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## Health Check - Read all about it



By the time staff read this article they should already have received a copy of *Health Check* our locally written newspaper. During August it was distributed to every household covered by NHS Highland. It is the first time NHS Highland has made such a concerted effort to communicate so directly with the public, and in doing so all staff. I would encourage you all to read the Newspaper and to provide feedback via the on-line survey, which I recently circulated.

One of the reasons for improving our communications is to help us make and manage some of the changes we are facing. This will include starting to think and work in quite different ways.

An excellent example of this is the joint working across Primary and Secondary Care to develop Anticipatory Care Patient Alerts. Over the last year, 5000 alerts have been completed. The process is already showing benefit for individuals and families as well as reducing pressure on hospital beds. This work was recently shared at NHS Scotland Conference and won an Award. This is national recognition for all the hard and effective work done by hundreds of GPs and community staff across Highland. I was also delighted to see so many of our other posters get very positive feedback. It shows that we can lead the way in Highland and that there are many opportunities to improve the way we deliver care and services.

I remain very keen for all staff to have more direct access to me. I would like to hear from staff who have any ideas or concerns and would also like to hear from staff who have had experience of care in the NHS either as a patient or as a carer. Please feel free to get in touch and bring these to my direct attention, including via my personal e-mail.

[emead@nhs.net](mailto:emead@nhs.net)



## Service Improvement Bench - What is it ?

*This is a new way of working for us, and allows us to use the huge range of skills and expertise that our staff have that we don't normally use to full advantage...*

The Bench is composed of NHS Highland staff that have expressed an interest in being involved in supporting change management across NHS H and have the support of their manager to be involved. They continue to work in their main job, but when they are requested to be involved in "Bench" work they are allocated to a project for approx 0.5 day per week in either a project lead or support role.

There are a range of projects currently underway in NHS Highland including off-site storage, patient travel, and staff travel, and there are projects about to begin, including customer care. These, and the other projects we will undertake over the coming months, will support NHS Highland to be more effective and efficient.

This is a new way of working for us, and allows us to use the huge range of skills and expertise that our staff have that we don't normally use to full advantage. Being involved in the work of the Bench is a great opportunity for staff to work in a different way with colleagues from other departments and areas that they don't normally come into contact with. In addition it enables them to develop skills and competences they did not have and then bring them back into their main role (and to use as evidence in their PDP).

We have a network in place to support the development of the Bench members and we are in the process of developing a range of programmes which will be accessible to all staff to help develop skills and competence in LEAN. This is being done with the support of our colleagues who deliver across the range of Service improvement methodologies as we are keen to become more "joined up" in the way we work together.

There is more detailed information about the Bench in the FAQ sheet which will be available on the intranet shortly. If you would like to know more about the Bench and how you could be involved (we are particularly looking for more clinical staff to be involved ) please contact:

Linda Kirkland, Business Transformation Manager on [linda.kirkland@nhs.net](mailto:linda.kirkland@nhs.net) or 01463 704921 or Judith McKelvie, Head of Learning and Development on [Judith.mckelvie@nhs.net](mailto:Judith.mckelvie@nhs.net) or 01463 706870.

## Extended Community Care Teams help keep patients in their own homes

NHS Highland is trying a new way of working which involves creating Extended Community Care Teams to provide patients with a higher level of care in their own homes.

This will help prevent people from needing to go into hospital, reduce the length of time they need to stay in hospital if they do need to be admitted and enable them to remain independent for longer.

An Extended Community Care Team (ECCT) is a multi disciplinary group caring for the patient as a team trying to work as closely as if they were working on a hospital ward.

It acts as a communications hub for all those involved in the care of patients with complex needs. It also supports the development of local services and the necessary knowledge and skills.

Many of the patients who will benefit from the development of these teams will be over the age of 75 years, on six or more prescribed medications and have more than one long-term condition. They may also have a history of falls or unplanned admissions.

NHS Highland Consultant Physician in Medicine for the Elderly, Martin Wilson, explained that the main principle

of an ECCT is to improve communication and joint working between the varied disciplines and agencies involved in a patient's care.

He said: "At present, the teams focus on adults who have become suddenly unwell and require support to avoid hospital admission or help to get out of hospital sooner. They aim to expand to take on adults at high risk of admission before dramatic problems arise.

"A key focus of the Extended Community Care Team has been the promotion of a return to independence, or as far towards independence as possible. Extending this to groups who are at high risk of decline should allow preservation of independence for longer."

Similar teams are already operating in other parts of the UK. Initially, NHS Highland is trying them in the areas covered by the South East and Mid Highland Community Health Partnerships (CHPs). It is planned that this approach can be rolled out to the rest of the Highland area.

## New guidance to ensure people are only taking the drugs they need

NHS Highland has produced new guidance to help GPs and hospital doctors across Highland and Argyll and Bute review patients who take a large number of different prescribed drugs at the same time.

NHS Highland Consultant Physician in Medicine for the Elderly, Dr Martin Wilson, said: "Some patients can be on a long list of drugs, so it's important we check and review what they are taking and make sure patients are on the best and safest combination.



"For example, a drug that was right when it was first prescribed many years ago may no longer be helping. Some patients may be putting up with side effects quite unaware they are linked to a drug or combination of drugs they are taking. In other cases, the drug they are on may no longer be needed.

"The patients who benefit most from these reviews are those taking 10 or more drugs and those whose health is most vulnerable, including care home residents."

Thomas Ross, who is Lead Pharmacist for South East Highland Community Health Partnership (CHP), explained that prescribing drugs is the most common intervention in the NHS. Eight out of 10 people over the age of 75 take at least one prescribed medicine and one in three take four or more.

