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Cowal Palliative Care Recommendation Endorsed

In January 2011 a Palliative Care Implementation Group (PCIG), chaired by an independent public member, was formed to help review palliative care services in Cowal. During the spring it identified an initial list of ten options which after public engagement was reduced to a short list of six at the end of May.

In the summer a formal options appraisal process was carried out to discuss and review these six options and the PCIG at its meeting in September identified a preferred option and made a recommendation to NHS Highland.

This recommendation outlined that Ward 1 in Cowal Community Hospital would be designated as the inpatient palliative care/rehabilitation ward (4 beds for inpatient palliative care), the Hospice Unit would be a rest area for relatives/carers, Ward 2 would be the acute/admissions ward, there would be 19 inpatient beds in the hospital and a single integrated nursing team should be established.

The recommendation has been endorsed by the Cowal Project Board, the CHP Core Management Team and on the 27 October by the CHP Committee. The PCIG will now be undertaking a communications and public involvement exercise in Cowal to inform the public of the details of this decision and the locality management will commence work on implementing the service as agreed.



Staff across NHS Highland have been getting vaccinated against flu this month (October).

Clinics have been taking place across Highland and many locations are also using a trolley service where the 'vaccinators' can come to staff who are unable to leave their department.

So far the programme is going very well and staff uptake this year has already exceeded that for last year. Any staff who have not yet been vaccinated are encouraged to do so soon.

Protect yourself

Protect your family

Protect your patients

**Make sure you get the
flu jab soon**



Above: ITU Staff Nurse Karen McKendrick vaccinates Surgical Assistant Nurse Manager William Craig-McLeman

Director of Public Health's Annual Report looks at health inequalities

The health of the population in the area covered by NHS Highland is improving, however, more needs to be done to ensure this improvement continues and applies equally to all communities, according to its Director of Public Health.

Last year, in her first annual report, Dr Margaret Somerville (pictured) highlighted the major health problems and challenges facing people living in this area in the future and this year's report looks at the progress that has been made in tackling them.



Dr Somerville said health improvements meant half of all boys born in the NHS Highland area today could expect to live to 76 years or longer, half of all girls could expect to live to at least 81 years and death rates from heart disease, cancer and stroke were lower than the Scottish average.

However, not everyone in the NHS Highland area is reaping the benefits of these improvements.

Dr Somerville explained that a person's social and economic standing can affect their health - with those who are better off enjoying better health and living longer than those who are less well off.

And she pointed out that there was currently a 14 year gap in life expectancy between the most affluent and the poorest areas. For example, the average life expectancy of a man living in Merkinch is 66 years – more than 14 years less than his neighbour living just a couple of miles away in Lochardil.

Dr Somerville said she was keen to see NHS Highland working with its partners to tackle these differences, known as health inequalities, which also affect groups at risk of disadvantage or discrimination.

She said: "It is important to note that inequalities in health have worsened over the last 10 years, despite improvements in the overall health of the population.

"The worst off in society are likely to suffer most from the economic climate and consequent changes in public sector services, unless we explicitly consider and act on the impact of those changes on them.

"Even then, reducing inequalities in health is difficult, as to be effective, actions need to be sustainable, requiring long-term commitment from all partners to work together on a shared agenda, with the local communities at the centre."

Dr Somerville also reiterated the dangers of smoking, drinking and obesity, as highlighted in last year's report, and encouraged people to adopt a healthier lifestyle.

She said 4,000 people attempted to quit smoking in the NHS Highland area in 2010, which was an increase of 5% on 2009, and the largest number of quit attempts were from those living in the most deprived areas.

NHS Highland and its partners continued to lobby Members of Parliament for a minimum price per unit of alcohol. They have also been involved in delivering alcohol and drugs education packages in schools and have provided specialised training to people working with underage drinkers.

And a number of initiatives have been introduced to encourage people to eat more healthily, to take more exercise and to consider their drinking habits.

Other health improvement activities undertaken during the last year include falls prevention work, anticipatory care planning, supporting people to self manage their long-term conditions and agreement with The Highland Council on the integration of adult health and social care services.

NHS Highland Annual Review - Minister meets Extended Community Care Team

As part of NHS Highland's Annual Review Visit, Michael Matheson, Minister for Public Health, met members of the Extended Community Care Team (ECCT) from Easter Ross who explained how they work together to provide patients with a higher level of care in their own homes.

The team, which includes staff from Health and Social Work Services, told the Minister how they 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.

With the number of people aged over 75 increasing it has been recognised locally that there needed to be a better way to support frail and elderly people in keeping their independence. The team has now been running for about 18 months and all involved agree that the results are impressive.

Graeme Mackinnon, Community Care Team Manager in Easter Ross, described some of the benefits. He said: "For me it's about all agencies and staff coming together and finding the best ways to meet the needs of patients. The reputation of the team depends on everyone working together and what we have been building is a huge reservoir of trust."

Doreen Brass, Team Leader with Tain Community Nursing, believes that the key to success has been excellent team working and communications, managed through a weekly multi-disciplinary meeting held at the County Community Hospital in Invergordon.

