest areas of interest and lead discussions on topics of their choice.

**3.3 Financial**

A reoccurring budget of £20,000 has been allocated to support Community Engagement. We expect an annual spend in the region of £17,500, for Engagement HQ platform.

**3.4 Risk Assessment/Management**

Engagement is no longer seen as a corporate risk, due to the production of the Engagement Framework and its progressive implementation. The procurement of the Engagement HQ platform will support ‘citizen’ engagement that will better inform our plans, strategies, and services. It will help us to reach groups who are less likely to engage by other means, at a time and method that are best suited to their personal and lifestyle needs.

The platform will also provide us with ways to oversee, manage and measure the impact of engagement plans and activities across the organisation and help us to identify gaps and groups that need tailored and personalised engagement.

The development of the governance structure will ensure that we are meeting our statutory duties relating to engagement, with particular focus on health and societal inequalities. Once fully operational, it will help provide assurance of the quality and standards of engagement taking place.

**3.5 Data Protection**

Information provided within this report has been taken from a range of sources, including reports, assessments, surveys, and shared feedback.

Where appropriate, consent was sought for data to be used to inform our practice and reporting.

**3.6 Equality and Diversity, including health inequalities**

The Engagement Framework was created in partnership with others and is based on what is considered to be ‘good practice’ and ethical approaches. Significant emphasis is placed on engaging with groups highlighted within the Equality 2010 Act and Fairer Duty Scotland.

Valuing lived experience and considering the impacts for those most affected by decisions, plans and developments is at the centre of the models within, as is engaging with people in ways best suited to their needs and wishes.

**3.7 Other impacts**

An EQIA and DPIA have informed development of the Engagement Hub and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.

**3.8 Communication, involvement, engagement, and consultation**

The information in this report has been taken from various engagement and information sources, including;

- [EQIA](#) for the online engagement platform
- The NHS Highland [Engagement Hub](#)
- Care Opinion Website
- Highland 100 survey, 6<sup>th</sup> January - 12<sup>th</sup> February 2024
- What Matters to you, Isobel Rhine Centre Engagement Report
- Request for Support data, via MS Forms

**3.9 Route to the Meeting**

This has been previously considered by the following groups as part of its development. The groups have either supported the content, or their feedback has informed the development of the content presented in this report.

- n/a

**4 Number of Recommendation**

- **Assurance** – To give confidence of compliance with legislation, policy, and Board objectives.

**4.1 List of appendices**

The following appendices are included with this report:

- Appendix 1: Assurance Report
- Appendix 2: Highland 100 feedback summary report 2024
- Appendix 3: What Matters to You, Isobel Rhind Centre Engagement Report



# Engagement Framework Assurance Report



23 December 2024

<b>Strategic Area</b>	Communications and Engagement	<b>SRO</b>	Gareth Adkins
<b>Programme Manager</b>	Ruth Fry	<b>Professional Leads</b>	Marie McIlwraith



Action	BRAG	Comment on progress to date	Focus for next period	Risks and issues	Challenges for escalation	Measures of success
Manage community contacts and citizens panel		Number of Highland 100 members: 32 Number of Listening and Learning members: 33 Total number of new contacts joining via EHQ since 28/11/24: 65, of which 22 are NHS Highland employees	Increase membership of Engagement Hub with community and NHS Highland employee members. Communications plan to increase sign up to EHQ by 200%			Increase in sign ups to EHQ. Comparison with baseline perception questions.
Increase oversight of engagement via Engagement HQ		2 services using EHQ. 5 projects live on EHQ. 5 Services expressing an interest.	Double services using EHQ and live projects.	Risk that services will see EHQ as a box to tick rather than genuine engagement. Mitigation: assurance reports of how feedback has been incorporated. Risk that too many projects could overwhelm small team. Mitigation: managed release of projects.		Increase in services and projects.
Support training		2 x bespoke Admin Training sessions offered since 14/10/24 10 people attended	Continue to provide training and signpost services to opportunities. Training to include Planning With People and support to use EHQ. Start collecting feedback from trainees.	Colleagues may not have time to attend training.		Steady numbers attending and feedback.
Provide assurance of engagement being used to support change		As projects close on EHQ, they will be required to report how engagement has changed practice or informed changes.	Support services to incorporate engagement into service planning and report how it has made a difference. Signpost to planning and comms and engagement templates.			Reports from closed projects.
Support offline engagement		Further work is required to ensure we meet the needs of stakeholders who prefer not to engage online.	Focus group to develop alternative approaches.			Focus group held, alternatives approaches embedded.
Operational support to specific engagement projects		Currently no corporate resource. Services are provided with training, advice, templates and access to corporate communications and engagement channels.	Mapping exercise to be carried out.	Risk that projects may lack operational support to engage effectively.		TBC

