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Issue 3: May / June 2011

Talking about change



Colleagues will be aware of the quality improvement work already in progress across NHS Highland and we will shortly be identifying a number of major areas of work for the months ahead. Although there has been regular, ongoing dialogue between our own managers / leaders and a range of groups of local people, there remains an outstanding need to extend that dialogue to a wider audience and a critical group are, of course, our own staff.

Engagement to date with patients, carers, and other local people suggests that people are generally supportive with many recognising the need for their local services to adapt to the wider changes taking place around them. In particular, the changing pattern of health problems, the opportunities from new technology and treatments, and the wider economic situation which is being felt by individuals and organisations across the country. However, I, and the Board, recognise the need to broaden our dialogue with local people and we are committed to this.

The initial priority is to raise greater public awareness of the current situation and to have an honest and frank discussion about the fact that this has very real implications for local healthcare services. Having considered the range of methods for communicating on this scale, and reviewed the approaches used in other parts of NHS Scotland, we have agreed to provide an NHS Highland newspaper to be distributed to each of the 150,000 households in the area. This will be designed to provide information, invite feedback and will illustrate some of the ways people can continue to be involved.

The newspaper will be a new approach for NHS Highland although it is common practice in many public agencies. We will ask local people if they feel this is a useful way of keeping them up to date and will use this feedback to inform future communications methods.

Although there will be a cost to this, there is also a clear duty to take comprehensive action to ensure local people are well informed. The proposed action is just one part of our approach to communicating with and engaging people. We will continue and strengthen the existing means of day to day communication, e.g. through direct contact with patient / carer / service user groups, through Public Partnership Forums, through local partnership groups and working groups, through publications and local press features.

Who's this making a surprise visit to Raigmore Hospital's Children's Ward?
Find out inside!



Promoting Supported Self-Management

New NHS Highland, Voluntary Organisations and Local Authorities Partnership

Many of you will be well aware of the importance that is being placed on promoting the principles of supported self-management for people who are living with long term conditions. One way to achieve delivery of this is if agencies and organisations come together in partnership and share resources with the aim of maximising access to and the uptake of services.

Well, a new Highland, Argyll and Bute partnership involving NHS Highland has been set up to do just that.

It is called, Let's Get On With It Together and has secured commitment and participation from Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland, Arthritis Care, Partnerships for Wellbeing, Highland Council, Argyll and Bute Council, University of the Highlands & Islands (UHI), Argyll Voluntary Action, Volunteering Matters (Highland), British Heart Foundation, British Lung Foundation, Diabetes UK, Asthma UK, Epilepsy Scotland, MS Society and the Stroke Association.

The Partnership has recently signed off an exciting and challenging 5 year strategy.

The key objectives the Partnership has set itself are:-

- Promote a culture of supported self-management
- Identify and build on existing self-management resources
- Promote equitable access to self-management resources
- Deliver self-management opportunities
- Provide peer support opportunities

In travelling the road to deliver these objectives the Partnership has a number of work streams to reach the outcomes it anticipates will provide benefit to the public and organisations involved.

These outcomes will be:-

- Increased supported self-management choices
- Pathways and signposting to self-management resources
- Increased access to self-management courses
- People taking more responsibility for managing their conditions
- Reduced hospital admissions
- Reduced dependency on services
- Better utilisation of resources

A lot to achieve but the Partnership hope in developing and linking into existing work going on in this area to enhance the quality of life for people living with long term conditions.

One of the first steps for the Partnership was to appoint a project coordinator to pull together the work of the Partnership.

He is, Andrew MacLean and is based with Partnerships for Wellbeing and can be contacted at the details below. So, you will hear more from the Partnership and if you wish more information or have any ideas for the Partnership to consider please contact Andrew.

The Partnerships for Wellbeing website www.pfw.org.uk now carries some information on the initial work of LGOWIT. If you visit the site you can view work already commenced around building links to community groups across Highland and which may provide support for people with long term conditions.

Contact details: Andrew MacLean, Partnerships for Wellbeing, 34A Tomnahurich Street, Inverness; [email-lgowit@pfw.org.uk](mailto:lgowit@pfw.org.uk); mobile-07771451889; office-01463729997

'Staywell' Self Management Programmes

On Monday 9th May 2011 NHS Highland introduced 'Staywell' self management information programmes which can be accessed by anyone living with a long term health condition in Highland, or for those that care for someone who does.

Staywell Self Management programmes are web based questionnaires that aim to help people to test their knowledge of their condition and provide targeted information on the areas where a knowledge gap is identified. In addition, the web based system provides general information on the condition, maintaining a healthy lifestyle plus information on support groups and organisations that can provide further support.

There are 3 Staywell programmes available in NHS Highland:

- Staywell COPD
- Staywell Diabetes
- Staywell Self Management Support

People can access these programmes through the following website address: www.highlandhealthinfo-staywell.co.uk.

Alternatively, for people who do not have or use the internet, we have teamed up with NHS24 who have a telephone service to provide access to the questionnaire over the phone. An NHS24 call handler will arrange to talk the person through the questionnaire and will then arrange for the appropriate information and/or leaflets to be sent out to them.

The Staywell telephone service can be accessed by phoning 0300 123 2303. Calls are open from 8am – 9.30pm, 7 days a week and calls to the number are free.