She said: "This might sound easy to do and be rather simplistic but in fact making it all work can be incredibly difficult. However, when it does work it makes such a difference. The communication between community and hospitals is so much better now. Working as a team has become a way of life with all members focussed on getting things right for our patients."

Patient Margot Smith, 75, of Conon Bridge, is full of praise for the team. She was transferred from Raigmore Hospital to the County Community Hospital in Invergordon after an operation. She was a patient there during April and May this year and came under the care of the ECCT for four to five weeks in June.

She said: "I thought I would need to be in hospital longer so I was delighted to be able to get home. It was an excellent service. All the different team members including nursing, home care, physiotherapy and occupational therapy were excellent and visited the house to see me."

Cowal GP Services

As part of the NHS Highland Better Health, Better Care, Better Value process a working group 'Cowal 24/7' has been convened to examine and develop potential options for the sustainable provision of GP out of hours services for the Cowal peninsula and medical cover within Cowal Community Hospital.

The Group is co-chaired by a member of the public and a GP. Membership of the Group also includes GPs, councillors, public and Community Council representatives, Scottish Ambulance Service, NHS 24, nursing staff and other health professionals.

The inaugural meeting was held in Cowal Community Hospital on 15 September 2011 where the remit of the Group was discussed and a number of sub groups with specific pieces of work such as public involvement, medical staffing and finance were identified. It is intended that meetings will take place on a monthly basis and that the work of the Group will be completed by September 2012.

It is also important to highlight that the current provision of Primary Care Services from local GP Practices will not form part of this review.

Steering group to consider services provided at Ross Memorial Hospital

A steering group has been set up as part of a review of services provided from the Ross Memorial Hospital site in Dingwall.

The aim of the review is to ensure that Mid Highland Community Health Partnership (CHP) is able to provide the communities of Dingwall and surrounding area with services that will meet their needs and be sustainable into the future.

The Ross Memorial Hospital - Designing Services for the Future Project Steering Group - chaired by Highland Councillor Margaret Paterson, who is also a member of the Mid Highland CHP Committee - organised a workshop at Ross County Stadium on October 26 to give local people an opportunity to help design services for older people in the Dingwall area.

Invitations were sent to representatives of community groups, GP practices, patient participation groups, community councils, charities and other local organisations, hospital and community staff and relevant Highland Council and Mid Highland CHP managers.

Locality General Manager Alison Phimister explained that the CHP wanted to find out about the experience of current service users and what patients and communities felt were important to them. It also wants to know how they think the services they receive should look in the future.

She said: "We need to ensure that services are accessible and meet the communities' health needs now and into the future. We, therefore, want to make sure patients and service users are informed about the review, including details of how they can find out more and ways in which they can become involved or express their views.

"And we want to find out what staff feel about the services currently provided and any possible changes."

Alison said the project would then develop a variety of options based on the information available, taking into account patient and stakeholder feedback. The next meeting of the steering group will be held on October 31.

Skye and Lochalsh local service open days

Skye and Lochalsh residents were given the chance to learn more about recent healthcare developments in their area at local service open days in Portree, Dornie and Kyleakin in September.

All three events were held in partnership with Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) and included a wide range of presentations, displays and demonstrations covering healthcare topics of local interest.

There were also opportunities for those attending the events to meet members of the Skye and Lochalsh Health Services Reference Group, which was convened by Mid Highland Community Health Partnership (CHP) in May 2010 to help shape the future of health services in their area.

Locality General Manager Alison Phimister said: "We are pleased that such a varied programme was offered with representatives of a range of local services demonstrating the contributions they make to the health of the people of Skye and Lochalsh.

"We are very grateful to all who supported these events, with particular thanks to the Friends of MacKinnon Memorial Hospital and Crossroads Care for providing refreshments at all the events while raising funds that can be used locally. "An evaluation of these events will now be carried out, the findings of which will be reported to the Skye and Lochalsh Health Services Reference Group at its December meeting."



New signage for Raigmore

A wide range of work is taking place at Raigmore Hospital in Inverness to improve communications with patients attending for outpatients appointments and, as part of this work, the signage both in and out of the hospital (old signage pictured) is being replaced.

The work, which is set to finish by the end of the year, started through the National 18 Weeks Referral to Treatment (RTT) Programme, which will reduce waiting times for patients.

We have received feedback from our patients that they get lost in the hospital because of poor signage. This was making them late for their appointment or having additional worry about getting to their appointment on time. Surveys also identified that while staff went out of their way to support patients and relatives this often took them away from their core duties.

Donna Smith, General Manager for the Patient Services Division at Raigmore Hospital, explained that the signage project has had engagement from a wide variety of patient groups and staff.

She said: “Since the hospital was built over 25 years ago, the building has continued to expand and our approach has been to provide additional signs which has led to over 300 signs in a 200 metre corridor. This can be very confusing for those using the services.

“The project, which covers both internal and external signs, is to ensure that our patients have a much better experience when coming into the hospital from the moment they are on site.

“We have consulted with a wide range of patient groups including Autism Rights Group Highland (ARGH) and Sight Action, as well as the hospital’s Patients Council and our own staff who work with patients who need additional support. The hospital will be split into 10 zones and our aim is to have the majority of patients and visitors coming in the correct door and getting to the right department in a timely, efficient and effective way.”

