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A Message from Jane Gill

Welcome to the 10th edition of our newsletter! We're thrilled to share exciting progress in the Moray Maternity Collaborative's aim to deliver consultant-led maternity care. Every step forward brings us closer to a safe, sustainable service meeting the needs of Moray families.

In recent months, we've reached key milestones. The Day Assessment Unit is now fully operational, and complex antenatal clinics - where women receive care from obstetricians, specialist nurses, diabetic specialists, perinatal mental health professionals, and midwives - are running smoothly.

Perhaps most excitingly this month we were able to reintroduce planned caesarean births at Dr Gray's Hospital.

Inside this issue, you'll find updates on that and much more on our progress as well as a look at what's next. Thank you for your ongoing support - together, we're turning this vision into reality!

Digital Innovation in Maternity Care Bridging IT Gaps for Seamless Care

Technology is transforming maternity care, and at the Moray Maternity Programme, we're ensuring those benefits reach everyone - especially expectant mothers and the midwives who support them. We've been working hard to improve access to maternity records across NHS Grampian and NHS Highland, so no mother faces gaps in information when transferring between hospitals.

We're tackling what's traditionally been a major challenge: IT access for midwives working across health board boundaries. While there's still work to do, we've made some solid progress. In the future, NHS Grampian staff are expected to have access to NHS Highland systems, enabling smoother data-sharing and better continuity of care.

Cross border working has improved significantly since we launched the Maternity Collaborative and this is another example of that. With continued effort and collaboration, we're confident these improvements will continue to bring real benefits for maternity services and families across Highland, Grampian and Moray.



Planned Caesarean Births Returning to Dr Gray's

Planned caesarean births are set to resume at Dr Gray's Hospital in Elgin in the coming weeks - months earlier than expected.

Expectant mothers who meet the criteria for a planned c-section can now begin discussing options with their midwife. Aberdeen will continue to provide care for more complex cases.

This milestone marks a major step forward in restoring enhanced maternity services in Moray, made possible by focused training, recruitment, and teamwork across NHS Grampian and Highland.

Dr Mandy Hunter, Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist, said:

"We're delighted to offer planned caesarean births at Dr Gray's again. It's a huge step toward restoring full obstetric services and makes a real difference for local families. Our team has worked incredibly hard to get to this point, and we're just as excited as the parents to welcome new arrivals back to Elgin."

The reintroduction of elective births also paves the way for a full consultant-led maternity service by the end of 2026, with recruitment efforts already well underway.



Thank you for the feedback on the newsletters so far. We have reviewed all of the comments and hope to build some of the requests into this and future publications. Please keep that feedback coming.

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Peek-A-Bump: New Antenatal Scanning At Dr Gray's

Expectant parents in Moray now have access to advanced antenatal scanning at Dr Gray's Hospital, reducing the need to travel to Aberdeen and saving expectant parents thousands of miles in travel each year.

This expansion is part of ongoing efforts to enhance maternity services in Elgin, ensuring high-quality, sustainable care closer to home.

Thanks to additional skilled staff and investment in new equipment, Dr Gray's can now offer specialist scans to monitor fetal anomalies, track baby growth, and assess organ function - all in collaboration with experts in Aberdeen. While some cases may still require specialist referrals, most families will benefit from local care and fewer long journeys.

With around 720 births in Moray each year and nearly half requiring extra scans, the reduction in travel time and convenience for families has already been felt.

Stronger Together: Collaboration at the Heart of Maternity Services

Collaboration has been central to the progress of maternity services in Moray. By working closely with colleagues across services and sites, we are making real strides in delivering high-quality, sustainable care for families.

A key focus has been on strengthening cross-board links between Dr Gray's and Aberdeen Maternity Hospital. This partnership is enabling a more coordinated approach, sharing expertise and resources to support the delivery of safe, consistent maternity care at Dr Gray's Hospital.

Within Dr Gray's, closer working relationships between teams continue to make a tangible difference. Integrated working is driving improvements in both efficiency and outcomes for mothers and babies.

"Teamwork has been central to this programme's success. Our shared goal is to provide safe, high-quality maternity and paediatric care, and we're making great strides in developing these services together," said Jane Raitt, Midwifery Professional Clinical Lead.