Some GP Practices and Community Teams in Mid Highland CHP are using Staywell as part of their regular reviews of patients with long term conditions. They are encouraging their patients to complete the questionnaire before their review appointment and have been provided with access to see the results of the online questionnaires of their patients. This allows them to check the patient's understanding of their condition so that they can tailor their support, advice and education to make the best use of the allocated appointment time.

Targeted promotion of the Staywell service is being focused around the Mid Highland CHP area initially however anyone from the NHS Highland region can access the service and further more targeted promotion of the service will be happening with the other CHPs soon.

For further details on the Staywell Self Management Information Programmes, please contact Sue Menzies, LTC Manager for Mid Highland CHP (sue.menzies@nhs.net).

Self management conference 14th June 2011

A self management conference entitled 'Leading Change for the Future: Supporting People to Self Manage' was held in Centre for Health Sciences on Tuesday 14th June 2011. The conference showcased the partnership project with University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI), Skills for Health (SKfH) and NHS Highland as well as various other self management projects and work across Scotland.

The UHI, SKfH & NHS Highland partnership has worked collaboratively with other key agencies such as Long Term Conditions Alliance Scotland (LTCAS), NHS Education Scotland (NES) and our 2 council areas Highland and Argyll & Bute. The project has developed the concept of Self Management Champions within our workplace by developing 2 MSc level modules, on enabling self management and leading change in the workplace.

We hope that through this self management champion route small sustainable changes will be fostered to support

a change in the culture and encourage more partnership working in the workplace. Partnership working includes real person centred care and seeing our patients and carers as key partners in care, and working more closely with the voluntary sector.

2 legacies which have resulted from the Partnership are:

- Self Management competencies
- Health Action Planning tool (HAP)

The Self Management Conference provided health and social care professionals and their voluntary sector colleagues with an opportunity to learn more about self management and hear practical examples of how self management is being supported and used in practice. The day was a mixture of presentations and interactive workshops which focused on the following key themes:

- Education Solutions for Self Management
- The reality of managing a long term condition – perspectives from people living with LTCs
- Partnership working for service and educational providers
- Promoting self management and the need for cultural change
- Resources for planning for self management

A report on the conference will follow in the next edition of Highlights. For any further information please contact Maggie Clark, Long Term Conditions Manager, A&B CHP, maggie.clark2@nhs.net

Infusion developments for patients in Highland

In 2008 NHS Highland launched a review of its rheumatology service in response to new national standards of care, the need to safely administer new drug treatments, known as “biologic treatments”, and to meet new waiting time targets.

Rheumatology deals with the investigation, diagnosis, management and treatment of patients with arthritis and other musculoskeletal conditions - disorders affecting joints, bones, muscles and soft tissues.

As a result of the review a biologic infusion service (an advanced form of treatment given by intravenous infusion, which means they are delivered directly into a vein) is being developed across Highland.

The service was established at Belford Hospital in Fort William at the end of last year and at the beginning of May a Day Case and Infusion Unit was opened at Ross Memorial Hospital in Dingwall meaning patients can receive this treatment locally, instead of having to travel to Raigmore Hospital in Inverness.

Raigmore Hospital in Inverness has also developed its infusion service for patients who, as from the middle of May, are now seen in a dedicated Infusion Suite (pictured are patient June Williams and Staff Nurse Mhairi Fraser on the opening day of the Raigmore unit).

Dr John Harvie, NHS Highland Consultant Rheumatologist, explained that having this dedicated unit will allow a higher quality of care to patients and improve their quality of life.

He said: “By having a dedicated unit in place the journey for our patients is more streamlined, they are getting undivided attention, the wait to begin treatment has reduced and we can now treat up to five patients at once when previously in the ward setting we could often only deal with one patient at a time.”

Dr Harvie also explained that the unit can be used as a training resource for members of staff across NHS Highland which will allow staff in other areas to develop their skills that, in time, could further reduce the need for patients to travel.



Patients and Staff move into new Sutherland Hospital

On Thursday June 30, patients and staff will be moving into the new 22-bed Migdale Hospital, which has been built in the centre of Bonar Bridge at a cost of more than £8 million to replace the village's 150-year-old hospital.

And, on June 8, more than 200 people attended an open day to see the new hospital before it became operational.

Locality General Manager, Georgia Haire, said: "We were very pleased with the number of people who turned up to view the new hospital, the interest they showed in how it will be used and all the positive comments we received about the facilities.



"And we are absolutely delighted that we are now able to move into the new hospital. I would like to acknowledge the huge effort the staff have made to be ready for the move on the day."

She added that the new hospital will provide the same services as the old one, but NHS Highland is always looking for opportunities to provide services closer to patients' homes.

Services currently provided at Migdale Hospital include an assessment unit for older people with mental health needs and GP-led beds, offering a range of in-patient services, including palliative care, general medicine and less intensive rehabilitation services.

It will also continue to provide the physiotherapy and occupational therapy services for both inpatients and outpatients that were provided at the old hospital.

New group for people diagnosed with inflammatory arthritis

A new group has been set up to provide people in the Highlands who are newly diagnosed with inflammatory arthritis with education in management of their condition and peer support.