The signage work will be carried out by Acorn Signs, based in Inverness, with a completion date of December. In total the work to replace the signs is costing approx £50k. The hospital’s own Estates Department have recently started clearing and painting the walls in preparation for the work to start.

Donna said: “Anyone coming into the hospital just now will notice there is a fair bit of work going on and I would like to apologise for any disruption this causes.”



New Blood Test Machine for Cowal

The locality recently purchased a new iSTAT battery operated handheld blood analyser which provides reliable blood test results at the patient’s bedside in minutes and needs as little as two drops of blood. Casualty staff and some ward staff have already been trained to operate the machine so it can be used for all patients in the hospital.

This new machine does not replace the routine or emergency blood tests that are analysed by the laboratories as per normal but can help enhance this service through allowing very quick blood tests to be taken when appropriate which can help doctors in their diagnosis.

Physicians Assistants coming to NHS Highland

NHS Highland is delighted to announce that as of November this year, we will be providing elective clinical placements to student Physician Assistants from a number of UK universities.

Physician assistants (PA's) are health care professionals who have been trained in the medical model of care and work with the supervision of a doctor. The role originated in the United States in the 1950's and has now been adopted by a number of countries world wide.

Currently there are a number of PA's working in a variety of clinical areas within the UK and commonly, their role includes obtaining medical histories, conducting physical examinations, requesting and interpreting tests, diagnosing and treating illnesses and injuries and providing guidance on preventive health care.

PA's are complimentary to clinical teams and are not replacements for traditional nursing, medical or AHP roles.

The student PA's that Highland will be hosting, come from a variety of backgrounds and all have a first degree as PA courses are all at postgraduate level.

Emma Watson, NHS Highland Director of Medical Education said "this is a really exciting development for NHS Highland and an opportunity to consider how PA's may contribute in the future to our overall clinical workforce. We are facing a number of challenges around trainee doctor numbers and PA's have proven to be an excellent addition to clinical teams. They function in a way that is quite different to Nurse Practitioners for example so are complimentary.

We are delighted that we have been able to establish links with a number of Universities that provide PA training including; St George's University London, Birmingham University and Aberdeen University who are Scotland's first provider of PA education".

New clinic improves access to NHS Dental Services in Dingwall area

People living in the Dingwall and Strathconon area of Ross-shire now have better access to NHS dental services following the opening of the new Inchvannie House Dental Surgery in the town on September 12.

Dr Navin Aziz has taken on the lease on the new four-surgery dental clinic, which has been built on a site owned by NHS Highland next to the public car park at the rear of the High Street at a cost of £1.3 million and, once fully staffed, the clinic will be able to take at least 6,000 NHS patients.

NHS Highland Dental Service Development Manager, Alex Fraser, said: "Long term access to NHS dental services is guaranteed to the local community as the lease, which the dentists sign up to, requires that 80% of the income generated at the practice is derived from delivering NHS dental services."

She explained that before the clinic opened, less than half the population of Dingwall and the surrounding area were registered with an NHS dentist and over 2,000 people had asked to be placed on the waiting list for registration in Dingwall. She added that the priority was to offer patients from the dental waiting list the opportunity to register with the new practice.



Dr Aziz (pictured) completed his training in India and qualified as a dentist in 1996. He started working in the UK in 2006 and was working at Huntly in Aberdeenshire before taking over the new dental clinic in Dingwall.

He said: "I've worked all over Britain and have always liked this part of the UK so I was really pleased when this opportunity came up. The premises are wonderful and NHS Highland has equipped the clinic to a very high spec so we will be able to offer a very good service to our patients. It's also an honour to work in Dingwall."

Scots to benefit from up to £10m, health and social care technologies project

The Highlands has been chosen as one of five pilot areas of Scotland which are to take part in a research and development programme that will see up to £10m invested in finding innovative solutions that could improve the lives of millions of people with long term conditions.

The aim is to encourage 10,000 or more older adults living in the pilot areas to take part in the DALLAS (Delivering Assisted Lifestyles At Scale) initiative. The programme will examine the use of new technologies to support people in their own homes and find out which innovative products, systems and services work best.

Cabinet Secretary for Health Nicola Sturgeon said: "Supporting people to live independently at home is a key priority for the Scottish Government. It is what older people have consistently said they want and we know it is generally better for people's health to remain at home wherever that's possible.

"Scotland has made significant progress on developing and expanding new technologies to help people do just that - providing effective care and reassurance to many older people. This project demonstrates our commitment to build on this progress and to expand even further the role technology plays in supporting twenty-first century healthcare."

Bill Reid, Head of eHealth, NHS Highland said: "We are delighted that the Highland Partnership has been chosen as a Phase One area. We have already made excellent progress in the beneficial implementation of telehealthcare assistive technologies in a wide range of ways right across our area.

"The current project will allow us to build on this and further develop our assistive living services on a large scale. I look forward to working with colleagues across the partnership organisations and maximising the benefit to mainly elderly and vulnerable residents allowing them to be supported in their own homes."