Mr Ross said: "Adverse reactions to drugs can account for up to 17% of hospital admissions. Evidence has also shown that around half of all people aged 75 or over may not be taking their medicines as intended.

"The review has to be conducted with the patient or their carer and there has to be agreement as to what is continued, what is changed and what is stopped.

"We need to ensure that, if a patient is taking a medicine, they are taking it for a valid reason. If not, it should be stopped. We also need to ensure that medicines are not causing patients any harm from side effects."

GPs have already done more than 4,000 reviews with the target of making drug prescribing as safe and effective as possible. In many of these reviews, patients have had one or more drugs stopped or changed.

## Scottish Patient Safety Programme

The Scottish Patient Safety Programme was introduced by the Scottish Government to help improve the safety of patients. The work of the Programme has included the closer monitoring of drugs and the way they are prescribed and used, and management walkabouts to discuss any environmental hazards with staff. Key to this is a culture of openness and transparency in the health service so that problems in service delivery can be raised in a timely fashion by staff at all levels, with patient safety being of the highest priority.



Lorn & Islands Hospital in Oban was recently praised by a visiting team from the SPSP Faculty which identified that the concept of patient safety had been successfully absorbed into the culture of the hospital. They were particularly impressed by the level of enthusiasm for the work of the programme evident amongst staff.

## Education helps to improve quality of life for heart failure patients

Chronic heart failure patients in Highland are enjoying a better quality of life for longer, thanks to the work of the Heart Failure Service, which is run jointly by NHS Highland and British Heart Foundation (BHF) Scotland.

The service was set up to help support chronic heart failure patients and their carers by introducing them to self management aspects of care, which allows them to live with this long term condition.

The team of five heart failure nurses are busy educating other staff members on heart failure management to allow a more consistent flow of support and management.

They are currently working with GPs and nurses in the community, providing them with training and education in heart failure management to enable them to provide joint heart failure care in the future and they recently won an award from BHF for the innovative way in which they are working together with primary care.

Lead Heart Failure Nurse, Mandi Smith, explained that there is a high incidence of heart failure with approximately one new case per 1,000 of the population being diagnosed each year.

She said: "There are an estimated 1,540 patients with diagnosed heart failure in Highland and possibly the same again who are undiagnosed. Each year, we have around 260 people admitted to our hospitals for whom the primary diagnosis is heart failure.

"Although the prognosis can be poor, with 50% of patients dying within the first 12 months, when heart failure is appropriately diagnosed, treated and ongoing support provided, heart failure patients' quality of life can improve.

"It also helps to keep people alive for longer and means they are less likely to require unnecessary hospital admissions."

Patient Peter Briggs, 61, of Smithton, near Inverness, said the Heart Failure Service had made a big difference to his life.

He said: "Every time I get a visit, it makes me feel so much better. I think I'd have been quite depressed without them. Just knowing they're there makes me feel so much happier. I really feel as though I'm getting the support I need."

## Devolution of Terminal Care Funding to Community Health Partnerships

The Community Health Partnerships (CHP) in North Highland are all set to change the way that patients who require End of Life Care packages are funded. NHS Highland's Senior Management Team agreed to devolve the central budget to the CHPs to enable them to provide a more flexible and responsive approach to addressing end of life care needs as part of the Health Board's Living and Dying Well Action Plan.

Chrissie Lane, Cancer Nurse Consultant said, "Previously, terminal care funding has been administered centrally under guidance set for NHS Continuing Healthcare. NHS Highland recognised that the constraints of the guidance potentially limited the options for supporting patients in the end of life period particularly around facilitating choice regarding preferred place of death."

The end of life funding will be used by the CHPs to provide enhanced support for people in the last 12 weeks of life, over and above normal service provision for existing end of life care services such as Community Nursing, Care at Home services, Marie Curie Nursing, Macmillan Nursing and other voluntary agencies such as Crossroads.

An assessment tool is being introduced in the CHPs which provides a consistent approach for assessing and identifying additional care needs for people who are dying. This assessment and accompanying application for funding will be completed by the Lead Professional (i.e. the person with oversight of the care package in the Community) and agreed by the CHP Lead Nurse.

The anticipated benefits to patients are clear in that:

- Greater choice will be available for those who wish to die at home but may require significant nursing and / or social care to enable them to do so.
- Discharge from hospital may be facilitated in a more timely manner for those who wish to die at home as additional resources can be accessed locally to provide appropriate levels of support in the Community.

Kate Patience-Quate, Professional Lead Nurse for Community & Hospital Services in South East Highland CHP said: "The devolution of terminal care monies to the CHP provides an opportunity which will enable us to work more collaboratively and flexibly across health, social care and voluntary agencies to more responsively meet the needs of patients and their families during the last phase of life. This in turn will assist us in supporting patients to remain at home and avoid unnecessary hospital admission in the last stages of life."

For further information please contact your Lead Nurse or Palliative Care Lead - SE CHP: Kate Patience-Quate; Mid CHP: Alison Hudson; North CHP; Lorraine Coe. This information does not apply to Argyll & Bute

Theresa James Community Care Integration Manager

## Public meeting held on palliative care delivery in Helensburgh and Lomond

Argyll & Bute Community Health Partnership (CHP) through the Helensburgh & Lomond Public Partnership Forum recently held a public meeting to provide members of the public with an opportunity to speak to local health and social work professionals about the delivery of palliative care services in the community.