NHS Highland is planning to hold monthly Early Arthritis Care Group meetings after the first one, held at Raigmore Hospital in Inverness in March, proved very popular with those attending. Two further meetings were held at Highland Rheumatology Unit at Ross Memorial Hospital in Dingwall and at Raigmore Hospital in May.

The new group, which has been developed following the review of the NHS Highland Rheumatology Service, is being organised by physiotherapists, occupational therapists and nursing staff involved in the care of rheumatology patients.

Fran Bowen, who is a Senior Physiotherapist and Clinical Specialist in Rheumatology, said: "The meetings will cover education about the disease process and how to manage their disease, improve function and manage their medication. They will also cover what to do in case of flare, work issues, home issues and exercise. We also provide advice on the self help groups that are available to them and on national groups and helplines."

Ms Bowen added that she was keen to hear from anyone interested in forming an arthritis self help group in any area of the Highlands and would be willing to support them in starting this venture. She can be contacted on 01349 868765.

Infection rates continue to fall in NHS Highland

Infection rates across NHS Highland are continuing to fall with a noticeable decrease in the numbers of Staphylococcus aureus bacteraemia (SAB), Clostridium *difficile* (C.diff) and surgical site infections (SSI).

NHS Highland's SAB rates, which include MRSA and MSSA, are the lowest of the mainland Boards and over the last year there has been a marked reduction in the number of C.diff cases and SSI's.

NHS Highland's success has been highlighted in the Annual Surveillance of Healthcare Associated Infection Report which was published in May by Health Protection Scotland (HPS).

NHS Highland's Director of Nursing, Heidi May (pictured), said: "There has been a huge effort from all of our staff to reduce our rates of infection and it has certainly paid off. I think this report highlights just how much work has gone on at NHS Highland in reducing our rates of infection and all the staff should be congratulated for their efforts. However, while this is obviously a good report for NHS Highland the hard work will continue in an effort to prevent and control these infections."



Global Hand Hygiene Day



Hand hygiene is a really important in the prevention of cross infection and NHS Highland operates a zero tolerance policy to non compliance. To mark World Hand Hygiene Awareness day on the 5th May, the Infection prevention and control team in collaboration with Occupational Health at Raigmore Hospital had a Hand Hygiene information stand in the Blue Dolphin restaurant over lunchtime.

As well as leaflets and information on hand hygiene, Ian Dunkley one of the occupational Health nurses was present to answer questions on skin problems related to hand hygiene.

Between us we asked staff to fill in a hand hygiene questionnaire and managed to get a few debates going over lunch with most groups of staff who participated, this same questionnaire was circulated to all members of staff in NHS Highland and we should have the results soon.

All who came to our stand and filled in the questionnaire were entered into a prize draw. The prize was kindly donated by our neighbours Lifescan. Congratulations to the winner Pat Cole, Neonatal Hearing Screener (pictured

Renal Unit one year infection free!

Congratulations to Raigmore Hospital's Renal Unit who recently (26 May) celebrated one year of no catheter related infections! This is a huge achievement for the unit which they credit as being down to the implementation of the Central Venous Catheter (CVC) bundle.

(CVC) use is the most common factor contributing to blood stream infections in haemodialysis patients. The bundle, which is a measuring tool which links together clear actions which are based on high quality evidence, was introduced in an attempt to reduce infection rates.

To improve patient outcomes staff will ensure that all elements of the bundle are performed for every patient and every time the catheter is used. Elements include hand hygiene, observation of the exit site and dressing, cleansing and aseptic accessing of the catheter, antimicrobial locking of the catheter and assessment of the need for the catheter. All elements must be performed every time the catheter is used.



Years saved thanks to CCU development

Heart attack victims in Highland have had years of their life saved thanks to a development that was established in NHS Highland's Coronary Care Unit (CCU), based at Raigmore Hospital, two years ago.

Patients with heart attacks in Highland often require a life saving drug called a thrombolytic or 'clot buster' and any delay in giving the patient this drug can reduce their life expectancy.

In February 2009 the CCU team, lead by Clinical Ward Manager Charlie Bloe, set up a pre-hospital thrombolysis service after an audit showed only one in four eligible patients receive clot busters before they get to hospital.

Over the past six months a review has shown that now three out of every four patients have received a clot buster before arriving at hospital. Mr Bloe credits the hard work of all involved for this increase but is quick to point out that this must continue in order to achieve 100%.

He explained that the system works by ambulance staff transmitting every ECG they record from anywhere in the Highlands into the new CCU system using mobile phone technology. Advanced interpretation of ECGs requires years of coronary care experience. Sometimes GPs and Paramedics need some assistance in making the diagnosis.

A thrombolysis practitioner is available 24/7 to interpret the data and immediately calls the ambulance staff to discuss the diagnosis and hopefully increase delivery rates for thrombolysis before the patient is transferred.

He said: "For every one minute delay in giving this drug a heart attack patient's life expectancy is reduced by 11 days, a half hour delay can reduce your life expectancy by a year. It is vitally important that people who think they are having a heart attack seek immediate medical assistance. However it is also important that when they do that we ensure they get their clot buster as quickly as possible.

"Scottish Ambulance Service crews really engaged with this programme and the improvement since it went live is a credit to everyone involved and to the hard work that has been put in."