In Scotland, the work will be led by the Scottish Centre for Telehealth and Telecare (SCTT) & NHS 24, and will examine how new technologies and innovative services can help improve the quality of life of, and support independent living for, older people and people living with long term health and care issues.

Cowal Health Promotion Day

Sixty staff attended a Health Promotion Day in the hospital to help promote healthy eating and healthy lifestyles among the staff and maintain the GOLD Healthy Working Lives Award. This event focussed on fitness with exercise taster sessions (pictured) of zumba, pilates and circuit training throughout the day. Cookery demonstrations promoting healthy snacks and reduced saturated fats were well supported.

Massages and spiritual healing were also on offer and both were fully booked during the day. Sun awareness and safe tanning was encouraged with several staff leaving much more 'tanned' (fake tanned that is) than before.

Thanks go to Lorraine Robinson who provided the fitness sessions, the Health Visiting Team who undertook the health checks, blood pressure checks, body mass indexes and blood sugar testing and also the dietetic team for their cookery demonstrations.



Moderator of Church of Scotland visits Migdale Hospital



Above: (l-r) Mrs Rosemary Arnott; the Moderator of the Church of Scotland the Right Reverend David Arnott; Clerk to the Presbytery of Scotland Mrs Mary Stobo; Lead Nurse for Sutherland Lorraine Coe; and Board Nursing Director Heidi May.

The Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland met patients and staff when he visited Migdale Hospital at Bonar Bridge on Wednesday September 21 as part of a 10-day visit to the Presbytery of Sutherland.

The Right Reverend David Arnott, and his wife, Rosemary, were accompanied on their visit to the hospital by the Clerk to the Presbytery of Sutherland, Mrs Mary Stobo.

The Church of Scotland party were met by NHS Highland Board Nursing Director, Heidi May, and Lead Nurse for Sutherland, Lorraine Coe, who took them on a guided tour of the new hospital.

Lorraine said: "It was a great honour for us that the Moderator and his wife found time in their busy schedule to pay a visit to Migdale Hospital. We were delighted to show them around the new building and the patients and staff were very pleased to have the chance to meet them.

"They were very interested in the work carried out at the hospital and showed particular interest in the support that the community gives the hospital and the community services that are provided in Sutherland."

New autism alert card launched in the Highlands

A new initiative has been launched in the Highlands to help address the unique challenges faced by people with autism who are victims of crime and accidents.

It is estimated that 50,000 Scots have autism, with 4,000 thought to live in the Highlands. Autism is known as the 'invisible disability', because those with the condition can appear to be outwardly functioning well, while often experiencing severe challenges in communication and social situations.

The Autism Alert Card, which will help ensure those with the condition are quickly identified by police and emergency services, is endorsed by Northern Constabulary, NHS Highland, Highlands & Islands Fire & Rescue Service and The Highland Council.

The card, featuring the Northern Constabulary logo, includes details of a personal contact who can lead emergency services through the best ways to support the individual with autism in what can be a highly pressurised experience.

Leading autism charity, The National Autistic Society (NAS) Scotland, together with its partners, have described the card as a 'breakthrough' and are encouraging all teenagers and adults with autism to apply.

Faith Wilson, NHS Highland Professional Lead Nurse for the Community Learning Disability Nursing Service, said: "NHS Highland welcomes the development of the Autism Alert Card and is proud to have worked in partnership on this initiative.

"The card will serve as a prompt for staff treating the patient with autism to consider and adapt their approach in order to make the experience much more positive. This is one step further for health staff in learning the language of autism!"

Anyone wishing to apply for an Autism Alert Card should call 01463 720056 or email autism.alertcard@nas.org.uk.



Above: (l-r) Lachlan MacBeth (Drummond School), Faith Wilson (NHS), Finlay MacLennan (Drummond School)

A Birthday without candles

Bereavement Seminar on still birth and neonatal death for healthcare professionals



On Thursday 1st September, a seminar was held at the Centre for Health Science, Inverness primarily for maternity staff to ensure best practice when supporting parents who had lost a baby through stillbirth and neonatal death.

The seminar was the idea of local midwife Di Matheson who works at Raigmore Hospital. Her son Callum had died in a road traffic accident last year and Callums parents had asked that donations at his funeral went to the stillbirth and neonatal death charity Sands. Di was keen that this money was used to help staff understand the needs of bereaved parents grieving over the loss of their baby which is an extremely stressful time

for parents. Maternity staff also find the experience very upsetting and are often unsure as to how they should respond to parents at this time.

The morning session was led by the Child Bereavement Charity who are based in London and the speaker, Julia Savage gave the 60 midwives, doctors, health visitors and students a truly inspirational insight into the work of the charity through supporting bereaved parents and training and education of staff.

The afternoon speakers included Dr Russell Lees, obstetrician, Dr Ros Rankin, senior pathologist, Lucy Griffin head of medical Illustration and input from the chaplaincy service. Debbie Gallagher from local group CROCUS gave the audience an insight into the needs of siblings whose new baby brother or sister dies and how they may react or respond to bereavement. Sands were there to offer further information and leaflets from their local support network. Sally Amor, the child health commissioner, gave an overview of the new administrative process that has been developed to support best practice both in primary and inpatient services to ensure that surveillance systems are joined up to avoid any appointments being sent out for a baby who has died.