Mavis Gilfillan, Helensburgh & Lomond Clinical Services Manager, added: "Argyll & Bute CHP felt that this was a great opportunity to highlight to the public the way in which palliative care is provided in partnership by health and social care professionals, those providing day to day care to patients and carers in their homes and hospitals and those who specialise in palliative care for example consultants, GPs, and nursing staff.

We were delighted by the turnout at our first event and along with the local PPF we are planning to hold further events to keep the public informed with what is going on with health services in their area.

## Cowal Palliative Care

The Cowal Palliative Care Implementation Group (PCIG) has been continuing its work over the summer months and is progressing with the options appraisal process on the 6 remaining options for providing end of life care and palliative care in Cowal Community Hospital.

Following a meeting between NHS Highland and the local MSP it was agreed an independent expert in palliative care should be appointed to assess the work done to date and assist in the review of palliative care services. The PCIG has therefore appointed Dr Jacqui Chaplin, a highly experienced cancer and palliative care nurse, to undertake this work and Jacqui will begin her role by assessing the options appraisal to date and providing a national policy context for the work.

The PCIG was set up and held its first meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup> January 2011 to discuss the issue of palliative care. The group is chaired by an independent member of the public and includes representatives from the Cowal Hospice Trustees, Community Representatives from Cowal Locality Public Partnership Forum, Community Council as well as representatives from the Health Board and Local Authority.

## Work starts on new Health Centre for Broadford

Skye GP Dr Angus Venters cut the first turf for the new medical centre that is being built next to the Dr MacKinnon Memorial Hospital in Broadford at a cost of £1.3 million (artist's impression pictured).

Dr Venters said: "This is a great step forwards for all of us. My personal thanks go to the people who have been involved in this process from the beginning and to those who have made it possible to bring this project to fruition."



And, soon after the turf cutting ceremony, archaeologists, who were monitoring clearance of the site on behalf of NHS Highland and the contractor, Global Construction Ltd, discovered the remains of some significant archaeological structures.

The site was not previously known to be of archaeological interest and the discovery will delay the project by about two weeks, while further excavation work is carried out, but the new health centre is still due to be completed by the end of March 2012.

Steven Birch, of West Coast Archaeological Services, said the finds included a cairn, an underground structure, known as a souterrain, and a burial cist containing a ceramic Beaker vessel (pictured).

He added that the souterrain could date to the Iron Age, around 600 BC to AD 500, and the Beaker is thought to have been made around 2300–2200 BC.



No human remains have been found in the burial cist, however, material has been taken away for chemical analysis to test for the presence of degraded human remains.

The new health centre, which will be fully accessible to all in line with current legislation on disabled access, will house five new consulting rooms, a dedicated treatment room, two nurse consulting rooms and a new base for community nursing staff, along with associated administrative, storage and waiting areas.

## Patients receive high standards of care in Highland

NHS Highland has welcomed the publication of the Better Together inpatient experience surveys where thousands of patients across Highland were asked to feedback their experience of their hospital stay.

Over 5,000 patients in Highland were sent a questionnaire as part of the survey and, of the 55% that responded, the feedback on their experience of their hospital stay has been very good with results significantly above the national average.

Garry Coutts, Chair of NHS Highland, is delighted that patients are reporting such a positive experience from their stay.

He said: “No one wants to have to come into hospital, but when they do they have the right to expect high quality care. I am pleased, but not surprised, to hear that NHS Highland staff are continuing to provide excellent services to patients and I want to take this opportunity to thank all of our staff for their dedication and commitment.

“I also want to express my appreciation to all those patients who responded. It is extremely important we that we seek the views of our patients and I am grateful to them for taking the time and energy to complete the survey.

“While I am pleased with the responses received we are not complacent. We will continue to monitor our standards and have many improvement programs in place to build on our successes.

“We know that we don’t get everything right every time and we will continue to work with patients and the Highland and Argyll and Bute Communities to improve the quality of our services.”

## Healthcare Environment Inspectorate reports for Fort William and Skye published

NHS Highland welcomes the publication of the HEI (Healthcare Environment Inspectorate) reports for Belford Hospital in Fort William and Mackinnon Memorial Hospital in Broadford, Isle of Skye, which were published in August.

The HEI carried out an announced visit to both hospitals over two days in July 2011 and found them to be well maintained and the overall standard of cleanliness to be very good.

Staff were able to demonstrate they understood their responsibilities when it comes to the prevention and control of infection and there was positive feedback with regards good communication between clinical staff, domestic and estates staff, managers and the infection prevention & control team throughout the hospital and wider organisation.

Alison Hudson, Lead Nurse for Mid Highland Community Health Partnership (CHP) said: “We are pleased with the overall reports for both the Belford Hospital and Mackinnon Memorial. The inspection team’s commented that it is clear that staff for both hospitals are proud of the hospital. We recognise that all staff have worked very hard to achieve this standard too.

“We were able to show that our staff are trained in and have a good awareness of infection control procedures, were able to demonstrate that infection control precautions in place and routine monitoring is undertaken.

“Work is already underway on the areas where improvement is indicated. We know that the ‘real’ test in terms of achieving consistently high standards will be when the Inspectorate team return unannounced in the future, but I have every confidence that the team will be able to demonstrate further improvement in standards on an ongoing basis.”

## Pharmacies supporting the FAST message

Patients picking up prescriptions from Highland pharmacies will now be able to pick up information cards reminding them about the FAST (Face, Arm and Speech Test) message which gives guidance on how to recognise the symptoms of stroke quickly.

The FAST campaign was run in NHS Highland in 2009 and since then a number of initiatives, including blood pressure check stands in supermarkets and the FAST message being displayed on Scottish Ambulance patient transport vehicles, have played their part in keeping the information current.