She added, "We're building services that are safe, sustainable, and family-focused. Thank you to everyone contributing to this journey - we couldn't do it without you!"

Moray Maternity Services: Advancing Care In Elgin

Exciting Developments for Maternity Services in 2025

Now that planned caesarean births are being delivered at Dr Gray's Hospital, the Maternity Collaborative Team has shifted its focus to establishing a consultant-led service.

Alongside this work, Susan Young, Project Manager for the Joint Maternity Collaborative, continues to lead on the development of enhanced maternity services.

Having supported the implementation of the Day Assessment unit and enhanced antenatal scanning, Susan has a focus on the Maternity and Neonatal Psychological Interventions (MNPI) pathway, and board-wide triage.

Susan shared: "The progress so far has been remarkable, and we're excited to take the next steps toward a consultant-led maternity service as well as enhanced antenatal care."

"Additionally, we're planning improvements in postnatal care, new options for labour induction and enhanced emergency interventions. These advancements will help maternity care in Moray grow in a sustainable, patient-centred way."

With many important milestones ahead, maternity services in Moray are set to continue evolving to meet the needs of local families.



Children's Ward in Full Swing Once Again at Dr Gray's Hospital

The children's ward at Dr Gray's Hospital in Elgin is once again offering round-the-clock care and has fully re-opened as a combined inpatient ward and assessment unit.

Consultant Paediatrician Dr Morag Turnbull who is the clinical lead for paediatrics at Dr Gray's explained: "We've been offering paediatric care at the hospital as a short stay assessment unit for a number of years. While some patients will continue to require transfer to access highly specialist care, the vast majority will now be able to stay with us for as long as they need. This is a great step forward."

It follows the investment in staff made possible through the Maternity Collaborative and the success of the We Wish You Worked Here recruitment campaign to attract health specialists to live and work in the North of Scotland.

Dr Turnbull said the number of permanent paediatricians in the team has doubled since last year and they are benefitting from five new trainee advanced paediatric nurse practitioners who will help to provide 24/7 care.

The expansion of maternity services includes a requirement for additional paediatric expertise and more dedicated resident doctors.



Recruitment Campaign Goes From Strength to Strength

NHS Grampian's recruitment efforts made a big impact at the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health conference in Glasgow in March, showcasing the incredible career and lifestyle opportunities in Moray. Our stall featured cutting-edge VR technology, giving attendees a virtual tour of the area's stunning



Supporting Our Maternity Teams: Staff Engagement in Action

Over the last few months, we've visited Ward 3 at Dr Gray's Hospital and Aberdeen Maternity Hospital engaging with over 80 staff members to increase awareness about the significant enhancements to maternity services that are now going live in Moray.

Each time we've gone equipped with a tea trolley stocked with refreshments, biscuits, and Maternity Collaborative newsletters!

The sessions at Aberdeen Maternity Hospital were aimed at spreading the word among teams there about the return of complex scanning and planned c-sections at Dr Gray's.

The teams were really enthusiastic about these changes, not only for the improved experience they'll deliver for expectant parents, but also because they will help reduce list sizes at Aberdeen Maternity Hospital, increase capacity Grampian-wide and offer women more choice in their care location.

In Elgin, we held a special staff event to update the team on the remarkable progress of our own "Wish You Worked Here" recruitment campaign, c-sections, enhanced scanning and gather feedback on future plans.

scenery and high quality of life. The reaction was overwhelmingly positive, with 62 professionals expressing interest in potential roles.

"The response was fantastic," said Consultant Paediatrician Dr. Morag Turnbull. "People were genuinely excited by what Moray has to offer - both professionally and personally. With over 1,500 attendees from around the world, we're delighted with the level of interest!"

The latest phase of the recruitment campaign also kicked off at the end of March, targeting obstetricians, anaesthetists, paediatricians and theatre staff for Dr Gray's from across the country.

These roles are vital for the next phase of expansion for Maternity services in Moray, so we're delighted that more than 100,000 people have viewed the adverts in the first two weeks of the relaunched campaign.