A poignant part of the afternoon was a talk from local mum Susan Simpson who spoke of her experience of the hopes and joy of an expected new baby through the high and lows of screening and the sad death of her baby girl Eilidh Beth. Susan and her family have since set up a website to offer support to other parents bereaved through stillbirth or neonatal death and also work with Scottish Charity SiMBA, who supply memory keep sake boxes for bereaved parents, to maternity and special care baby units.



The seminar offered participants a tremendous amount of information and an opportunity to discuss how they would like their local services to develop to improve support to bereaved parents. Sandra Harrington, NHS Highland and Wendy Jessiman from the University of Stirling helped Di to organise the event and are extremely grateful to all the speakers and colleagues who participated in making this a truly great day. We all left feeling moved and emotional but motivated and uplifted.

Sandra Harrington
Midwifery Development Officer/Supervisor of Midwives

Customer Care in NHS Highland

If you hear the phrase Customer Care I wonder what you think about.

A group of staff from NHS Highland have met recently to discuss how we ensure that we are delivering good quality, consistent customer care across the organisation and how we would measure this.

We are planning to work alongside you in your own services and teams to help you identify who your customers are; what good customer care might mean and how we know that we are achieving it. It is intended that eventually we will get round the entire organisation, but to begin with we have identified 6 different teams or functions from across NHS Highland to begin this work.

Are you confident that your own team already champions customer care or would you like to assess how you are really doing?, then we are keen to hear from teams and services who would like to volunteer to be a part of this work. You will receive support from a staff member to carry out work to identify your customers and by involving them begin to draw up a list of what quality customer care looks like for you and your customers. The learning from this can then form part of the wider roll out to other teams to support them in going through a similar process.

Are you keen to find out more about this work or want to contribute your ideas and thoughts about it or would you be interested in being involved in looking at customer care then please get in touch with Esther Dickinson on 01463 704791 or by email on esther.dickinson@nhs.net.

Do you give respect and get respect at work?

This is the first in a new series about Dignity@Work. Every issue, we'll be giving you tips, stories or discussion points to make sure we all give respect and get respect in the workplace. A Partnership sub group has been set up to take this work forward.

Questions to ask in your workplace.....

Do we recognise when someone has done a good job? And what do we do about it?

Could we do something as a team to say well done?

How can we tell others about the good things our team are doing?

Can we use the performance review process to recognise contribution and motivate each other?

Netiquette tip 1 -

Check before sending – Take a few moments to proofread before you send something!

Frequent typographical errors or misspellings will distract readers and can leave a bad impression. Always use the spell checker.

Reasons to be *cheerful*

Recognising Excellence Award 2011 - the results!

Desire, motivation, dedication, going that extra mile and not losing that personal touch were just some of the themes being celebrated at this year's Recognising Excellence Awards.

Ray Stewart, Employee Director at NHS Highland, was on the judging panel again this year and was again very impressed by the nominations that came in.



He said: "I have said before that we cannot underestimate the impact on patients and carers that our staff have. It was difficult to decide on this year's finalists as the calibre of nominee was so high. I would like to offer my congratulations to all finalists and my thanks to those who took the time to nominate."

This year there are eight award categories with a total of 13 winners (pictured with friends and family) who line up as follows -

'Better Health' award went to Donna Gough, Clinical Psychiatric Nurse. The 'Person Centred Care' award went to Dr Chris James, GP; Josie Johnson-Duff, Nursing Assistant; and Florence Anderson, Staff Nurse. The 'Improving Quality' award went to Christine McArthur, NHS Highland's Falls Coordinator and the Mackinnon Memorial Hospital Team. The 'Volunteering' award went to volunteer driver Alice Grant. Our 'Behind the Scenes' award went to the Community Equipment Stores Team, South East Community Health Partnership and Iris Mackenzie, Health Protection.

The first of our three new awards this year was the 'Going Green for Efficiency' award went to Lynn Lopez, Team Leader in Fort William. Our 'Lifetime Achievement' award went to Dr James Douglas, GP, Fort William and Dougie Montgomery, Substance Misuse Coordinator. And finally our 'Outstanding New Recruit' award went to Linda Fraser in Pharmacy.

Many congratulations to all!

GPs in Highlands and Islands leading the way

GPs from across the Highlands and Islands were very well represented at the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) Scotland GP awards this year with nominations coming in for GPs throughout the region.

Dr Miles Mack, Vice-chair of the North of Scotland Faculty of RCGP, was very impressed with how well the area was represented this year.

He said: I was delighted that the Highlands and Islands were so well represented in the RCGP Scotland GP awards this year with all nominations coming from our region. Particular congratulations go to Dr Joe Tangney for his award of GP of the year.

"This backs up our belief that General Practice is thriving in our area and we are lucky to have exceptional doctors who are highly appreciated by their patients and their communities. This is especially encouraging as we approach the centenary of the publication of the report of the Highlands and Islands Medical Service Committee or Dewar Report that led to the setting up a planned health service some 30 years ahead of the NHS.

"In a time when the NHS faces unprecedented challenges it is essential that GPs remain at the heart of medical provision to our communities."