NHS Highland opens steroid clinic

Users of Performance and Image Enhancing Drugs (steroids) in the Inverness area will now have access to help, advice and support following the May opening of the first clinic in Highland set up directly for this group.

The clinic, also the first of its kind outside of Glasgow, has been set up by NHS Highland's Harm Reduction Service as evidence has shown that there is a need for this service.

Linda Macleod, NHS Highland's Clinical Harm Reduction Nurse, is keen that this group knows the support is available to them and that they engage with the service.

She said: "We are aware, as is the case throughout Scotland, that there is an identified group of people who use Performance and Image Enhancing Drugs. The clinic will be run out with normal hours, hopefully making it easier for them to attend bearing in mind that this client group will mostly be working and will not find it easy to get away during the day."

The clinic will offer needle and syringe exchange, advice on usage and how to minimise harmful and/or side effects. Blood tests provided will look at liver function, cholesterol, blood pressure and hormone levels.

The clinic will be held every Wednesday, from 5-7pm in the Harm Reduction Offices at 57 Church Street, Inverness.

Anyone wishing to attend can turn up to any clinic without appointment, please call 01463 717594 or look for the Harm Reduction Facebook page for more information.

Enjoy the sun, but do it safely

Too much sun, especially if it causes sunburn, can lead to the development of skin cancer, which falls into two categories – non-melanoma skin cancer and the more serious malignant melanoma – both of which are preventable.

Non-melanoma skin cancer is one of the most common types of cancer in the world. Malignant melanoma is less common, but more serious than the non-melanoma variety because the cancer is more likely to spread to other organs in the body.



Consultant Dermatologist and Head of Service, Dr James Vestey, explained that there is a clear relationship between excessive exposure to Ultraviolet (UV) radiation and sunburn, premature skin ageing, eye damage and skin cancer.

He said: “The most important things we can do to protect ourselves are to keep out of the sun at the hottest times of the day during the summer - 11am to 3pm from March to October - to cover up and use a high factor sun screen for the small areas of skin which have to be exposed and to wear good quality sunglasses.

Dr Vestey said an easy way to remember what to look for is to learn the **ABC** of changes in moles, particularly looking for moles which arise after puberty or longstanding moles which change to become **A**symmetrical and irregular in shape or surface contour, have an irregular, rather than a smooth **B**order and/or irregular or asymmetrical distribution of **C**olour.

Any change in a mole, freckle or normal patch of skin that happens quickly, over weeks or months, should be checked by a GP.

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Changes to copyright licensing - important information for all staff

From March this year, NHSScotland no longer subscribes to a licence from the Copyright Licensing Agency. This means everyone who copies printed or other materials has to take extra care to ensure you are not breaking the law.

It is an offence to copy a published work in any format (print, electronic, audio, video etc.) without the permission of the owner. However, the 1988 Copyright Act allows you to copy within the terms of ‘Fair Dealing’. Broadly this means you can copy short extracts from a book, or a journal article as long as it is for personal use only.

The Knowledge network gives each member of staff access to a wide range of material published electronically and is covered by copyright arrangements.

There will be more detailed national guidance available shortly, but, in the meantime, look out for updated posters appearing at photocopiers near you.

First boot camp for surgical trainees held in the Highlands

New trainee surgeons from around the British Isles were offered the chance to get a flying start with their surgical skills at a week-long surgical camp in the Highlands, with an outdoor experience as an optional extra.

The Highland Surgical Boot Camp is a new project run by NHS Highland, in partnership with the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh and NHS Education for Scotland.

The first boot camp took place between May 29 and June 4 in the Centre for Health Science. It is now intended to run the course twice a year.

The course was the idea of Professor Angus Watson and he and Kenneth Walker, both colorectal surgeons, are leading this project.

Mr Walker, who is also Associate Postgraduate Dean, said: "The idea is to bring junior surgeons from around the British Isles to Inverness for an intense and enjoyable week to pick up skills that are essential for early success as a surgical trainee.

"In the era of reduced hours, we now wish to teach by simulation some things that were previously learnt by apprenticeship. The course will include topics such as operative skills, communications skills, how to lead a ward round and patient safety practices. Simulation will feature very prominently.

"In addition, there will be an outdoor activities day in the middle of the week run by Active Outdoor Pursuits, which is based in Newtonmore.

Facilities for the surgical training during the week include a wet lab for simulated operations, a simulated ward area and experienced actors playing the part of patients.

New procedures help bowel screening programme reach more people

New procedures have been developed to ensure that long-stay patients, homeless people and gypsy travellers are able to take part in the Scottish Bowel Screening Programme.

The programme aims to reduce deaths from bowel cancer through early diagnosis, which improves the chances of treatment being successful, and it has been estimated that screening programmes can reduce death from bowel cancer by approximately 16%.

Men and women aged 50-74 years are eligible to take part in screening through completing a home screening test every two years. They are identified through the Community Health Index (CHI), which contains peoples' home addresses, and it is to this address that test kits are sent.

Therefore, patients being cared for within healthcare facilities for an extended period of time, people whose CHI record is not up-to-date and people with no permanent address may not receive test kits. This will apply to some people who are homeless and some gypsy travellers.

Two procedures have been developed to enable these people to take part in bowel screening and it is anticipated that these will be of interest to medical and nursing staff working within secondary care, community hospitals and other community settings across NHS Highland.