## Highland 100 feedback survey summary

### Sharing your views and experiences to improve services

In February 2024 we asked the 32 people, who have signed up to be members of the Highland 100 Panel, to share their views and experiences of NHS Highland and the services it provides.

The information below is a summary of the responses from the 29 people who took part.

The survey is the first one that the panel have been asked to complete and the information collected will help us understand people's perceptions and experience of NHS Highland. Including how well we involve people in their own care and treatment, as well as in planning and delivery of services.

The information will be used to inform our plans for 2024 and will help us measure improvements within the areas listed below, in the future.

Preference information collected from the same survey will be used to inform how we share information with you and support you during any engagement activity that you choose to take part in.

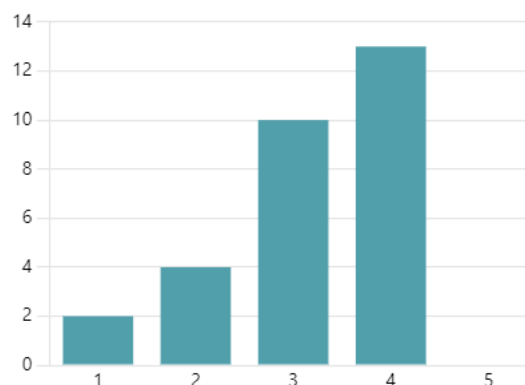
You can change your preferences anytime by emailing us at [nhsh.engage@nhs.scot](mailto:nhsh.engage@nhs.scot)

### Summary of your views and experiences



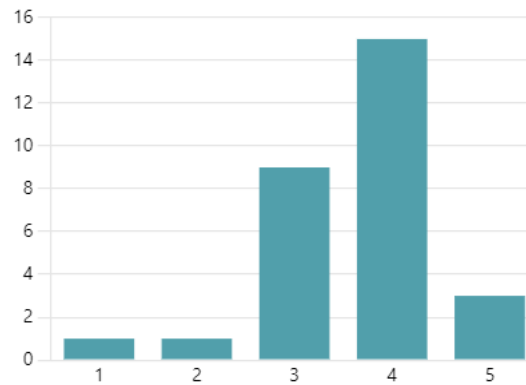
### What is your overall opinion of NHS Highland?

3.17  
Average Rating



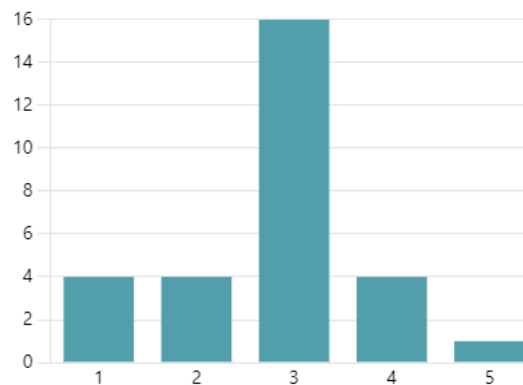
## How happy would you be for your friends and family to receive health or care services from NHS Highland?

