



Eye in Skye Issue 1: Sharing information about your local NHS health and social care services

Welcome!

Welcome to the very first edition of *Eye in Skye*, the official NHS Highland newsletter to help keep communities informed about and involved with the redesign work we're doing across Skye, Lochalsh and South West Ross.

We're aware that the community would like us to communicate better and share more detailed information about the health and social care redesign. We have listened to you and as a result, have created this newsletter as an attempt to increase communications between us and you. The newsletter will be a source of news for things like Urgent Care, recruitment, and service updates, improvements, or changes.

In this edition of *Eye in Skye*, we have:

- Hospital at Home service introduction
- Staffin Health Centre update
- North Skye Urgent Care updates
- Recruitment updates
- Community Health and Wellness Website
- Call for Feedback



Hospital At Home: A new and innovative service



We have recently been successful on a Scottish Government bid to trial an exciting new service, which will introduce a Hospital at Home team on Skye.

In a twelve month trial from January 2023, Hospital at Home will allow for acute hospital care to be delivered in patients' homes, including the local Care Homes. Acute care could be anything like infections, minor injuries, serious illnesses, or anything else deemed urgent yet a non-emergency. Instead of going to hospital, patients will have the option to ask for this service should they so wish and only if it suits their healthcare needs.

The Hospital at Home will consist of an entire new healthcare team, meaning our hospitals can remain as staffed as possible, with support from Healthcare Improvement Scotland.

Skye is the first remote and rural area this is being trialled in, and we're excited to see the improvements and benefits this exciting and innovative service brings to our communities.

We will keep you posted on any further information or developments surrounding this programme.

Opening of Staffin Health Centre Facility

The long awaited Staffin Clinic Health Facility opened on the 5 December 2022.

The facility has been built in partnership with the Staffin Trust, who have developed a number of affordable housing and two business units in the Staffin Area. NHS Highland has taken one of these business units to use as our new health facility in replacement of the old Nurse's House, which I think we all knew was no longer fit for purpose.

The facility will have a consulting room, interview room, staff room, accessible toilets, a waiting area, and has an automatic door so those with accessibility issues can enter the building problem-free.

Over the last few weeks the building has been completed and has gone through its final processes, like installing IT and telecoms. The building is compliant with all infection control prevention measures and ventilation has been installed in compliance with COVID-19 management.

There are a number of different clinics within the Health Facility. Community nurses will use it for treatments that require a sterile environment, and the space may also be used for vaccination clinics for our vulnerable groups or those with accessibility issues. Women in the area will also have access to midwifery clinics through the facility. Community mental health clinics will be available for vulnerable patients, and psychiatric and psychology services will be available on an ad-hoc basis. In addition, podiatry clinics, physiotherapy and adult health professional clinics like Dietetics, Occupational Therapy, and Speech and Language Therapy will also be available on an ad-hoc basis.

We are in the process of installing [Near Me](#) clinics in the facility to save patients travelling far distances to appointments. These clinics will be intended for those who are unable to access Near Me from home, whether that's due to not having a device or a stable internet connection.

The facility will also benefit staff, who can use the space to conduct administration tasks. For Care at Home teams, the facility can be used to store PPE instead of teams having to travel to Portree to replenish equipment.

GPs will continue running their surgery on Thursday, however, we are looking at potentially introducing an extra day for this. This is still to be agreed and arranged.

We are hoping that this development will be a real positive addition for the communities in North Skye. We can't wait to see it get put to good use!

Portree Urgent Care Centre- NHS 24 Development



Due to ongoing staffing challenges, we are all aware of the challenges around the urgent care centre in Portree. Since the service was suspended in May, we have been offering the same treatment from Broadford.

We want to continue to encourage people who do not need emergency treatment to phone NHS 24 on 111. Our healthcare professionals can come to see patients at Portree Hospital or at home if necessary/preferred. It may be more suitable to travel to Broadford to be seen by a professional depending on your healthcare need and reason for care. NHS 24 will be able to advise you on what is best for you and where you need to go to receive the right care at the right place.

Our NHS 24 service has developed to enable callers to get through to someone faster. There is no longer a wait for a callback and once connected to an operator your call will be dealt with until completion. This means those who need it have quicker access to urgent care.

Remember to always call 999 if it is an emergency.

North Skye Urgent Care Redevelopment

Some good news; after lots of ongoing hard work recruiting and training staff, from the 9 January 2023 we are reestablishing urgent care services from Portree to be operational on weekends and bank holidays.

This is not a walk-in service. The urgent care centre will be available to those who are advised to need urgent care after phoning NHS 24 on 111.

If you require urgent care or think you need A&E but it is not a critical emergency, you should still phone NHS24 on 111 for advice before attending hospital. Always phone 999 or go straight to A&E

for life-threatening emergencies, like suspected heart attacks, strokes, or severe breathing difficulties or severe bleeding.

This service will be staffed by an advanced practitioner based at Portree, with support from trainee advanced practitioners, between 9.00am - 6.00pm on Saturdays and Sundays and on bank holidays. Outwith these times, local urgent care will still be provided by the team based at Broadford Hospital.

There is currently a meeting established called the Urgent Care Workstream Meeting. This has representation from a number of organisations including NHS Highland, the Scottish Ambulance Service, NHS24 and primary care colleagues who are working together to plan the right sustainable model of urgent care service for North Skye that meets the community's needs. The current plan is for those services to run out of Portree Hospital but what the final plan looks like is still to be agreed.

The urgent care cover at Portree will at this time be day time cover during weekends and bank holidays only. The team are considering the data on attendances to ensure the service recommences at the times that are likely to be most needed. Nights always have lower patient attendance, so based on the service need outside of the current operating times we will further increase service provision as required. As we rebuild, the team are likely to be extending into the week.

This is a step forward, however, we appreciate there is more to be done. We will keep you updated on all progress as this work develops.

Recruitment Updates



We are delighted to announce that the new District Manager for Skye, Lochalsh and West Ross is Dawn Pridham. Dawn will commence in post from the 16th January 2023. She will be working alongside Kate Earnshaw in delivering the operational management for both the hospitals and community. A warm welcome and best of luck to Dawn!

Thank you to the communities for your support in raising awareness and working to help with our recruitment and retention.

Our recruitment campaign focuses on the benefits of living in the Skye, Lochalsh and South West Ross area.

We are proud of the hard work and commitment of the staff that work for NHS Highland and continue to work to recruit additional colleagues and to develop services.

We hope you continue to support our recruitment campaigns.

Community Health & Wellness Website



The [Community Health & Wellness website](#) acts as a hub for all health and wellness information, groups and updates for Skye and Raasay. The website will be frequently updated with current news, developments and reports from working groups. You can also find a list of upcoming meetings and events and information on services like Near Me.

On the website you can find an informational and helpful [video](#) about the Rural Support Team and Urgent Care services, or watch it below.



Your Voice Matters

As always, we're keen to hear your thoughts, opinions and feedback on anything relevant to our services. This can be what's working, what's not working, what you like or dislike, or ideas on how we can better things for you, as you are at the heart of the community and your real life experiences matter the most.

It would also be great to hear of any improvements we can make to the *Eye in Skye* newsletter and any content you'd like to see specifically.

There are many ways you can provide feedback to us.

To give us feedback about this newsletter, radio podcasts, or other information we are providing about the Skye redesign, please email: engage@nhsh.scot.

You can choose from any of the options below to give us feedback about a health or social care service you have used:

[Care Opinion](#) (an independent organisation that is completely anonymous)

[Complaints | NHS Highland \(scot.nhs.uk\)](#)