They are available on the NHS Highland intranet in the Policies and Procedures Library in the Public Health section of the Clinical Policies category.

More information about the Scottish Bowel Screening Programme can be found at www.bowelscreening.scot.nhs.uk/.

Work starts on new dental facility for Portree

Portree dentist Graham Smith cut the first turf for the new £1.32 million Portree NHS Dental Clinic on June 2.

The new facility, which will increase access to NHS dental services for both adults and children in the North of Skye, is being built by Robertson Highland and it is planned that it will be handed over by the end of January next year.

It will have three dental surgeries, a soft clinic room to provide oral health education and a dedicated local decontamination unit for dental instruments, as well as a reception, waiting area, offices and staff facilities.



Pictured (left to right) are:- Ian Renwick - Highland Councillor; Diane Forsyth - NHS Highland Dental Capital Support and Projects Manager; Graham Smith - NHS Highland Dentist; Raymond More - Robertson Highland Managing Director



Dr Michael Simpson who cut the first sod

Work starts on Golspie Greenspace project

Work has started on transforming the grounds of the Lawson Memorial Hospital at Golspie in Sutherland into an inviting "Greenspace" for the enjoyment of patients, staff and visitors to the site.

Contractors, G F Job Limited of Nairn, started work on site on May 23 and expect to complete the £50,000 project by the end of July.

Work will include the creation of a network of accessible footpaths and a much needed alternative pedestrian access into the hospital, removing the need for people to walk along the entrance road. The project also includes pruning and removing dead shrubs and trees and there are plans for a flower and herb garden with raised beds.

Learning Disability Service holds Health Promotion Event

The South East Highland Community Learning Disability Nursing Service held a successful Health Promotion Event at Inshes Church Inverness on the 14th June 2011.

The idea was to roll several mainstream national and worldwide annual calendar health events into one event. We hoped to make this event as stimulating and interactive as possible to inspire and empower people with learning disabilities to take some control and responsibility for their own lifestyles and health impact.

Staff were able to advise and promote to visitors the benefits of healthy living through various methods under the umbrella of 'Know Your Numbers' which included blood pressure, height, weight and waist measurements. Speech and Language Therapists were on hand to assist visitors in understanding how communication aids can be utilised in supporting visitors to follow recipes and health eating guidelines.

The Accessible Information Officer Dave Hughes was there to promote the benefits his service can provide to users of the health care service and information about Autism was provided by Faith Wilson (pictured),

Professional Lead Nurse LD Services South East CHP, with samples, tips and hints to help with specific sensory differences which need to be acknowledged by health professionals when offering a health service. Other stands included sleep management and body awareness (pictured with Mark Butcher, Staff Nurse in Learning Disabilities), as well as information and advice on bowel screening, smoking and alcohol awareness.



Feedback from the event has been very positive and there are strong indicators that this event should happen again with some new ideas to make it even better the next time!



Coronary care staff hear the beat

As part of Heart Rhythm Week (6th – 12th June) staff from Raigmore Hospital's Coronary Care Unit manned an information stand and carrying out pulse checks in the hospital.

The aim of the week was to promote the use of pulse checks when a patient visits their GP surgery; encourage people to check their own pulse as part of a regular health regime and raise awareness of how a simple pulse check can identify arrhythmias.

With this in mind members of the public coming in to the hospital had the opportunity to have their pulse checked and will also be taught how to take their own pulse correctly.



Planning for good oral health

Planning for good oral health should be integrated into national health and homelessness policies in Scotland, according to a major report launched in May.

The Smile4life report is based on a survey of more than 850 homeless people across Scotland. It found that homeless people had a higher than normal rate of decayed and missing teeth, suggesting that many attended for dental treatment only when in an emergency and when experiencing pain.

“Oral health is an issue for many homeless people and should be addressed through wider strategies and policies aimed at helping homeless populations,” said Professor Ruth Freeman, of the Dental Health Services Research Unit (DHSRU), University of Dundee and NHS Highland.



“Poor dental health obviously affects people’s ability to eat, speak and smile, and so it affects their quality of life and psychological wellbeing. For instance dental anxiety among homeless people is about double the rate found in the rest of the population. So we see oral health as being part of the wider set of problems that many homeless people face.”

Professor Freeman said many of the homeless people surveyed realised they needed help with their teeth but often other priorities prevented them from seeking treatment. Therefore there is a need to provide appropriate oral health care for homeless people so they may see a dentist to monitor their oral health. It is suggested that this process should be incorporated into the whole range of services which are accessed by homeless people.

The Scottish Hospitals Adventure Group.

We are a group of hospital workers who from time to time, in order to let off steam, have thrills or whatever, dangle from, jump off/out of, dive into, fly, drive, sail, climb up, fall off or eat all sorts of things.

We started off with a skydive in 2006 and have been doing things on a fairly regular basis ever since.

Our next adventure will be gliding over the Cairngorms some time in July or August.

Previous outings have included, gliding, rock climbing, skydiving, abseiling off the Forth Rail Bridge, hill walking,



aerial assault course, sailing, water skiing, scuba diving, bungee jumping, go kart racing, Honda pilot racing (off road go karts). We even had a trip to Ikea and an expedition to the best cake shop in Scotland!

