

Area Clinical Forum Report to Grampian NHS Board Meeting on the 12th of September 2024

Purpose of Report

This report updates the Grampian NHS Board on key issues arising from the Area Clinical Forum (ACF) meeting on 26th June 2024.

Recommendation

The Board is asked to note the following key points.

Financial efficiencies work within Pharmacy.

David Pflieger Director of Pharmacy presented a paper on Sustainability and Value programme concentrating on prescribing and medicines commission. This focused on the indirect and direct saving that could be achieved to help with the need to reduce the financial deficit. It was noted that the prescribing budget had seen significant increases and, with some careful management, significant savings could be achieved. Whilst some of these savings would come from improvement in pathways and self-care, a good proportion could also be achieved by direct savings. Generic prescribing, although generally very good, could always be improved and switching to more cost effective yet clinically equivalent drug would be encouraged.

A public engagement communication was supporting the indirect savings, and it was emphasised that unused medicines have a real implication on budgets and getting citizens to buy in to sustainable prescribing would be an important message.

Overall, the message was that there could be significant savings in the prescribing budget but there are a multitude of factors some of which we can directly influence and some that will need a longer-term approach.

Updates from advisory committees.

Reports were had from all committees with highlights including the concerns around junior doctor rotas with the reduction in Clinical development fellow posts possibly adversely impacting ward cover. The loss of the Drug and Alcohol team in ARI was highlighted again and there was discussion around a Grampian-wide approach to support citizens that are alcohol and drug dependant.

There was a recognition from our colleagues in Clinical Psychology that patients may be wanting more 'in person' consultations but that this was proving difficult due to lack of clinical space. An ongoing estates review is underway at present and it is hoped that this may help to reduce waiting times if suitable areas can be located.

Working towards the reduced working week was noted to still be progressing across the Agenda for change groups and this was causing some difficulties for some services. However, some good news was evident from our education and

governance work that has allowed Band 4 nurses to enhance their skills, particularly in urinary catheterisation which should free up capacity for other members of staff providing care.

On another positive note our Consultant subcommittee and GP subcommittee have already started some joint working in a 'connect programme' that hopefully will allow better communication between primary and secondary care and build good working relationships. It is hoped that this relationship should improve pathways of care and enhance the 'shared care approach' to healthcare delivery.

Rest and recovery programme/Junior Doctor Rota Compliance.

Working in partnership, Grampian Area Partnership Forum (GAPF) and ACF have been co-chairing a group to focus on rest and recovery of staff. Part of this work has focused on our doctors and dentists in training and ensuring that they are able to take their breaks within their working hours. Often the lack of breaks has contributed to non-compliant rotas of work that are not only detrimental for the staff but also incurs a financial penalty to the organisation.

Transformational work has been ongoing, and this was presented to the forum by Mary Agnew, a programme manager, highlighting the work to present date. Some innovative solutions have been proposed and it is hoped that this can improve rota compliance in the future. It was emphasised that as part of the wider leadership team the advisory structures have a role to play in promoting the 'Best with Rest' message into our discussions with all staff and lead by example.

Review of Portfolio results.

Tom Power Director of People and Culture presented the results of the Portfolio survey that was recently carried out. It was acknowledged by the forum that there was a poor understanding of the portfolio approach and that some of the early messaging about the approach may have failed to convey their use in Cross system working.

It was also acknowledged that there may be limited appetite for whole system change of the portfolio system but that some changes would be required and then communicated effectively to the staff. The ACF stand ready to assist in this when required.

NHS Grampian ePayslip Roll out.

There was broad agreement that ePayslips would be welcomed from an environmental and sustainability point of view, but it was recognised that ensuring all staff had access to a networked device would be essential to ensure staff can view their payslip when required.

Board Programme

The Board programme is a standing item on the ACF agenda to allow the forum to fulfil the role of providing clinical and professional advice to the Chief Executive Team (CET) and Board on relevant topics.

**Mark Burrell, Chair, Area Clinical Forum
August 2024.**