To further promote the message pharmacies across Highland are now displaying bookmark sized stands highlighting those who could be at a higher risk of stroke either due to their particular health condition or the medication they are on. The cards are there for patients to take with them and will give them information on what signs to look out for and what to do if they think they, or someone they know, is having a stroke.

Dr Paul Findlay, Stroke Consultant for NHS Highland, said: “With over 13,000 people in Scotland having a stroke every year it is essential that people can recognise a stroke when it is happening and take prompt action.”

To spot the signs of a stroke, just remember the word FAST –

F stands for FACE. Can the person smile normally? Does their mouth droop?

A is for ARM. Can they lift both arms normally?

S is for SPEECH. Can they speak clearly?

T is for TIME. Time to call 999 if any of these signs are present.

Dr Findlay explained that time is crucial and emphasised the importance of knowing what to look for and what to do. He said: “While there are people who will be at greater risk a stroke can happen to anyone and it happens fast. By learning and using the FAST test you know what to look for and know that if you do see these signs it is time to call 999.”



## Voluntary Patient Transport Scheme gets new addition

Partnerships for Wellbeing are an Inverness based charity that provides a number of projects within Inverness city and the Highland area. These projects are intended to support more people to adopt healthier lifestyles; increase the capacity of people to live independently and reduce isolation; to grow the volunteer team involved in delivering the programmes; maximise the involvement of volunteers in our service delivery; and respect people using our service and value their feedback.

In 2004 they launched the Inverness Voluntary Patient Transport Scheme which provides non-emergency transport to anyone registered with a GP in Inverness who is unable to access any Community Healthcare facility.

Over 1000 patients are now registered users and in April, to complement cars the service already has (some of which are volunteers own), Partnerships for Wellbeing obtained a new Peugeot Partner motor car with support from Highland Cross and NHS Highland.

Ms Ros Philip, Primary Care Manager, South East Highland Community Health Partnership (CHP), NHS Highland (pictured with Partnerships for Well Being manager Michelle Cowie) said, “The CHP recognises the vital importance of helping service users access primary care services such as their general practice or other community services. We are delighted to support Partnerships for Well Being’s Inverness Patient Transport service as it helps some of our most vulnerable patients with a value for money transport service.”

## NHS Highland's contribution to NHSScotland Event 2011: Quality in Action

The annual NHSScotland Event took place in Glasgow on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> August 2011. It is one of the leading health events in Scotland and this year's event entitled **Quality in Action** saw the first gathering of a Quality Alliance – that is everyone who has a stake in delivering consistently high quality healthcare.

NHS Highland was invited to present nine project examples of excellent and innovative Quality in Action, in support of the following three Quality Ambitions outlined in the Healthcare Quality Strategy for NHSScotland. This year there were 4 prizes for poster presentations - one for each of the Quality Ambitions: Safe, Person Centred, and Effective and in an additional category around Infrastructure (key supporting strategies).

**Person-centred:** Mutually beneficial partnerships between patients, their families and those delivering healthcare services which respect individual needs and values and which demonstrate compassion, continuity, clear communication and shared decision-making.

**Safe:** There will be no avoidable injury or harm to people from healthcare they receive, and an appropriate clean and safe environment will be provided for the delivery of healthcare services at all times.

**Effective:** The most appropriate treatments, interventions, support and services will be provided at the right time to everyone who will benefit and wasteful or harmful variation will be eradicated.

NHS Highland's poster that describes the work done on developing Anticipatory Care Patient Alerts and the positive effects on hospital bed use, won the Best Poster Award in the Effective Category, for the poster titled Anticipatory Care Planning in NHS Highland – Long Term Conditions. This is national recognition of hard and effective work done by hundreds of GPs and community staff across highland.

The additional eight posters were as follows:

In the **Person-centred** category: Redesign of Pharmacy Services that improves patient care and makes better use of the facilities/staff in community hospitals in terms of access to services closer to home.

In the **Safe** category: the development of a Maternity Dashboard for Raigmore Hospital.

Seven posters were also presented in the **Effective** category:

A Nurse-led pre hospital thrombolysis support system from the Coronary Care Unit at Raigmore Hospital;  
Anticipatory Care Planning in NHS Highland – Dermatology;  
Combined Assessment Unit in a Rural Setting at Belford Hospital, Fort William;  
Extended Community Care Team Working in NHS Highland and impact on Inpatient Bed Use;  
Improving Theatre Utilisation in Raigmore Hospital; and  
NHS Highland Naloxone Programme

After the conference, the posters that have been developed will be on display in the Board Room at Assynt House.

Access to electronic versions of the winning poster and all the posters displayed at the Event can be accessed via the NHS Scotland Event website: <http://www.nhsscotlandevent.com/Home>

In addition the website will soon be updated with access to all the work shop and video presentations made on the day.

For more information about the event and access to event resources, please contact Pamela Cremin Workforce Planning and Development Manager [pam.cremin@nhs.net](mailto:pam.cremin@nhs.net)

## Volunteering Opportunity

Volunteers play an important role in NHS Highland and across the organisation there are a number of people who already give their time to help improve the health and wellbeing of patients, service users and their families and carers. The Macmillan Suite in Raigmore Hospital is one such area.

The Macmillan Suite is an area in the Department of Clinical Oncology delivering care to adults affected by cancer at all stages of their disease and treatment. They are currently recruiting volunteers to work alongside staff to support patients, their families and carers who are using the service.

Within the Macmillan Suite there are already a number of volunteers who welcome patients and visitors to the department and undertake a number of tasks. Many of individuals these have been part of the team since the department opened in 2003. The department is keen to add to this dedicated group.