Outings on the list for the future include more of the above and other things such as paragliding, canyoning, zorbing, white water rafting and anything else we can think of.

Most people come to participate but some just come to watch and others just come for the cake. Anyone with any sort of association with the health service is welcome to join us, including partners and family.

If anyone would like to be included in any or all future events they can get in touch with me, Ed Molden, on 01463 708242.

Reasons to be *cheerful*

Easter Ross mums are first volunteers to complete UNICEF breastfeeding course

A group of 10 Easter Ross mums are the first volunteers to complete the UNICEF breastfeeding management course which has previously only been delivered to staff in Highland.

The women, who answered an NHS Highland appeal for mothers who had breastfed their own babies and wanted to help other mums to breastfeed successfully, completed a four-week training course to become volunteer breastfeeding peer supporters.

They then started contacting new mums soon after they leave hospital to offer them help and support from someone with firsthand experience. The volunteers also run local breastfeeding support groups in Invergordon, Inverness and Golspie.

In the meantime, they have been attending training sessions for the UNICEF course at the Averon Leisure Centre in Alness and they completed the course in May.

At their final training session, they were presented with certificates as a record of their achievement. They also had a chance to meet local health professionals to discuss the on-going links between the volunteers and local health providers.

Lands End to John O'Groats Challenge

Two brothers took to their bikes to raise money for the MacMillan Unit based at Raigmore Hospital in Inverness in memory of their mother, Shirley Kirk, who passed away in July 2010.

Craig and Mark Kirk (pictured l-r) cycled from Lands End to John O'Groats, unsupported, over a period of ten days at the end of May with all proceeds raised from this charity bike ride going towards the unit.

With over £3000 raised and more coming in through offline donations the brothers have easily beaten their £1500 target.



Both brothers were invited to Raigmore Hospital to meet the staff and get a tour of the department they raised money for. A warm welcome was given by all who met them.

Positive feedback from patient survey

All the patients who took part in a survey of substance misuse services at Osprey House in Inverness made positive comments about the service they received.

The patient questionnaire, which was linked with National Quality Standards for Substance Misuse, was completed by 51 patients. There were at least 42 positive responses to all 11 questions, with four of them receiving 50 positive responses.

The questions covered all aspects of the service and the care they received, including the support provided, their relationship with their key worker and whether they had been treated with dignity and respect.

Patients were also asked for comments on how the service could be improved. There were 14 responses all of which were positive. They included "All is good, everyone who works in this establishment is very good at what they do", "Can't think of anything. Service excellent" and "Thank you Osprey for all your help".

Staff were very encouraged by the comments as they constantly strive to offer a service where patients feel supported. Service changes appear to have enhanced their ability to meet their patients' needs and they will continue to build on this.



A family's thanks

Big thanks to the Blackwood family who donated £1000 to the Bignold Wing in Caithness General following the death of their mum Wendy.

Grateful thanks to the family for this very generous donation which will go towards patient care.

New locum consultant physician for Caithness General Hospital



Dr Joanna Wojciechowska (pictured) has taken up a one-year post as Locum Consultant Physician in general medicine at Caithness General Hospital in Wick.

Dr Wojciechowska, who has been working at Raigmore Hospital, completed all her medical, education, training and qualifications in Poland.

She said: "For someone from a different medical reality, Caithness General Hospital is a great opportunity to widen professional horizons, but first of all it's a fantastic possibility to live in the most beautiful part of Europe."



Silver anniversary for renal unit

Renal technician, Colin Walker (pictured), will have worked in the renal department at Raigmore Hospital for 25 years this month (June) and his colleagues could not let the occasion go unnoticed.

A customised cake, in the shape of a dialysis machine, was ordered and a surprise tea party was held in the unit to make the occasion.

Occupational Health achieve business excellence award

The hard work and dedication of staff at NHS Highland Occupational Health Service has been honoured in spectacular fashion at the prestigious Scottish Awards for Business Excellence gala lunch organised by Quality Scotland and held at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre.

Staff at the Raigmore Hospital based department, is celebrating their success in the coveted Committed to Excellence category – one of the highlights of the prestigious awards event. Their success recognised the Occupational Health unit as maintaining a consistent high level of 'best practice' quality procedures within the scope of its business excellence strategy.



Dr Steve Ryder, Director of Occupational Health Service, NHS Highland Occupational Health commented; "This award has been won thanks to the sterling effort shown by all staff across the Scottish Highlands. They do so much for both employees and employers. They enrich the lives of others and much of what they do often goes unheralded. This 'Committed to Excellence' Award gives them recognition of just how important a role they play amongst the people they help.

In the past year, we have seen not just some extraordinary work and outstanding achievement carried out by the unit, but a major shift in how the importance of the wider impact of what we do is appreciated by community groups across a large part of the country from Wick to Kingussie, Skye to Nairn and also into Argyll & Bute."

NHS Highland Consultant is made President of prestigious medical organisation

NHS Highland Consultant Dermatologist, Dr James Vestey, has been made President of the Dermatology Section of the Royal Society of Medicine (RSM) – the first time anyone from the Highlands has held this office.

He took up the presidency in June and will hold the office for a year.