3.62  
Average Rating



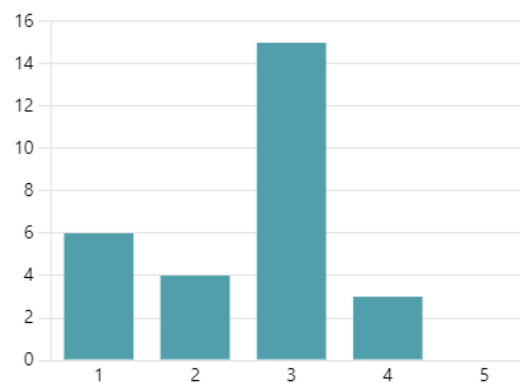
## How good is NHS Highland at Involving people in their individual care?

2.79  
Average Rating




## How good is NHS Highland at involving communities in designing and delivering care?

2.54  
Average Rating



## Main themes from what you told us.

	<p>NHS Nurses and Staff are greatly valued. Work pressures and culture can impact upon good treatment, care and relationships with those we care for. Some people experienced 'superb' care and treatment from members of staff, and the same people experienced poor care and treatment from staff members on other occasions.</p>
	<p>Consistently being listened too and respected, by those providing care and services is vital to receiving good care and for people's long term recovery.</p>
	<p>There is a perceived lack of change following meetings with senior managers and officials. Feeling that more people on the ground could be involved with decisions, particularly in remote and rural areas. Making sure the impacts from decisions are understood and considered.</p>
	<p>Better engagement within Mental Health Services. Recognising and supporting peer support opportunities, to enable people with lived experience to support each other.</p>
	<p>Patient experience is a huge untapped resource that can be used to improve services and peoples experience. Most people want to use a negative experience to create a positive outcome.</p>
	<p>Lack of face to face appointments for GPs can be off putting for some people. Feeling that person centred care can take 2nd place over pathways and procedures.</p>



**What Matters to You and  
what keeps you feeling good**

**Isobel Rhind Centre 12th December 2023**

# This report shows



The main things that you us told about, during our talk on the 12 of December 2023, at the Isobel Rhind centre.



The main ways you said you would like to talk to NHS Highland in the future.



The main things you said are important to you and keep you feeling good, from the leaflet.



What NHS Highland will do with what you have told us.



The ways you can share your experience with us in the future.





On the 12th of December 2023, Marie McIlwraith, from the NHS Highland Engagement Team came to the Isobel Rhind Centre to talk to people who were at the Day Centre.



We talked about ways to share our experience of health and care services. Like when we visit the Doctor, Dentist or Isobel Rhind Centre. An experience is how we feel and what we think about something that has happened to us.



We learned that sharing our experience can let people know when things are not good for us and can help to make things better for us and other people, in the future.



We talked about the different ways that people can tell NHS Highland about their experience of an appointment or visit to a health or medical service.

People told us the ways they would like to use, to tell NHS Highland about their experience.

See page 3 to find out more.



Marie left leaflets for people to tell us what is important to them, and what keeps them feeling good.

People agreed to complete the leaflets with help from Isobel Rhind Centre Staff.

Page 5 and 6 shows the main things from what you told us.

# The main ways you said you would like tell us your experience of a health appointment or visit

## Meeting in a group



Most people said they liked to talk as part of the group, at the Isobel Rhind Centre.

People said they felt happiest sharing things with people they know and trust.

## Talking to someone



Most people said that they liked to talk to someone in person about how they feel or what they think.

This could be a trusted person at the Isobel Rhind Centre or somewhere else.

## A Short Survey



Some people said they liked to answer questions on a survey.

Most said they would like to do this by using a pen and paper, with help from someone they trusted.

One person said they would like to do this on the internet, on a computer or smart phone.





In February 2024, 17 people from the Isobel Rhind Centre, completed a leaflet that had been left. They told us what was important to them about their health. Below is a summary of the top 5 things that people said was important.