Fiona Campbell, NHS Highland Clinical Nurse Specialist for Oncology and Chemotherapy, explained, that whilst the volunteers' main role is to provide hospitality by offering patients refreshments and company, they may also occasionally undertake minor clerical tasks such as photocopying and one or two have been known to undertake some light gardening tasks. Volunteers do not in any way replace paid employees.

The department also has a small but increasing number of trained Complementary Therapists who offer patients complementary therapies such as massage and reflexology on a voluntary basis.

Ms Campbell said: "The benefits to patients and those accompanying them are immeasurable. Volunteers give their time freely and help make patients and visitors feel welcome. They provide hospitality by offering refreshments and if appropriate, companionship in what can be a busy, frightening environment.

"The ambiance of the department is greatly improved with the volunteers being part of our team and their ability to offer time, support, and attention to our patients can not be underestimated.

"Whilst there is no doubt that it is very helpful to the staff and the patients to have the volunteers available, the volunteers themselves also get a lot out of it; The experience can provide them with a sense of belonging, social interaction and a sense of achievement from knowing they are doing something to help the community."

If you are interested and would like more information please contact Fiona Campbell on 01463 704037 or by email [fiona.campbell3@nhs.net](mailto:fiona.campbell3@nhs.net).

## 'We're all frontline' says UNISON as it marks the 63<sup>rd</sup> birthday of the NHS

UNISON, Scotland's largest health union representing thousands of staff across the NHS, marked the 63<sup>rd</sup> birthday of the NHS during July with the launch of its 'I am frontline' campaign.

The campaign was to raise awareness of the vital role each member of staff plays in delivering NHS services, and to dispel the myth of 'frontline' and 'back office' staff.

NHS workers and union officials met at Raigmore Hospital in Inverness to mark the occasion with 'I am frontline' birthday cakes, cards and giant campaign posters.



## Harm Reduction Service mark Remembrance Day

Family and friends of those who have died as a result of drugs got together on a special memorial day to mark the occasion, allowing them to share stories and remember loved ones.

International Remembrance Day – for those who have died as a result of drugs – takes place on the 21<sup>st</sup> July every year. This is the first year the Harm Reduction Service at NHS Highland, based in Inverness, took part.



The aims of the day are to raise awareness of the memorial and the harm reduction service, and to educate and support those currently using this service.

In Inverness, there was a short memorial service with the rest of the afternoon giving those attending the opportunity to discuss the issues affecting them before a balloon release from Greig Street Bridge in Inverness.

Lisa Ross, NHS Highland Clinical Harm Reduction Nurse, is keen to draw attention to a day that recognises and remembers a group of people who are not often talked about, while also using it as a way of getting together a group of people who can discuss various issues.

The day also coincided with the two-year anniversary of the start of the very successful Naloxone programme. Naloxone is an antidote to opiate drugs and a pilot was started in July 2009 where drug users and their families and friends were trained in how to recognise the signs of an overdose, the importance of calling emergency services, and basic life support. For further information on the harm reduction service please call 01463 717594.

## The Duke of Rothesay visits Caithness General Hospital

His Royal Highness The Prince Charles, Duke of Rothesay this month visited Caithness General Hospital in Wick to mark the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the facility, which was officially opened by his grandmother, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother.

On arriving at the hospital, The Duke was greeted by The Lord Lieutenant of Caithness, Anne Dunnett, who presented him to local dignitaries before he was accompanied into the hospital by NHS Highland Locality General Manager for Caithness, Pauline Craw.

Mrs Craw then took The Duke on a tour of the hospital starting at the CT Scanner Suite, where he had an opportunity to speak to radiography staff about the work they carry out in the unit.

The Duke stopped off to talk to domestic cleaning staff and WRVS volunteers at the WRVS shop on his way to the hospital's Renal Unit, where he met patients undergoing dialysis. He was also shown the video link, which enables kidney patients to have a consultation with their consultant in Inverness without the need for the patient or the consultant to make the journey.

His next stop was at the Physiotherapy Gym (pictured) where he was able to watch part of a class, which helps patients with Cardio Obstructive Pulmonary Disorder (COPD) gain confidence and improve their quality of life.



The Duke met staff working in each of the areas he visited and was introduced to Medical Laboratory Assistant, Margaret Jones, who started her career with the NHS 50 years ago.

Mrs Craw then took him to the hospital dining room where he was able to meet more members of staff and signed the visitor book before his departure.

## Breastfeeding support across Highland

Breastfeeding support is available across Argyll & Bute thanks to funding which has enabled the training of volunteer peer supporters. How does peer support work? The young mothers who are volunteers have access to a phone in local areas within the area and they take it in turn to have the phone and contact mothers who have been referred by community midwives for extra support. This is done by telephone or texting.

The peer supporters liaise with the midwives and attend groups in the community midwifery unit. Meeting mums to be when they are 16 weeks pregnant and again when they attend their breastfeeding workshop at 22 weeks pregnant, enables the mums to get to know the supporters. Leaflets with telephone contact numbers are given out at these meetings.

Lochaber mothers who are breastfeeding their babies can also now attend a breastfeeding support group so they can meet other breastfeeding mums to share their experiences and support each other.

A group of local women, who completed a four-week training course to become volunteer breastfeeding peer supporters, are now holding a peer support group at the Nevis Centre in Fort William from 10am to 12 noon on the first Friday of each month.

The group is open to any mum who is breastfeeding and her baby, whatever the age of the child. Anyone wishing to attend can just turn up any week to join the other mothers for a cup of tea and a chat while their babies play together.

