Skye, Lochalsh and South West Ross

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Strong clinical consensus on model of care

THE redesign of health and social care services across Skye, Lochalsh and South West Ross is one of the most significant that NHS Highland has undertaken in recent times.

In 2014, NHS Highland consulted on a proposed new model of service for the communities of Skye, Lochalsh and South West Ross. It is one of only two major service change projects in the NHS to be approved in Scotland since 2007.

The changes being proposed are against a backdrop of the last 50 years or so when it has never been possible to agree where a new hospital facility should be located on Skye.

But as Dr Paul Davidson, clinical director for NHS Highland’s north and west operational unit, explained, this time there is a high degree of confidence that the very necessary modernisation will happen as proposed.

“There will be many benefits from changing some of the ways we provide care,” he said. “Co-locating in-patient care will be safer and more sustainable. It will also allow investment in community and care-at-home services and support some new ways of working in local care homes. All the changes taken together should ensure that services are sustainable for many decades to come.”

He added: “NHS Highland has been through a very lengthy and an extensive process to seek a consensus. There is broad and strong clinical support both for the need to change as well as the proposed new clinical model. This includes representatives from all GP practices who have actively engaged throughout the process and continue to do so.

“There is also overwhelming support from the public – almost nine out of 10 people who responded to the consultation support the proposed future model. And almost everyone who participated in the consultation agreed that the status quo was not an option.

“We recognised that tension around any decision on the location of the new hospital was inevitable. It is evident that some people in North Skye are disappointed that the new facility will not be in Portree but the same would be true for communities in the south of the island had it been determined that the new facility should have been located in Portree. But this is not only about bricks and mortar. The way forward is to develop community services and we are determined to get that right.”

Dr Davidson continued: “We are still a few years away from the new hospital being ready. We will use the time to develop community services in the area, agree a transport plan and we will continue to involve local people. A huge amount of work has taken place but there is much more to do. I hope we can get a meeting of minds with those who still have concerns and work together to make this happen in a way that benefits everyone.”

NHS Highland has secured significant funding in principle to support the major health and social care service redesign for the communities of Skye, Lochalsh and South West Ross. It will include a new hospital ‘hub’ facility in Broadford, strengthened community services and some new arrangements in Portree. This newsletter will be produced quarterly and will be one of the ways NHS Highland will keep local communities and staff informed.

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Produced by NHS Highland
Developing the detail...

**Business case will set out service model**

Over the past year health and social care professionals have been working on translating the agreed service model for Skye, Lochalsh and South West Ross into a more detailed clinical and care specification. This is a key requirement of preparing the Initial Agreement—the first of three documents to be prepared as part of the business case process required for securing the necessary funding to invest in modernising services and care.

To develop the detail, various discussions have taken place with senior clinicians and partner agencies. The following is only a brief summary of some aspects but in future issues more detailed updates will be provided on the main services.

All the in-patient care will be provided from the new hospital and ‘hub’ facility in Broadford. There will be 24-28 beds, all configured as single rooms as required by the Scottish Government to ensure safer and more sustainable care. The new facility will be built on the land adjacent to the health centre which NHS Highland owns.

The new arrangements will also see enhanced community services including care-at-home and mental health services, with integrated teams working flexibly providing both in-reach and out-reach support from hospital. Arrangements will also be in place to provide choice for people at the end of their life. This will require additional capacity for the district nursing team, Marie Curie, Macmillan Nursing and care at home to provide a seven-day and 24-hour service when required. This will improve on the current service, which is more sporadic.

The integrated and extended teams, including GPs, will build on excellent achievements in caring for people with long-term conditions further, reducing hospital admissions and length of stay in hospital.

The implementation of the new GP contract also provides opportunities to refocus time, effort and resources to provide more local needs assessment, including anticipatory care.

Care homes in the north of Skye: We continue to have productive discussions with care home providers in the north of Skye. One, in Portree, is working with us on our development of care-at-home commissioning so that they have an opportunity to develop their outreach services. Another, also in Portree, is producing a business case for a new, enhanced facility. We are working with them to ensure that their new design takes account of our local needs and builds in our commissioning intentions for intermediate care, step-up/step-down beds, respite provision, potential for day services and supported living accommodation.