Donation of TVs for Migdale Hospital patients

All inpatients at Migdale Hospital at Bonar Bridge in Sutherland are now able to watch TV in their bedrooms thanks to a generous donation of £5,000 from Scottish Sea Farms Heart of the Community Trust.

Previously patients were able to watch TV in the day room at the 22-bed hospital that opened in June of this year, but they did not have TVs in their rooms.

However, Scottish Sea Farms, which operates a salmon farm on Loch Shin, has donated the money to buy 18 television sets, which have now been installed in patient bedrooms. The facility already had four TVs that have been placed in the other rooms.

Murray Munro, manager of the salmon farm at Loch Shin, said: "Many families in Sutherland, will at some point, make use of the hospital facility and will therefore benefit from this donation.

"Scottish Sea Farms was delighted to have been able to assist with the funding through its Heart of the Community Trust and is pleased that the televisions have been so gratefully received."

Lorraine Coe, who is Lead Nurse and Clinical Nurse Manager for Sutherland, said: "We are very grateful to Scottish Sea Farms and are delighted that all patients at the hospital are now able to watch TV in their own rooms. This has given them more choice and greater independence, which can help their recovery.

"The new TVs have been very well received by patients and are already being well used. Patients can now choose whether they wish to socialise while watching TV in the day room or enjoy some quiet time alone watching TV in their bedrooms.

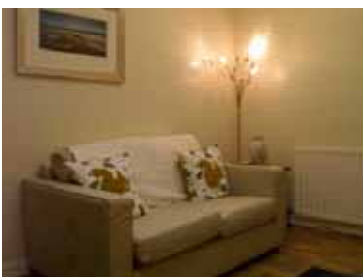
"This generous donation is enabling patients to keep up to date with what's going on in the world and to follow their favourite programmes while in hospital."

SiMBA support to Raigmore Hospital

SiMBA (Simpson's Memory Box Appeal) has worked closely with the chaplaincy staff at Raigmore Hospital, Inverness to re-decorate/re-furnish their Quiet Room (pictured).

Lindsay Rodgers hospital chaplain approached the charity to see if they could help smarten up their Quiet Room as this room is used by bereaved parents while in the hospital or when they return for a chat or counselling. SiMBA were happy to support the project and seeing the benefit to parents they were only happy to assist. With the help of Lindsay Rodgers and John Scott in estates the room has now been transformed into the peaceful, quiet room it was intended to be.

The charity introduced their Memory Boxes to the maternity unit within the hospital in March 2011. The Memory Box can be gifted to any parent who loses a baby at any stage of pregnancy or close to the time of birth; the box is filled with a treasure of mementoes including hand and footprint certificates, a card for a lock of hair, a birth acknowledgement certificate, a SiMBA teddy and many other precious items. The memory Box often being described as the parents 'most treasured possession'.



They are also looking for a location for their Tree of Tranquillity, a life sized tree made out of mainly copper, leaves can be requested by parents, engraved and added to the tree as a symbol of remembrance to babies. More information on the current Tree's can be found on the SiMBA web site www.simbacharity.org.uk.



Above: (l-r) Murray Munro of Scottish Sea Farms, Staff Nurse Sue Tomlinson and Migdale patient John Stevenson with one of the new TVs.

Funding boost for Highlands Project

The charity CHILDREN 1st has launched a new project in the Highlands to help families of vulnerable babies and very young children who are growing up with parents who use alcohol or drugs.

And the new service, which offers a unique, family focused way to keep children safe and happy, has been given a kick-start with the award a grant of £154,253 from the Partnership Drugs Initiative (PDI), which is run by independent grant-making trust the Lloyds TSB Foundation for Scotland in partnership with the Scottish Government. The funding will help sustain the service to 2015.

PDI targets children and young people in families in which parents misuse drugs or alcohol, pre-teen children who are at higher risk of developing problems with substance misuse and young people who are developing or who have established problems with substance misuse.

CHILDREN 1ST already has the pilot stage of the new project up and running from its base in Killen, by Avoch, Ross-shire. The project, called Family Solutions, puts the family at the heart of decision-making and planning for the safety and well-being of their young children. The project uses an approach called Family Group Conferencing (FGC). Using the FGC approach, the project supports families to come together.

Dr Margaret Somerville, chair of the Highland Alcohol & Drugs Partnership (HADP), said: "It's vitally important that we have a range of services and interventions available that can help families where alcohol and drugs are an issue.

"This project will not only help families by letting them be fully involved in creating their own solutions but will also allow them to engage with professionals who can ensure the children in that family are supported and safe.

"HADP are delighted that Family Solutions has attracted funding from Lloyds TSB Foundation for Scotland Partnership Drugs Initiative and we look forward to working with CHILDREN 1ST over the next few years to build on the excellent work that already happens in Highland in supporting children and families."

Medical Illustration Receives Awards in IMI 2011 National Competition

Susan Mitchell who is a Senior Medical Artist in the Medical Illustration department has received three awards in this years' Institute of Medical Illustrators (IMI) competition.

