

NHS Highland



Meeting: Highland Health & Social Care Committee

Meeting date: 30 August 2023

Title: Primary Care Update

Responsible Executive/Non-Executive: Pam Cremin, Chief Officer

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1 Purpose

This is presented to the Board for:

- Awareness

This report relates to a:

- 5 Year Strategy, Together We Care, with you, for you.
- NHS Board/Integration Joint Board Strategy or Direction

This report will align to the following NHSScotland quality ambition(s):

Safe, Effective and Person Centred

This report relates to the following Strategic Outcome(s)

Start Well	Thrive Well	Stay Well	Anchor Well
Grow Well	Listen Well	Nurture Well	Plan Well
Care Well	Live Well	Respond Well	Treat Well
Journey Well	Age Well	End Well	Value Well
Perform well	Progress well	All Well Themes	X

2 Report summary

2.1 Situation

This report provides Committee with an update in relation to primary care.

2.2 Background

The primary care division covers General Practice, Dental and Community Optometry services across North Highland.

2.3 Assessment

Community Optometry

Community Glaucoma Service

The Community Glaucoma Service (CGS) is a new national NHS service in Scotland that provides a means by which patients who have lower risk glaucoma or ocular hypertension, and who have been under the care of the Hospital Eye Service, may be discharged to receive care from CGS accredited providers in the community.

The roll out of the Community Glaucoma Enhanced Service was due to commence in NHS Highland Summer 2024. Roll out is dependent on number of Community Optometrists completing the NHS Education for Scotland Glaucoma Award Training (NESGAT). Cohort 3 of this training is due to complete in March 2024.

Currently there are 9 Accredited Providers who have signed up to the Enhanced Service for the provision of the Community Glaucoma Service and 8 Accredited Clinicians. There are 3 accredited clinicians in NHS Highland who are currently NESGAT accredited and the remaining 5 are in Cohort 3 of NESGAT.

Recently the Scottish Government Eyecare team have requested NHS Highland to support roll out of the Community Glaucoma Service ahead of the planned roll out of date of summer 2024 across the Kintyre peninsula as there is sufficient Accredited Providers and an Accredited Clinician in the area who is NESGAT accredited. NHS Greater Glasgow currently provides the Hospital Eye Services (Ophthalmology) for patients residing in the Argyll & Bute HSCP area and has recently rolled out CGS across several HSCP areas. There is clearly huge benefit to these patients in terms of being able to be seen locally.

We are about to commence discussions with NHS Highland e-Health Department regarding the roll out of the National Ophthalmology Electronic Patient Record (Open Eyes) initially for the Accredited Providers in the Kintyre area of A&B and these discussions will also widen to include various stakeholders (SG Community Eyecare team, NES Digital, NHS GGC, A&B Head of Strategic Planning & Performance etc.) moving forward.

Stroke/TIA Pathway

We are currently engaging with the Stroke Team to develop a clear pathway for Community Optometrists to follow in the event of a diagnosis/suspicion of a recent Stroke/TIA.

Dental Services

Registrations

Three Dental Practices (Invergordon, Alness, Tain) are accepting new adult and child NHS patients, with Fort William/Glencoe Dental Practices now accepting new child NHS registrations.

Payment Reform

The Scottish Government has now shared information on proposed NHS General Dental Services payment reform, to be implemented from 1st November. This

information has been shared widely with dental teams. This is a significant change for Dental Practices, which simplifies current payment systems and increases treatment fees that can be claimed by dentists. It is hoped that these changes will stabilise access to NHS dental services. Some patient charges for dental treatment will increase, although the maximum NHS patient charge remains unchanged.

Scottish Dental Access Grant Funding

NHSH has received one further application for Scottish Dental Access Initiative grant funding to open a new 2/3 Surgery Dental Practice in Inverness, this will be formally assessed by NHSH colleagues on Monday 21st August. If the application is supported, funding will be released by the Scottish Government to support establishing this new Practice.

General Practice

Board-managed GP Practices

A further GP practice transferred to Board management in July 2023. Armadale Medical Practice had both GP partners retire and no new GMS provider was secured. There are a significant number of GP vacancies across the Board-managed practices across 6 practices (Scourie, Kinlochbervie, Durness, 3 Harbours Caithness, Aness & Invergordon).

Lease Assignment

The new GP Contract premises directions provide the opportunity for GP practices to request a lease assignment from partners to the Board. An application process has been developed and all applications require to be approved by NHSH Asset Management Group (AMG). Several practices have expressed an interest and discussions are on-going for completed paperwork to progress to AMG.

Premises Maintenance

There are various premises issues across the region with significant maintenance backlog work.

Culloden Medical Practice and Culloden Surgery

Culloden Medical Practice and Culloden Surgery are currently declining patient registrations. Their patient lists remain open, with no formal closure requested to date. Issues are due to the practice building operating beyond originally intended capacity. The GP partners jointly own the building. No solutions from NHS Highland have been identified at present due to lack of capital funding for development. As premises owners, the practices are able explore their own solutions.

NHS Highland will continue to assign patients until a list closure is requested and agreed. Meeting between Primary Care and practice teams planned for late August.

2.4 Proposed level of Assurance

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

Comment on the level of assurance

Recruitment challenges remain across Dental and General Practice services.

3 Impact Analysis

3.1 Quality/ Patient Care

General practice vacancies require locum deployment which creates budgetary cost pressures whilst maintaining local service provision.

3.2 Workforce

The number of vacant GP posts across 2C practices remain around 12WTE.

3.3 Financial

Locum expenditure is an area of scrutiny in line with the efficiency and transformation programme. Significant work has been undertaken on a locum rate card and a centralised booking process is being implemented to provide more corporate oversight. Use of expensive agency locums are under review to reduce reliance.

3.4 Risk Assessment/Management

Workforce and finance risks are noted in the primary care risk register which is reviewed monthly.

3.5 Data Protection

N/A

3.6 Equality and Diversity, including health inequalities

Recruitment is continually under review across all aspects of primary care.

3.7 Other impacts

N/A

3.8 Communication, involvement, engagement and consultation

This report has been compiled specifically for the purpose of reporting and updating HHSCP Committee.

3.9 Route to the Meeting

As above.

4 Recommendation

- **Awareness** – For Members' information only.

4.1 List of appendices

The following appendices are included with this report:

None