Spoke facility in Portree: Outline proposals for the ‘spoke’ facility are being progressed with some initial designs being considered. Existing minor injuries services will continue to be co-located with the out-of-hours service. The minor injuries services will be available from 8am-11pm as is currently the case. The service will be staffed by appropriately trained nurses with either medical cover provided by local GPs under a service level agreement or staffed by advanced nurse practitioner with remote medical cover provided by rural practitioners in the ‘hub’ facility in Broadford. One of the key changes is that the Portree Practice would be located in the ‘spoke’. Outbuildings will be demolished to increase car parking.

Scottish Ambulance Service: The Scottish Ambulance Service will be co-located in the new ‘hub’ facility in Broadford, as they are currently. Work is ongoing to explore the potential of co-location in the ‘spoke’ facility in Portree. This would further support integrated working, sharing workload, skills maintenance and professional support. Current arrangements in outlying rural areas will continue where ambulance staff are home-based but could rotate by negotiation to the busier, connected ‘hub’ facility for mutual professional benefit.
The estates side of things will be led and co-ordinated through senior project manager Heather Cameron and project manager Diane Forsyth.

**Community and staff engagement**

THE steering group, which has wide range of local representatives, will continue to meet throughout the duration of the project. The next meeting has been arranged for 8th March.

A sub-group to oversee North Skye services and development of the 'spoke' has also been established.

A key role for Ross Mackenzie and Evan Beswick is to ensure that there is good staff engagement and that the workforce plan is developed to underpin the new model of services and care. This work is ongoing and is a key requirement as part of the business case.

Patients, public and community representatives will be invited to sit on working groups to look, for example, at access and design of the new building. There will also be opportunities to visit some new facilities.

Members of the project team continue to respond to requests to meet local groups or answer queries.

**Key dates for 2016**

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<tr>
<td>29th January</td>
<td>Open drop-in event (Portree)</td>
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<td>1st March</td>
<td>Transport and access and north Skye group</td>
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<td>8th March</td>
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<td>20th April</td>
<td>Project board</td>
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<td>23rd May</td>
<td>Transport and access and North Skye group</td>
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<td>1st June</td>
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<td>6th July</td>
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<td>5th October</td>
<td>Project board</td>
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<td>29th November</td>
<td>Transport and access and north Skye group</td>
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<td>8th December</td>
<td>Steering group</td>
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**Guide to local services issued**

LAST year, NHS Highland issued a leaflet to residents in Skye, Lochalsh and South West Ross with some basic health advice and advising them who to contact if they are unwell or injured.

It also clarified that a Minor Injury Unit service and not an A&E service is provided in Portree. This does not represent a change and is in line with national terminology. Signposts have been changed as appropriate.

In current and future arrangements there are no plans to change the location of GP practices, other than the move for Portree.

**Transport and access**

A MULTI-AGENCY group has been formed to discuss a holistic view on travel and is chaired by Councillor Hamish Fraser.

Its remit is partly advisory but the group will support the development of a transport assessment plan to underpin the redesign.

Having a suitable transport plan in place prior to any planned changes was a condition of the Cabinet Secretary's approval in February 2015.

Notably, as part of the public consultation responders were asked about car ownership or access to a car and overall 84 per cent indicated they did have a car or had access to one.

**Project board established**

A PROJECT board has been established to oversee the governance of the project.

It is chaired by NHS Highland's chief operating officer, Deborah Jones, and includes members of the project team (see below) and other senior NHS Highland officials.

Public members, drawn from the development group, also sit on the board. They are Councillor Hamish Fraser, Caroline Gould (Skye and Lochalsh Access Panel) and Meg Gilles (Skye and Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations).

The group held its first meeting on 13th November 2015 and approved its membership, remit and a risk register, and determined key milestones going forward.

**Update on NHS Highland project team**

THE project team is responsible for the day-to-day running and delivery of the project. It reports on progress to the project board through the project director, Gill McVicar.

Gill is supported by members of her management team: Dr Paul Davidson (clinical director for NHS Highland’s north and west operational unit); Dr Alistair Innes (clinical lead for MacKinnon Memorial Hospital); Ross Mackenzie (area manager for north and west); Tracy Ligema (deputy director of operations for north and west), Kate Earnshaw (district manager for Skye, Lochalsh and Wester Ross) and Evans Beswick (project management support).

**To find out more, contact...**

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Alternatively, visit the NHS Highland website via the home page: http://www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/Pages/Welcome.aspx