Argyll and Bute Community Health Partnership has also recently passed Stage 2 of the UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative. This means staff have undergone a training programme about breastfeeding to equip them better in promoting and protecting breastfeeding as well as teaching mothers breastfeeding skills. There are 3 stages in this process and the CHP has completed 2 of these stages. The next stage will be completed before April next year.

## The Facilitators Network Continued Professional Development (CPD) Event 2011

The Facilitators Network held its second CPD event on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2011 in Inverness.

The theme of the event was “Learning and Development in turbulent times”.

Over 50 NHS Highland staff, plus representatives from some of our partner organisations attended the event, visiting the variety of exhibits available and attending from a selection of 12 workshops

**If you were unable to attend the event then visit the Learning and Development page on the Intranet to view some of the workshop presentations.**

If you would like to participate in any future events please contact Michelle Jeans Tel: 01463 706857  
Email: [michelle.jeans@nhs.net](mailto:michelle.jeans@nhs.net)



Staff from Glassary (Dementia Assessment) Ward, Mid Argyll Community Hospital with a painting entitled “Tobermory” donated to the ward by the Mid Argyll Art Society. The painting is by Helen Simcox a local artist from Easdale,

l-r - Helen Samborek, Senior Charge Nurse, Dementia Services; Nichola Clark, Nursing Assistant; Jeanette Hatton, Staff Nurse; Kate MacAulay, Clinical Services Manager; and Eilidh Finlay, Enrolled Nurse.

# Reasons to be *cheerful*

## Anonymous donation benefits renal patients in Highland

A holiday to Scotland which ended with an unexpected stay in hospital has resulted in a donation of just over £25k for the Renal Unit at Raigmore Hospital in Inverness.

Véronique Peccoud (pictured), 43, from France was visiting Scotland with a friend at the beginning of the year when she developed renal failure and bone marrow disease while traveling through the Highlands.



So impressed was her friend, who wishes to remain anonymous, with the speedy diagnosis, treatment and care she received at Raigmore Hospital that he has donated just over £25k to the unit allowing them to buy a NxStage dialysis machine and new furniture for the day room used by renal patients on Ward 7C of the hospital.

The machine is quite compact allowing patients who do not have the room for standard equipment to opt for home dialysis.

Dr Stewart Lambie, Renal Consultant for NHS Highland, is incredibly grateful for the generous donation which will be put to good use and benefit a number of renal patients requiring treatment.

He said: “I think I speak for the department when I say we were overwhelmed when we heard about the donation, it is very generous and saying thank you just doesn’t seem enough.

“I’m delighted we were able to diagnose and treat Véronique before she was allowed to return home where, thankfully, her renal function has recovered.”

Véronique was very happy with the treatment she received in hospital and hopes the donation will be put to good use. She said: “My initial idea when I came to Scotland for Hogmanay was not to end up in hospital, but I have been so well treated and so warmly taken care of that I have only kept good memories of my week in Raigmore.

“My friend's donation is here to say thank you to all – the doctors, nurses and all the staff I have been in contact with. They all have impressed me.”

## Lorraine sets sail...

In June we said a fond farewell to Lorraine Beigley, previously worked in the Highland Hub, who has taken a career break and will be taking to the high seas with her partner.

They are setting sail on the Red Ruth and embarking on their venture to travel around the world. The first leg will see them touring the Med and who knows which way they will head thereafter. Anyone wishing to chart their progress is welcome to access their website ([www.syredruth.co.uk](http://www.syredruth.co.uk)).



A tea party was held for Lorraine (pictured, Lorraine is in the centre) in June when those who were able to dropped in for refreshments and to wish her well for the journey. Associate Medical Director Ken Proctor delighted us all with some anecdotes and Mid Highland General Manager Gill McVicar presented Lorraine with a bouquet.

We all wish her well.

## Second Linear Accelerator arrives at Raigmore Hospital

Raigmore Hospital in Inverness received an extra special delivery at the weekend with the arrival of its new linear accelerator.

Staff took delivery of the Varian TrueBeam, the first of its kind in Scotland, on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> August and will now begin the installation and commissioning process for this complex piece of equipment.

The Varian TrueBeam will allow the radiotherapy department to treat patients with intensity-modulated radiation therapy (IMRT), an advanced mode of high-precision radiotherapy.

IMRT uses linear accelerators to deliver radiation doses to tumours, or specific areas of a tumour, and allows for the dose to be delivered more precisely to the shape of the tumour by controlling the concentration of the radiation. It also helps minimise the radiation dose for areas around the tumour.

Nichola Summers, Service Manager for Cancer Services, explained that while the machine will be using more modern technology it is not an extra machine but a replacement.

She said: “This is a replacement for our older machine so while we will not be increasing our capacity we will be able to provide our patients with the latest in radiotherapy techniques.

“There is a lengthy installation and commissioning process for this piece of kit, but we would expect it to be ready for clinical use by the middle of next year.”

## Investing in Volunteers Award



NHS Highland recently received accreditation in the Investing in Volunteers award.

The Argyll and Bute Community Health Partnership (CHP) invited volunteers from across the area to a ceremony in Lochgilphead where their hard work was acknowledged by Bill Brackenridge, CHP Chair, and Glenn Heritage from Argyll Voluntary Action who is also a CHP Committee member.

## International recognition for Highland Fellow

Congratulations to Muriel Cockburn, Superintendent Radiographer for NHS Highland, who has recently been made a fellow of the Section for Magnetic Resonance Technologist (SMRT) of the International Society for Magnetic Resonance in Medicine (ISMRM).



Muriel is delighted to have this recognition from her peers. She said: “This is an absolute honour. MRI has been a career passion and focus for me since 1993.

