

**NHS Highland**



Meeting: NHS Highland Board Meeting  
 Meeting date: March 2022  
 Title: Social Mitigation Strategy update  
 Responsible Executive/Non-Executive: Dr Tim Allison; Director of Public Health  
 Report Author: Lynda Thomson; Senior Health Improvement Specialist

**1 Purpose**

**This is presented to the Board for:**

- Assurance

**This report relates to a:**

- NHS Board Strategy

**This aligns to the following NHS Scotland quality ambition(s):**

- Person Centred

**This report relates to the following Corporate Objective(s)**

<p><b>Clinical and Care Excellence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving health</li> <li>• Keeping you safe</li> <li>• Innovating our care</li> </ul>
<p><b>A Great Place to Work</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growing talent</li> <li>• Leading by example</li> <li>• Being inclusive</li> <li>• Learning from experience</li> <li>• Improving wellbeing</li> </ul>

## **2 Report summary**

### **2.1 Situation**

This report is an update of NHS Highland's social mitigation strategy as endorsed by the Board in May 2021.

### **2.2 Background**

Whilst the situation around the pandemic and its health impacts appears to be easing, there is still an ongoing impact of COVID across the wider society and the need to address health inequalities in our population which existed before the pandemic, but has been exacerbated over this period.

The Social Mitigation Strategy was agreed by the Board in May 2021. A workshop entitled Building a Better Boat was then held in November 21. The intention behind the workshop was to both promote the strategy and to provide opportunity for teams and services to identify what actions they might take in support of the outcomes within the overall strategy.

A summary report from the workshop was sent out to all those who attended in January 22.

The action plan has been amended following this workshop and discussions are ongoing with relevant teams and services around the actions identified and the relevant governance routes for reporting.

### **2.3 Assessment**

The Social Mitigation Action plan is attached which provides the most recent progress updates. It should be noted however, that this plan is seen as a live document which will continue to be updated and amended as actions are progressed.

Some of the actions already lie within separate governance reporting and where this is the case this has been identified on the plan. Other actions have no specified governance routes and these areas still need to be developed to ensure that we have an appropriate governance route in place.

The Social Mitigation Strategy itself is not replicated in this update report as it has already been seen and endorsed by the Board in May 21.

There are some perceived gaps or areas that are more challenging in the delivery of the plan and which include:

Targeted employment and recruitment for those furthest from the job market and at-risk groups.

Development of Community Wealth Building and specifically work on land and assets and financial power and economic growth.

Impacting on cost of living and addressing fuel poverty and ensuring that our staff are skilled to ask about Money Worries and refer on appropriately  
Redistribution of best before food from NHS Highland premises  
Digital inclusion support and health literacy  
Transport poverty

## 2.4 Proposed level of Assurance

This report proposes the following level of assurance:

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

## 3 Impact Analysis

### 3.1 Quality/ Patient Care

The Social Mitigation Strategy identifies key themes or topics that are likely to make a difference for people who have been most impacted on by the COVID-19 pandemic. If we can deliver on some of the identified actions then we can mitigate some of the worst effects of the pandemic and make a difference on the gap in health for communities who are the most disadvantaged.

### 3.2 Workforce

Our own staff have also experienced the impacts of the pandemic on their personal lives and we seek to not only support our workforce through Fair Work and reasonable pay, but also to offer this opportunity to those furthest from the job market and seeking employment.

### 3.3 Financial

Many of the actions detailed in the plan rely on doing things differently or in partnership rather than financial resources specifically. Some of the actions may require either workforce commitment or funding going forward, but there are no specific financial risks identified in the delivery of the plan. There is however, a financial cost longer term in not mitigating against the impact of the pandemic.

### 3.4 Risk Assessment/Management

The risks of not taking action are that more people will experience poor health outcomes over time resulting in a greater use and need of our services.

### 3.5 Data Protection

There are no identified Data Protection issues in the delivery of the actions.

### 3.6 Equality and Diversity, including health inequalities

An impact assessment has been completed and is available on the NHS Highland website.

### **3.7 Other impacts**

The plan details actions around mental health and wellbeing in addition to other themes identified.

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

A separate engagement plan on the development of the strategy was submitted at the same time as the strategy was presented to the Board in May 21.

### **3.9 Route to the Meeting**

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

- System Leadership Group, July 2020
- Highland Health and Social Care Committee, 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020
- NHS Highland Board, May 2021

## **4 Recommendation**

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

### **4.1 List of appendices**

The following appendices are included with this report:

- Appendix No 1, Social Mitigation Action Plan updated February 22