She received a Bronze award for a 'Shoulder Impingement' Illustration (right) as part of a physiotherapy project;



A Silver award for a 'Bladder' Illustration (left) for a paper showing the development of cancer cells within the bladder;

A Silver award for a 'Plantar Fasciitis' Illustration (below right) for a physiotherapy leaflet.



If you require illustration work, posters or leaflets designed please contact the artists on 01463 704284. Guidelines can be found on the Medical Illustration web page on the intranet at: http://intranet.nhsh.scot.nhs.uk/Org/DHS/SSU/Medical_DiagnosticsDivision/Medical%20Illustration/Pages/Default.aspx



MFR Cash for Kids boosts ARCHIE fund

A staggering £15,000 was raised at the recent Moray Firth Radio cash for Kids day which was broadcast live from Raigmore Hospital's Children's Ward.

The money is being given to the ARCHIE fund which is aiming to raise £1m to pay for the refurbishment of the Children's Ward at the Inverness hospital.

Accepting the cheque from Cash for Kids on behalf of ARCHIE are Fundraising Director David Cunningham (left) and Allana Mackay, Fundraising Manager (right).

Letters to NHS Highland...

"May I congratulate you and your staff upon the delectable food your excellent team prepared during my recent time in Raigmore Hospital. The very varied menu, combined with the attractively arranged trays helped to break up the day in knowing that treats were in store!

As you are well aware your work is fundamental to recovery so I am very grateful to you and all your team."

A patient from Inverness

"I have just returned home after a brief stay in the Bignold Ward in Caithness. I would like to place on record my appreciation for the care and kindness I received from every member of staff I met. I found my room spotlessly clean, the food was tailored precisely to my medical needs and each member of staff did everything possible to reassure me, to look after me and to treat me with respect and consideration."

A patient via email

"I am writing to thank you for the superb treatment which I received when I attended Mackinnon Memorial on Skye. I was seen immediately by Dr Bennebroek and examined and triaged in conditions of the utmost cleanliness and efficiency. I was reassured to be told that despite my symptoms it was not believed to be as serious as I thought - and she was right. I am now managing well with medication.

I was fortunate enough to find myself at your hospital at a time of such need."

A patient from London

"I'm not sure that the simple words 'thank you' even begin to convey the gratitude that my family and I feel at the caring way in which all the staff on Glenaray ward looked after my husband in his final weeks.

He has for many years been a campaigner for better health and social care, particularly where people are unable to advocate for themselves or feel they are not being listened to. I shall always be grateful that during his last weeks he was looked after by such compassionate staff - who listened to him and who treated him with dignity.

It would be remiss of me not to say thank you also to everyone on the ward for their care and consideration towards my family and I. We truly appreciated all the support that they gave us during a difficult time when we were struggling to come to terms with what was happening."

A patient's family

"We would like to record our appreciation and utmost gratitude to you and your staff, along with all auxiliary staff for the quality care and attention that was shown to our late mother during her time in the Queen Elizabeth Wing of Caithness General Hospital.

It was very much appreciated to know that she was in a safe place, under caring staff, with exceptional personal care. Thank you all for your caring and kindness to our mother."

The family of a patient

A first for Raigmore with Ophthalmology exams

Raigmore Hospital played host this month (September) to the diploma exams in Ophthalmology. This is the first time the exams have been held at Raigmore and staff at the hospital were pleased to see Dr Gondhowiardjo Tjahjono, visiting Eye Surgeon from Indonesia, who had been invited by the Royal College of Ophthalmologists to come as an observer of the examination process. Dr Tjahjono is Chair of the body overseeing training in Indonesia, and is hoping to implement changes following the pattern established for examinations in this country.

SVQ Congratulations for Ward 6C staff

Many congratulations to Nursing Auxiliaries Teresa (Terry) Tillman, Donna Moore and Debbie Mackay from Ward 6C at Raigmore Hospital in Inverness who have completed their SVQ Level 3 in Health and Social Care.

Congratulations also go to Senior Staff Nurse Cynthia (Cyd) Macdonald, Senior Charge Nurse Andrew Wilson and Staff Nurse Lorraine Wilson who completed their SVQ for assessors at the same time.

All staff did really well completing the programme, which contained a lot of hard work throughout. Well done!

Need to know...

Copying of Print Materials Protected by Copyright

Staff will be aware of the Scottish Government's decision to terminate the NHS Scotland copyright license with the Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA). A major factor in this decision was the wide range of electronic journals and other information resources already licensed for national use through The Knowledge Network (www.knowledge.scot.nhs.uk).

Boards have been advised that they must in the first instance use The Knowledge Network as much as possible to meet their information needs (thus minimising the need for copying of paper resources). Further, Boards were advised that they must carry out only essential photocopying for NHS business, strictly within the terms of copyright law.

In order to remain strictly within the law, as a general rule, staff should not photocopy from print publications protected by copyright – e.g., from books, journals, reports etc.

Journal articles and books should be sourced in electronic form from The Knowledge Network wherever possible. These online resources are licensed for use in NHS Scotland.

For more information contact knowledge@nes.scot.nhs.uk with any questions.



Do NOT photocopy!

Copying print information is costly, and is covered by copyright law.

As a rule, you should *not photocopy* from books, journals, reports etc.