Dr Vestey, who is also Head of Service for Dermatology, explained that the Dermatology Section of the RSM is one of the main educational bodies for senior dermatologists in the UK.

He said: "It is a great honour to be asked to head-up such a prestigious organisation and I look forward to the challenges of the year ahead."

Dr Vestey has been a consultant with NHS Highland since 1997 and a member of the RSM's Dermatology Section for 28 years. He became a member of the Dermatology Section Council in 2002.



Congratulation to frontline leaders

Lorraine Beigley and Kerrie Maclean were amongst 73 Graduates of the NES Front Line Leadership & Management Course delivered through UHI and Du Montford University.

Derek Feeley, Chief Executive of NHS Scotland provided the Keynote Address and then presented the graduates with their certificates, while Malcolm Wright, Chief Executive of NHS Education for Scotland gave a personal perspective on developing as a leader in the NHS.

The course was an intensive 15 months consisting of 4 modules completed using on-line learning supported by 3 face to face workshops with a tutor. All the graduates were congratulated on their achievement, especially considering that we all completed this course whilst delivering our substantive posts, managing our family lives and dealing with on-line challenges.

MFR Cash for Kids day of support for the Archie Campaign - to raise £1m for Raigmore Hospital's Children's Ward

Since the Archie Foundation, supported by the Inverness Courier, launched their ambitious appeal to raise £1m in two years to allow the refurbishment of the Children's Ward at Raigmore Hospital the donations and best wishes have been coming in thick and fast.



In support of the campaign MFR Cash for Kids offered to do a day of fundraising for the Archie Foundation and on 27th May they spent a day broadcasting live from the ward, interviewing patients, their families and staff. The event has raised thousands for the appeal, a clearer total will be available at the end of the month.

Girlband Parade also paid a surprise visit to the ward, singing a few of their songs and meeting the patients who were in the ward on the day.



Pictured are scenes from the day, including the visit from Parade and our very own Charge Nurse April Emmott being interviewed live on air.



Letters to NHS Highland...

Just to say thanks for the swift, friendly and useful service I received this morning at Raigmore A&E. I've been made aware that some folks have been a little critical, at times, of the service at Raigmore so here's my own contribution, which I hope you can add to what I would imagine are many positive experiences of Raigmore.

I have nothing but praise for the four members of staff I came across; the receptionist lassie, the nurse who came to see me within minutes of my arrival, the Dr. and the Radiologist who sorted me out equally quickly. Regrettably, I cannot remember their names (worried and fretting as I was.)

If you can determine who these people were, then please thank them on my behalf.

A Patient via email

I attended the ultrasound unit at Raigmore today. Though the examination was short and routine, I was very pleased with the service I received from the staff in the examination room.

The nurse gave me a lovely smile on entry and showed me real dignity when I had to undress. The Doctor was professional and showed me the same dignity, and he talked openly about what he was doing and what he found. They both gave the impression of being a first-class team and they put me entirely at ease.

Even better, they made me feel like a person and I knew intuitively that I was in good hands. Please be kind enough to pass on my thanks to them their manager.

A Patient from Inverness

May I congratulate Oban and Lorn Hospital on the quality of the food you offer to patients. The menu is adventurous and appetising. I can say that I have enjoyed every course of every meal. I congratulate you and your staff for having contributed so well to my recovery.

A Patient from Argyll and Bute

I was recently on holiday in Fort William and became unwell and was admitted to Belford Hospital.

I would just like to let you know that I was treated so well by all the staff in the hospital and was wondering if it would be possible for you to pass my thanks on to them. They were very kind to me, especially as I was so far away from home.

I think that many people love to complain so I felt it was very important for me to pass on my husband's and my thanks for the wonderful way we were treated.

A Patient from Kent

Need to know...

New way to request work from eHealth

The eHealth Department is changing the way that it accepts requests for new pieces of work from **Monday 1st August 2011**.

From this date, we would be obliged if you could assist us with this new process by using the eHealth Business Request (NEBREQ) form located on the eHealth Frontline Services page for any piece of work that you require us to undertake. This will allow us to provide you with a more relative service. We will review your request and respond to you with one of the following:

- Accept your request as 'Business as Usual'. Your request will be sent to the appropriate team for action. You will receive an email informing you of the expected completion date.
- Inform you that your request is of the size or scope that requires it to be reviewed by the New eHealth Business Advisory Group (NeBag).
- Ask you for more information.

We hope that through this new process we will be able to clearly prioritise the most important requests to meet the strategic business needs of NHS Highland and communicate effectively with our users.

I've done Equality and Diversity: Core Principles training – what next?

Most of you will know that Equality and Diversity is one of the core dimensions on your KSF. One of the easiest ways to meet this requirement is to attend an Equality and Diversity Core Principles session. The session usually provokes lots of good debate and gives you ideas to take back to the workplace. Core principles gives you a good grounding in equality issues, but if you've done this and want to take the next step, there are other courses that can help develop particular skills for you.

Interpreting Brief gives you the opportunity to learn more about the interpretation services we use and to practice your skills. We have found that while most staff now know how to book an interpreter, there are still top tips and skills you can learn to ensure you are working with interpreters effectively. This course gives you the opportunity to iron out any issues you have come across and establish best practice for using interpreters – both foreign language and British Sign Language.