“As president of the British Association of MR radiographers (BAMRR) I was asked to work with the SMRT/ISMRM during their meeting in Glasgow in 2001, the first time such a meeting had been held in the UK.

“Since then I have served on the educational and global relations committees which means very late teleconferences UK time!

“The SMRT has grown from a small steering group into a global organisation with local chapters, with regional seminars held each year across the world. They have provided quality educational programmes and opportunities for Radiographers and MR Technologists to share with each other for 20 years. Members realise a sense of professionalism and a rich resource of international expertise and knowledge sharing in the field of MRI.”



## Charity canoe trip to benefit Highland renal patients

A huge well done to Martin Macrae (pictured) who has just finished a charity canoe trip in a bid to raise money for the Renal Unit at Raigmore Hospital in Inverness while also raising awareness of kidney disease and dialysis.

Martin, 53 from Inverness, left Fort William by canoe on the 30<sup>th</sup> August and was expected to take six days to travel to Inverness. His hope is to raise enough money to buy the department up to three portable dialysis machines.

Mr MacRae is on haemodialysis himself and is well aware that portable dialysis machines make it easier for patients to be dialysed at home. Home dialysis can be done for shorter periods of time and is more appealing and it has been shown to be a much more natural form of treatment giving significant long term health benefits.

He was joined by seven friends on this challenge. A total of four canoes will be used with 2 people to each one.

He goes on to explain that this adventure wasn't just about the physical effort for him but he also needed to dialyse while on the trip.

Speaking before his trip began Mr MacRae said: "MacRae and Dick in Inverness have helped out by supplying a 4x4 to assist in transporting the dialysis equipment, which has been loaned to us by manufacturer NxStage, between camp sites daily."

"We could do it in less than six days but I will need to stop and, while the rest are setting up camp, be needled and connected to a portable dialysis machine powered by a portable generator. This will need to happen for three hours each day and I will need to be sitting very still due to the needles in my arm, which I think will prove a challenge with the infamous Scottish midges!

"We've been extremely fortunate as we have had some canoe training from Mr Donald Macpherson of Explore Highland, who has given us not only his time and expertise, but also the use of his canoes and equipment for the challenge. Without his input it would have been a disaster as none of us has much previous experience."

To support Martin and the team, or to read more about the challenge, please visit his Just Giving page at [www.justgiving.com/Martin-MacRae](http://www.justgiving.com/Martin-MacRae).

## Donation helps buy new equipment for Belford Hospital

Belford Hospital in Fort William has received an unexpected donation of £1,100 that will enable the hospital to buy an important piece of equipment for the urology department.

Stagecoach bus drivers, Sandy Gunn, Coolie MacKenzie, Alex Flannagan, Paul Fenner, Tom Hughes, Kevin Mackormack, Iain Beaton, Richard Nicolson and Neil Campbell, held a collection for the hospital at a local outdoor event and presented the money to staff at the Belford last week.

Marie Law, who is Clinical Services Manager at the Belford Hospital, said they were delighted to receive this donation. She explained that it would be put towards the purchase of a flow meter, which is used to help assess people with bladder problems.



Above: Stagecoach drivers Sandy Gunn and Coolie MacKenzie present the cheque to Charge Nurse Mandy Sillars.

## London to Paris Cycle raises hundreds

Well done to Debs Jamieson, a physiotherapy helper in Raigmore Hospital's Chest Unit, who has recently completed a London to Paris cycle and raised over £1400 for the Royal National Institute for the Deaf (RNID now called Action on Hearing Loss).

Debs, who herself has bilateral hearing loss, took three days to do the cycle. She said: "It was very hot and hilly, the temperature reached 40°C in France, which I admit does sound nice but not when you're working away!

"I met some amazing people who were doing the same trip for various charities. All in all 42 of us have raised £65,000."

Debs explained that she chose to raise money to help adults with learning difficulties who have hearing loss/deafness partly due to the experience she has had.

She said: "Alison in the Audiology Department at Raigmore has been my rock. I have overcome many personal hurdles and will continue to highlight the charity and help adults and children who are deaf or who find themselves like me with a degenerative hearing problem.

"One in seven will suffer hearing loss and that's quite a large amount of people. It affects your whole life and can feel very isolating, however with support and help from the experts in Audiology and the RNID you will not be alone.

"I would recommend anyone to volunteer for any such events as I have made many good friends and learnt a lot about not just my cause but others too."

## Dental staff qualification success

Congratulations to a number of our Dental staff across Highland who have been very busy over the summer months completing a number of different qualifications.

Well done to –

Faith Bramley, Trainee Dental Nurse, Wick; Louise Tunstall, Trainee Dental Nurse, Lochinver; Katherine Fraser, Trainee Dental Nurse, Helmsdale; Susan Bremner, Trainee Dental Nurse, Tain; Beverley Mackenzie, Trainee Dental Nurse, Invergordon; Jane Duff, Trainee Dental Nurse, Culloden; Donna Macintosh, Trainee Dental Nurse, Culloden; Katy Ramsay, Trainee Dental Nurse, Inverness Dental Centre; Amberley Crooks, Trainee Dental Nurse, Nairn; and Elisha Walker, Trainee Dental Nurse, Abban Street who have all completed their SVQ in Dental Nursing final formal assessment exam.

Also congratulations to Gail Macleod, Dental Nurse from Inverness Dental Centre who was the candidate of the year from the 2009 SVQ in Dental Nursing course intake and was also the highest scoring candidate for the June 2010 exam in Scotland. Well done Gail.

