

NHS Highland



SUMMARY REPORT OF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

Name of Committee	Highland Health and Social Care
Date of Meeting	6 May 2026
Committee Chair	Gerry O'Brien

KEY POINTS FROM DISCUSSION AND ESCALATION

ALERT

- Ongoing financial pressure including significant Adult Social Care overspend and reliance on supplementary staffing.
- Continued system pressures from delayed discharges and high demand across services.
- Fragility of NHS dental services, particularly in rural areas, due to workforce shortages and infrastructure disruption.
- Vaccination programme remains in escalation due to uptake challenges and service issues.

ASSURE

- Finance Report – Month 11 – limited assurance
- IPQR (Integrated Performance and Quality Report) – limited assurance
- Vaccination Report – limited assurance
- Dental Services Update – limited assurance
- Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Team (PNIMHT) Report – moderate assurance
- Care Home Collaborative Report – substantial assurance
- Fees and Charges Report – substantial assurance

Item 04c - Highland Health and Social Care Committee Summary
2026 05 06

ADVISE

- Need for improved clarity and benchmarking of unmet need and service demand trends.
- Need for enhanced performance reporting clarity including around delayed discharged metrics.
- Strengthened communication around vaccine delivery model.
- Need to further develop hybrid service models whilst managing risk of fragmentation.
- Use development sessions for deeper strategic topics.

RISKS

- Financial risk: due to overspend and reliance on non-recurring savings.
- Workforce risk: affecting multiple services including dentistry and governance.
- Service sustainability risk in particular regard to dental service
- System flow risk: delayed discharge and limited care home capacity
- Vaccination delivery risk related to hybrid model implementation
- Capacity risk within Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Service if trainee/student positions un-met in future years.

ACTIONS

- Amend and re-circulate March minutes
- Add key strategic topics including: dentistry and governance, to list of subjects for future development sessions
- Continue engagement with Scottish Government regarding vaccination service escalation
- Progress implementation planning for vaccination hybrid model
- Provide further analysis on unmet need; delayed discharges; and pharmacy data (pharmacy data to be passed to IQPR team).

LEARNING

- Future development session topics were discussed including: clinical governance review to improve the integration of social care with NHS quality and patient safety systems (follow-up with Director of People and Culture to clarify legislative implications for social care, monitoring and confirm whether current budget and staffing levels meet statutory requirements); development session on the practical use of risk register, mitigations and assurance processes; understanding rising delayed discharge trends and hidden demands; deep-dive into unpaid carers; dental services.