Interpretation is one small part of accessibility – accessibility means making our services easier to use for all patients. Many people think it is just about ramps and wheelchair users, but actually it's everything, from the way we let people know about our services to the layout of the waiting room to the appointment systems we use. If you want to know more about accessibility and how you can improve it in your service, then look out for an Accessibility Brief session.

We also have occasional partnership training opportunities – one with the Highland Rainbow Folk is coming up. You can keep up with these on our intranet site or by calling 01463 704826.

To see our future schedule, please have a look at our intranet site - <http://intranet.nhsh.scot.nhs.uk/Staff/EqualityAndDiversity/TrainingandEvents/Pages/Default.aspx>. Equality and Diversity related courses can be booked through your e-KSF.

Need to know...

New Passport Service

A new passport photo service for staff is available in the Medical Illustration department. This service costs £6.00 for 4 photos. Staff can make an appointment for their photo to be taken at a mutually suitable time. Please phone ext 4240. The photographs will be taken in the professional studio located next to x-ray in Raigmore Hospital.

Heartbeat Challenge now open!

The Heartbeat Challenge is now open to all entries at www.heartbeatchallenge.co.uk/.

The weather has been fantastic for training over the past couple of weeks so please keep that motivation going by joining us on the Heartbeat Challenge on September 10th 2011 and pass this e-mail on to anyone else you think may be interested. Last year was a great day out - the sun shone and we enjoyed great food from the Storehouse of Foulis, Duncan Fraser Butchers and our own bakers and soup makers. At the same time as keeping fit, we raised money for the Cardiac Unit at Raigmore Hospital.

Online entry is easy with payment through Paypal and our website also links to easy online giving through the Dove Trust at www.charitygiving.co.uk.

We hope you can get involved this year, either as a participant or as a volunteer. We look forward to seeing you on the day - The Heartbeat Challenge Committee.

NHS Highland Staff Awards

There is still time to nominate for this year's staff awards!

This year there are eight award categories in total –

Better Health – the nominee has made a real contribution to helping people take control of their own health.

Person Centred Care – the nominee respects and responds to the rights and needs of every individual.

Improving Quality - the nominee has made a real difference to the quality or safety of services.

Volunteering – the nominee has given exceptional commitment to support the work of NHS Highland.

Behind the Scenes – the nominee has made an outstanding commitment in one of the non clinical services / functions which are essential to supporting patient care.

Going green for efficiency – the nominee has identified innovative ways of reducing our carbon footprint and making more efficient use of resources.

Lifetime achievement – for someone who has made an extraordinary commitment to continuous quality improvement, through years of NHS service.

Outstanding new recruit – for someone new who shows real enthusiasm to develop and learn and who shows a personal commitment to quality in their service.

As previous years have shown the awards will enable a wide range of staff, including staff working in the community or in our hospitals, support workers and volunteers to be recognised.

Anyone can nominate an individual or team. Forms can be downloaded from our website (under the events section on the news page) or you can request one be sent to you in the post by phoning NHS Highland on 01463 704927 and asking for Communications. The closing date for entries is 5th August 2011.

Need to know...

Military Civilian Health Awards 2011 - Vote for the Best of Health

The search is on. We are looking for the people, projects and initiatives from the Defence Medical Services, NHS, private and voluntary sectors that provide our serving military personnel (including the Reserves), their families and our Service veterans with the very best in healthcare and social care.

Now is the time to recognise them.

For more information and to nominate yourself or your team visit www.militarycivilianhealthawards.org. Closing date is 29th July 2011.

Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professions (NMAHP) Engagement

The importance of strong and visible NMAHP leadership to maximise their contribution to quality and ensure the best use of resources has been recognised in a declaration by Scotland's Chief Nursing Officer, Chief Health Professions Officer and NMAHP leaders.

The NMAHP contribution to quality will be driven forward through the activities of the NMAHP Quality Councils giving NMAHPs the opportunity to participate in decision making processes that impact on their practice and their ultimate goal to deliver high quality healthcare services. It empowers them to reflect their professional values in these decisions.

To support this the Directorate of the Chief Nursing Officer, Patients, Public and Health Professions have established the following website www.knowledge.scot.nhs.uk/qualitycouncils.

NHS Highland Director of Nursing, Heidi May, said: "The NMAHP Quality Councils website puts you in touch with information, news, resources, and updates. It's designed to promote networking across the practitioner community, so you can contribute developing practice locally and with colleagues in other areas."

Lands End to John O'Groats Charity Cycle

NHS Highland's Associate Director of Allied Health Professions, Judith Catherwood, is leading a group of fitness fanatics from Inverness in an arduous cycling challenge from Land's End to John O'Groats from July 21-31..

The group, called Inverness Spinners, aim to raise over £15,000 for their chosen charities - Multiple Sclerosis Scotland and local children's charity SNAP, the Special Needs Action Programme.

Anyone interested in making a donation or enquiring about sponsorship opportunities should visit www.spanglefish.com/lejog2011. Donations can also be made via the JustGiving website at www.justgiving.com/invernessspinners.

Inverness Hospitals Curling Club

We are a friendly group of curlers wanting to invite new recruits to join us next season. We offer coaching so please feel free to come along and try a few sessions.

For further information please contact: muriel.cockburn@nhs.net

