

# NHS Highland



**Meeting:** NHS Highland Board

**Meeting date:** 28 January 2025

**Title:** Director of Public Health Annual Report: Health Inequalities

**Responsible Executive/Non-Executive:** Tim Allison, Director of Public Health & Policy

**Report Author:** Tim Allison, Director of Public Health & Policy

## 1 Purpose

**This is presented to the Board for:**

- Awareness and Discussion

**This report relates to a:**

- Legal requirement

**This report will align to the following NHS Scotland 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

The Annual Report of the Director of Public Health for 2024 is presented.

### 2.2 Background

Directors of Public Health are required to produce an annual report concerning the state of health of their local population. There is no set format for the report

and in recent years the reports have tended to focus on individual themes rather than acting as a repository for population health intelligence.

**2.3 Assessment**

The report for 2024 is brought to the Board of NHS Highland along with a presentation. A link is provided for the full report.

The report sets out information about the health and wellbeing of people in Highland and Argyll and Bute and focuses on health inequalities. It starts with information about the overall health of the population including people’s life expectancy and how things have changed over several years. Then there is a chapter about health inequalities, what they are and how they affect local people. This is followed by a section about ways of tackling health inequalities. The remainder of the report consists of chapters looking at different groups of people or different factors that relate to health inequalities including chapters on children, on vaccination, on the effects of alcohol and on under-represented groups. The report is not a comprehensive review of health inequalities but is intended to generate action which will tackle this important priority for NHS Highland and its partners. There are recommendations for action which are designed to help all agencies work to reduce inequality.

**2.4 Proposed level of Assurance**

This report proposes the following level of assurance:

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

**Comment on the level of assurance**

There is substantial assurance that the requirement for the publication of the report is met. Other elements of public health reporting will continue to need further work as will implementation of the recommendations from the report.

**3 Impact Analysis**

**3.1 Quality/ Patient Care**

Tackling health inequalities is an important part of both quality improvement and patient care. It is vital that health inequalities remain a major aspect of NHS Highland strategy and service delivery.

**3.2 Workforce**

It is important that the board’s staff members are aware of the impact of health inequalities and the need to act to reduce their effects. A focus on employability and inequalities is also important both to support the community and strengthen the workforce.

### **3.3 Financial**

There are no direct financial implications from the paper. Tackling health inequalities will entail costs but there are also possibilities for savings. Addressing health inequalities is a fundamental part of the work of the board and its partners, for example through community planning.

### **3.4 Risk Assessment/Management**

Risks are managed in line with NHS Highland's policy.

### **3.5 Data Protection**

No personally identifiable information is involved.

### **3.6 Equality and Diversity, including health inequalities**

The focus of the report is on health inequalities; these include inequalities relating to protected characteristics.

### **3.7 Other impacts**

No other impacts to note.

### **3.8 Communication, involvement, engagement and consultation**

The principles of public and user involvement and engagement are embedded in public health actions.

This is an independent report from the Director of Public Health.

### **3.9 Route to the Meeting**

This is an independent report from the Director of Public Health. Considerable work has been undertaken within the Public Health Directorate to produce the report.

## **4 Recommendation**

The Board is asked to note and discuss the 2024 Director of Public Health Annual Report.

### **4.1 List of appendices**

The full report can be accessed using this link:

<https://indd.adobe.com/view/ff013007-f1c4-414c-84be-d2e99d8d3a29>