Regularly seeing a Doctor, Dentist or other health or care professional.



Taking medicines, having vaccinations and managing health conditions like asthma and epilepsy.



Having the right support. This included the support people get from the Isobel Rhind Centre.



Knowing plans in advance and not being overwhelmed.



Getting enough sleep and being healthy. This included eating healthy food, exercising and being at a healthy weight.





The 17 people who completed the leaflet, also told us what keeps them feeling good. Below is a summary of the top 5 things that people said keep them feeling good.



Seeing or being with friends and family. Including family pets.



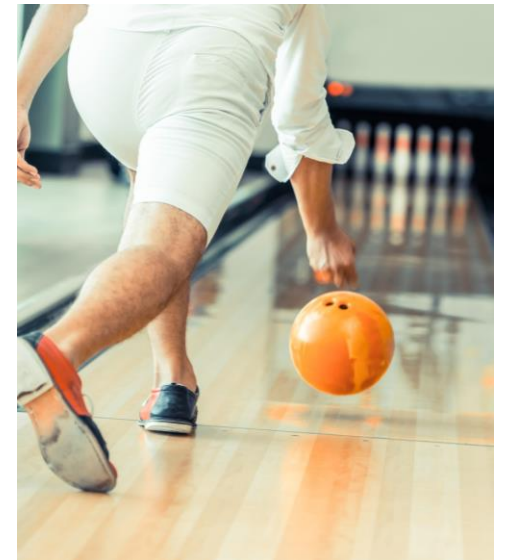
Taking care of yourself. By eating healthy food, keeping clean and exercising.



Looking and feeling good. Like visiting the hair salon and having nice clothes and nails.



Hobbies like gardening, walking, cooking, woodwork and watching TV, including sport.



Holidays and social outings. Like, going bowling, out to the cinema, bingo and eating out.

# What NHS Highland will do with the things you have told us

## Help make plans at the Isobel Rhind Centre



What you told us will help us to make plans within the centre that fit in with the things you have said are important to you.



## Help inform NHS Highlands Plans

What you have told us will help us understand what is important to people from across the Highlands. This will help us to make plans that best suit what people need.

## Help us to better communicate and engage



You told us about the ways you like to communicate and engage with us, and the things that make it difficult for you. We will use this information to help us get better at talking to you and listening to how you feel and your ideas.

## Help us to teach other people to communicate and engage better

We will share what you have told us with other members of staff and will work with them to help them get better at listening to people and involving them in decisions

about things that are important to them.



NHS Highland wants to hear about how you feel about your health and care services, appointments and visits.



Hearing people's stories and how they feel about their service or appointment, helps us to make things better in the future.

It also helps us to make plans that suit the things that people feel are important or need most.



There are different ways that you can tell us how you feel about a health or care appointment or visit to a service. This could be when you visit the Dentist, Doctor, Hospital or Isobel Rhind Centre.

Page 8 and 9 will tell you about some of these ways.

# Ways you can tell us how you feel about an appointment, service or visit.



You can phone the Feedback Team at NHS Highland at **01463 705997** and speak to someone on the telephone.



You can send an email to the Feedback Team at NHS Highland:  
**nhshighland.feedback@nhs.scot**



You can write to:

**Feedback Team NHS Highland, PO Box 5713, Inverness, IV1 9AQ**



You can become a member of the Highland 100 panel. Find out more by emailing **nhshengage@nhs.scot** or visiting our website at

**[www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/contact-us/highland-100-panel](http://www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/contact-us/highland-100-panel)**



You can tell NHS Highland how you feel about a health or care appointment or visit, through Care Opinion.

Care Opinion is an independent website. They make it safe and simple for people to share honest feedback about their care.



You can do this on the Care Opinion Website at **[www.careopinion.org.uk](http://www.careopinion.org.uk)**, using a computer, tablet or smartphone.



You can phone Care Opinion on **0800 122 3135** and speak to someone on the telephone:

**Thank You!**