Use electronic resources via The Knowledge Network www.knowledge.scot.nhs.uk wherever possible.

If a photocopy is essential, you should request it via your library service or The Knowledge Network.

There are a few specific situations in which it is safe to photocopy:

- 1) For judicial proceedings, statutory inquiries and Royal Commissions.
- 2) Crown Copyright material is normally available under a free licence. Government publications will often be covered by Copyright, so copying can be undertaken within the relevant terms.
- 3) Where the owner has explicitly given copyright permission
- 4) Where your NHS Board owns the copyright.

Need to know...

Message to all NHS Highland staff - library access

You have access to a library service. It is located in the Centre for Health Science. All staff can use it. It can help you with many things – space to study, a quiet area, item coverage of many subjects you may not expect; eg managing reward systems, developing training courses, statistical analysis.

Doing an SVQ, something e-KSF related or a PhD? We can help. Developing a course, or investigating a new service? We can help. Overwhelmed with the need to look for information and don't have the time to do this? – don't worry the library can find information for you. The Librarians are skilled in the use of a wide range of sources to find you the material you require whether it be clinical, managerial, or educational. PCs providing Internet access and Microsoft Office applications are available for use by all registered Library members.

More detailed information can be found on the Library's website – www.is.stir.ac.uk/nhs.

Other useful links: Library catalogue: <http://libcat.stir.ac.uk>; NHS Scotland Knowledge Network: www.knowledge.scot.nhs.uk

For more details come and visit us, telephone: 01463 255600 (ext 7600), or email: hhsl-inverness@stir.ac.uk. Users in the Argyll and Bute CHP area have their own service based in Oban. Contact Linda Kerr or Marsha Bell on 01631-789020.

(BLOOD) RED ALERT!

Attention all staff involved in ANY part of the transfusion process. Education is key to improving patient safety.

To comply with NHS QIS Blood Transfusion Clinical Standard you must have valid transfusion training to participate. You can access the e-learning modules at www.learnbloodtransfusion.org.uk

For any assistance in anything transfusion related please contact Lynn Kropp, the (temporary) Transfusion Practitioner for NHS Highland.

Whilst there is 100% traceability in NHS Highland (well done all!) there is a poor record for trained staff.

Let's change that!

Lynn.kropp@nhs.net, Telephone-01463 705832 or Bleep 1130

National Health Service Superannuation Scheme Consultation – Employee contribution increases

In his address to Parliament in September on the Scottish Spending Review 2011, the Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Employment and Sustainable Growth, John Swinney, announced the Scottish Government's decision to reluctantly apply employee contribution increases for the NHS, Teachers', Police and Firefighters' schemes in Scotland.

A copy of the consultation documentation on proposed increases to employee contribution rates effective from April 2012 for the National Health Service Superannuation Scheme in Scotland is available on the Agency's website at www.sppa.gov.uk/nhs/consultations.

Responses should be sent by email to: nhspensionsreform@scotland.gsi.gov.uk or sent to the following address no later than 17 November 2011: NHS Pensions Reform, Policy Branch, SPPA, 7 Tweedside Park, Tweedbank, Galashiels, TD1 3TE

Need to know...

New name for national social work inspectorate

The “Care Inspectorate” is the new name for Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland. This is the independent scrutiny and improvement body for care and children’s services which has a significant part to play in improving services for adults and children across Scotland. The Care Inspectorate regulates and inspects care services and carries out social work and child protection inspections. Their aim is to make sure that people receive the highest quality of care and that their rights are promoted and protected.

For more information about the Care Inspectorate visit their website www.careinspectorate.com or telephone 0845 600 9527.

Public Holidays in NHS Highland for 2012-13

The Highland Partnership Forum has agreed the public holiday dates for NHS Highland, they are as follows -

The dates for NHS Highland (excl Argyll and Bute CHP) to be:

Friday 06 April 2012 (Good Friday)
Monday 07 May 2012 (May Bank Holiday)
Monday 06 August 2012 (Summer)
Friday 12 October 2012 (Autumn)
Tuesday 25 December 2012 (Christmas)
Wednesday 26 December 2012 (Christmas)
Tuesday 01 January 2013 (New Year)
Wednesday 02 January 2013 (New Year)

The dates for Argyll & Bute CHP to be:

Friday 06 April 2012 (Good Friday)
Monday 09 April 2012 (Easter Monday)
Monday 07 May 2012 (May Bank Holiday)
Monday 24 September 2012 (Autumn)
Tuesday 25 December 2012 (Christmas)
Wednesday 26 December 2012 (Christmas)
Tuesday 01 January 2013 (New Year)
Wednesday 02 January 2013 (New Year)

Printer Consolidation for NHS Highland

Printer Consolidation for ALL Departments

Please think of consolidating/rationalising printers in your area before placing any new orders.

1. Can you work in a different way?
2. How far are you from your next nearest printer?
3. Have you discussed the need for all current printers in the department?
4. Are there printers in your area that are not used?
5. Are there printers in your area that are only minimally used?

If the answer to any of the above questions is yes then please get in touch to discuss further.

Alison Mackay, eHealth Project Manager
alison.mackay3@nhs.net