We have also had three members of staff pass the National Examination Board for Dental Nurse - Sedation Qualification. Well done to Kareena Brodie and Claire Barker, both Dental Nurses at the Royal Northern Infirmary, Inverness; and Karen Bell, Dental Nurse in Fort William.

Final congratulations to Nicola Anderson and Susan Glass, both Dental Nurse Managers who have completed their SVQ in Management level 4.

## Letters to NHS Highland...

“We recently travelled up to Caithness general for my husband to have an operation. We were so impressed by the nursing, auxiliary and domestic staff, we wanted to write to you to let you know what a good team we felt you have. The staff were without exception pleasant, cheerful and could not have been more helpful. They extended excellent patient care towards my husband at all times and could not have been more helpful towards me either. We were very pleased to observe the careful and thorough cleaning which was ongoing within Bignold Ward during our time there as well as being so impressed by the kind efficient happy team we encountered in Wick.

Over the years we have been in other hospitals many times with our son and so are able to make effective comparisons, and we felt your staff were amongst the best we have encountered. Many thanks to all concerned.”

### **Patients relative from Tain**

“My mother has been a fairly frequent visitor to Mid Argyll Hospital in recent years and I felt it was important to acknowledge the high levels of care she has had at the hands of your nursing staff. Sadly she has recently passed away but in her last two weeks as an inpatient both my sister and I felt the standards of care delivered by the nurses were exceptional. The nurses were attentive, considerate and patient whilst maintaining a highly personal level of care. They were also very supportive to us as a family which when added all together was very comforting for us at a difficult and emotional time.

I would be grateful if you could pass on our sincere thanks to the nursing team on Glen Array ward.”

### **Patients relative from Aberdeenshire**

“I was recently taken ill whilst on holiday near Lochinver, and wanted to say a big thank you for the wonderful care I received during this time, both from Lochinver Health Centre and Ward 8 and the oncall Gynaecology team at Raigmore Hospital. The nursing care on Ward 8 was wonderful, the ward was clean and the quality of the food was excellent. The doctors from the oncall team who dealt with me were respectful, caring and gentle; I could have asked for better care. Please pass my thanks to all concerned.”

### **A Patient via email**

## Need to know...

### Changes to eHealth new requests

From the **1st August 2011**, The eHealth Department changed the way that it accepts requests for new pieces of work

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 an enhanced service.

For General Practices, please continue to contact Dacoll or Contractor Services for any hardware or networking requirements.

Once we receive your request, we will review 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.

# Need to know...

## NHS Highland's new e-Learning System

NHS Highland will be implementing an e-Learning system known as LearnPro NHS as part of its blended learning approach to education and training. Blended learning is a powerful learning solution using e-Learning with a variety of other traditional teaching methods. The system will provide staff with access to a host of online training modules and programmes of learning, and support meeting the increasing demands of statutory and mandatory training.

### LearnPro Benefits

- Staff will learn at their own pace and demonstrate knowledge by completing an online assessment
- Learning will be more effective and repeatable
- Increased access to a wide range of modules
- Reduced staff travel
- Increased productivity time
- Lower operational costs for managers
- More efficient use of training providers time to provide on-site support and advice
- Improved statutory and governance compliance due to faster, easier and more regular access.

### What LearnPro Will Not Do

e-Learning is less suitable for those staff that require more “hands on” training to develop physical or coordination skills, or when attitudes and behaviours require change. Some training providers, for example Health and Safety, will use a combination of approaches such as LearnPro to deliver underpinning ‘knowledge’ and face-to-face training to deliver practical skills; such as the use of Moving and Handling equipment. LearnPro will **NOT** completely eliminate the need for classroom based training; staff will still have to be released to attend practical parts of training where necessary. All staff will have to be given the time to undertake the e-Learning.

### Next Steps

LearnPro NHS pilots will be undertaken in September 2011 across Highland so Managers may be contacted to be part of this. The system will go “Live” for all staff in November 2011.

Any queries please contact Fiona Gordon: LearnPro Project Implementation on [fiona.gordon3@nhs.net](mailto:fiona.gordon3@nhs.net) or view the project site via the Intranet.

## RNID becomes Action on Hearing Loss

In June RNID celebrated their 100 year anniversary and at the same time changed their name to Action on Hearing Loss.

Founded 100 years ago with ambitious aims they have achieved an enormous amount. They have to reach more people with hearing loss and those at risk of losing their hearing. Their new name making their intention clear.

They continue to do the same work in biomedical and social policy research, services, information and outreach and campaigning across the UK and Scotland.

They have spent the last two years researching and consulting to find a name that makes our intention clear - to help and support everyone with any form of hearing loss.

They also have a new website, with lots of subtitled videos and British Sign Language (BSL) translations. The site allows you to share stories and support in our forums, search for and rate hearing aid providers, and find great events and services in your area. Their website can be accessed at [www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk](http://www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk)

## Need to know...

### AT-L (All Time Learning) Update

The AT-L Learning Management system has now been implemented across Raigmore, Corporate Services, NRTH CHP, Argyll & Bute CHP and SE CHP. Implementation for MID CHP will commence mid September.

For more information about the AT-L system or for guidance on how to self service book and more go to the Learning and Development page on the Intranet or follow the link below.

<http://intranet.nhsh.scot.nhs.uk/Training/LearningAndDevelopment/LearningManagementSystemATL/Pages/Default.aspx>

If the learning activities you deliver are not yet on AT-L please contact Michelle Jeans to agree a suitable time to do this. You can contact Michelle on 01463 706857 or [michelle.jeans@nhs.net](mailto:michelle.jeans@nhs.net)

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