



Purpose of this report

This report updates Board members on priority issues since the last Board meeting which are not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

Delivery plan submission

We are currently developing our Delivery Plan with a focus on FY 2025/26, which will aim to stabilise and optimise our system in an extremely challenging financial environment. In addition to detailing our efforts to achieve and sustain an improved financial position, there will be an equal focus on safe care, our workforce, prevention of illness and meeting the healthcare needs of our population. We also intend to reflect the many areas in which NHS Grampian continues to perform efficiently. Our plan will set out our approach to transformation, including work underway to develop our Route Map for Strategic Change, which will support fundamental change both locally and in the context of the national reform agenda.

An initial draft high-level framework for our Delivery Plan, setting out our key objectives, priorities and risks was submitted to the Scottish Government at the end of January as part of this national process. Engagement remains ongoing with teams to further inform and develop the draft Delivery Plan prior to final submission to the Scottish Government in March. Our intention thereafter, subject to Scottish Government approval, is to bring the final Delivery Plan to our public Board meeting in April for endorsement.

Baird Family Hospital & Anchor Centre Update

A recommendation on the strategy for the completion of the ANCHOR Centre has been agreed by an NHS Grampian Executive Review Panel and will be considered by the Chief Executive Team for approval very soon, prior to an instruction to the contractor. Following advice from Infection Prevention and Control specialists, with input from clinical and technical stakeholders, the recommendation is to instruct the contractor to make changes to the configuration of the building ahead of occupation.

Construction of the Baird Family Hospital stays in line with the approved construction programme. Works have been focused on the completion of interior finishes and fixtures within the building, as well as completion of external landscaping out with. The impact of design alterations to specific areas of the building continue to be assessed by project stakeholders, with change instructions to the contractor anticipated to be made in February 2025.

Commissioning and migration plans are in development for both buildings, with key stakeholders involved in the necessary planning and training. Dates for the completion of both facilities will be presented to the NHS Grampian Board in April 2025, once instructions to the contractor have been agreed. The project team continue to update NHS Scotland Assure on progress, and the Scottish Government have confirmed their continued agreement to underwrite any additional cash flow support to complete both buildings.

Bed Contingency Plan

Having previously shared how our comparatively small bed base constrains our ability to respond to surges in demand, I wanted to share an update on some work that taken place over the last couple of months to temporarily increase our bed numbers.

Significant pressures continue to exist across our system and, with endorsement from the Chief Executive Team, a working group was established to identify opportunities to realise extra capacity and associated staffing across our system. As a result, 20 additional frailty beds and a further 13 inpatient beds have been opened since December. Additional options continue to be worked on. Although this capacity increase is short-term, the learning from this work will inform our longer-term Bed Base Review which is underway and seeking to increase our bed base on a more sustainable basis.

Vaccination Programmes

Our vaccination team have recently produced their second annual report (Grampian Vaccination and Immunisation Annual Report 2024). It describes the breadth of activity taking place across the programme in Grampian, which continues to save lives, prevent illness and reduce inequalities. Given its wide ranging impact on health outcomes, it offers excellent value by reducing both current and future public expenditure on health and social care provision.

Some of its highlights include the introduction of a new programme to protect infants and older adults from severe respiratory disease, with early data indicating it has supported a reduction in hospitalisations among older adults.

Our winter flu and covid-19 vaccination programme saw 85% of eligible citizens offered clinic appointments between September and 8 December 2024 and uptake of both flu and covid-19 vaccines in Grampian remains above the Scottish average. However, there are groups within our population where the uptake was lower than we would wish it to be. Admissions to hospital increased in December associated with respiratory illness and higher uptake of vaccination would have had a positive impact. We will continue to work with communities and colleagues to understand lower levels of uptake so we can improve vaccination rates and associated morbidity.

Life-changing dialysis at home

I would also like to draw attention to a successful pilot project supporting home haemodialysis (a treatment that cleans' the blood when a person's kidneys aren't working properly) for patients who would typically have to attend a dialysis unit three times a week.

While treatment at home isn't right for everyone, by avoiding unnecessary travel and time in hospital this pilot has given patients the freedom to decide when treatment works best for them and whether to dialyse more frequently for shorter periods. Placing patients in control of their care in this way enables them to spend more of their valuable time with friends and family.

The pilot was made possible by NHS Grampian Charity, which funded the specialist haemodialysis equipment, and having seen four patients benefit from this home-

based pilot, our hope is to extend this to 20 more patients over the coming year. I would like to thank both the NHS Grampian Charity and its supporters whose generous donations made funding this project possible.

Dr Adam Coldwells, Interim Chief Executive

6 February, 2025