

Daily Brief...



Thursday 17 September 2026

Interim Board Chair update Following the decision of Alison Evison to step down from her role as NHS Grampian Board Chair at the end of her 4-year term of office, Professor John Connaghan CBE has been appointed to serve as Interim Chair of NHS Grampian for a period of around six months, from 10 October 2026. Professor Connaghan has served as Chair of NHS Lothian since August 2021 and is expected to return to his substantive NHS Lothian role at the end of the interim period.

As Interim Chair of NHS Grampian, Professor Connaghan will seek to build on the important stabilisation, recovery and improvement work initiated under Alison Evison. The arrangement reflects Professor Connaghan's current sub-national role in leading the East Region Strategic Planning and Delivery Committee and the experience and continuity he can bring to NHS Grampian.

Executive Team update Please see below for the report from this week's Executive Team meeting:

Matters of concern or key risks to escalate	Major Actions Commissioned/ Work Underway
• Emergency care pressures remain significant, with ongoing concerns about patient flow, waiting times, staff wellbeing and system resilience. Recent reviews highlighted the need for stronger collective ownership of improvement actions and clearer accountability for delivery. • Cancer performance remains a significant concern. Executive Team reviewed a detailed analysis of current performance and agreed the need for a clear recovery trajectory, supported by sustainable workforce and capacity solutions as part of a single strategic recovery plan for Planned Care being finalised by the end of October 2026.	• Recovery planning continues across Cancer and Planned Care , including East of Scotland collaboration, service redesign workshops and trajectory reviews to support sustainable improvement. • Dedicated staff briefings and local engagement sessions will be established to support colleagues through forthcoming public service reform discussions and provide opportunities for questions and feedback following the Programme for Government which will be led by the Chief Executive and Employee Director. • Progress with the Frailty expansion programme was reviewed. Further work is underway to consider implementation risks and mitigations to support the next phase of delivery, while maintaining focus on patient safety and the intended benefits of the programme and delivering this

	programme to time as expected by the NHS Grampian Board and Scottish Government.
Positive Assurances to Provide	Decisions made
- Performance against planned care trajectories for 2026/27 remains broadly on track, with progress being made in reducing long waits and further collaborative work underway across the East of Scotland to share capacity and support improvement. - Staff engagement in recent operational improvement activity has been positive, particularly within nursing teams, with daily oversight arrangements helping to identify and address barriers more quickly. - A new organisational performance reporting approach is being introduced from October's public Board meeting to provide broader visibility of workforce, quality, safety and organisational health indicators.	- Approval was given to progress visa support arrangements for eligible international staff affected by forthcoming immigration rule changes. - Approval was given to strengthen vacancy control arrangements through a more consistent process and increased Executive oversight of senior recruitment decisions. - Terms of Reference for the Frailty Incident Management Team were approved, the outputs of which will be reported to the Executive Team.

Everyone Matters Pulse Survey – coming soon As part of our ongoing commitment to listening to staff and acting on feedback, a 'pulse' survey will launch on Friday 25 September. This 2-3 minute, 5 question survey focuses on the staff experience part of the wider iMatter survey. There is no confirmation window for managers for this survey; a link from Webropol (the same company used for iMatter) will be sent directly to everyone. Paper copies will be available where needed. There is no action planning requirement for this survey; please stick to the action plan you agreed when your team iMatter results were received.

The survey window will open on Friday 25 September and run until Sunday 18 October. Please take part and have your say; the results will help us understand where improvements are needed.

Woodend Site Road Closures Tomorrow, wide-load equipment required for the demolition of Westholme will be delivered to Woodend Hospital site under police escort coming in via Eday Road.

The estimated arrival time is 6pm and it is expected to take approximately 45 minutes for the equipment to be moved onto the Westholme site. Robertson Construction, the Contractor will oversee the delivery alongside NHS Grampian Health & Safety colleagues. During this period, the main road onto the site will not be accessible.

The car park between Westholme and the Neuro Rehab Unit will be closed from this evening and parking will also be suspended at the front of the Staff Home entrance.

Staff are asked to respect the barriers and cones that will be in place and also not to park anywhere on the main road in.

Cones will be placed on Eday Road to prevent parking and ensure the wide-load vehicle can access the site safely. There will be road marshals in place along the route to ensure site users safety.

In the event of a fire alarm activation or if an emergency ambulance is required during this time, please follow normal procedures and also contact the site bleepholder on x54868 or bleep 2198. They will liaise directly with the contractor.

Rehabilitation Week 2026 - Super 6 exercises The CAARS physiotherapy team have developed some short exercise videos of Super 6 exercises. These exercises are simple, safe movements designed to improve balance, strength and stability, helping reduce risk of falls. The team would like these to be shared far and wide! To check out the seated exercises, [follow this link](#). For the standing exercises, [watch the video at this link](#).

Celebrating Major Trauma Week Did you know our Major Trauma Team at ARI supports patients from roadside to recovery? [Follow this link to watch a video giving a brief insight into the multidisciplinary team](#) which brings together physiotherapy and occupational therapy, neuropsychology and dietetics, trauma coordinators and consultants, as well as vocational rehabilitation. Their aim is to make sure patients receive:

- Patient-centred support from ED through discharge
- The same experienced AHP team across ward moves
- One point of contact for patients and families
- Routine follow-up at 2 weeks and 3 months

Urgent safety notice Action is required by all staff to report all Calomax hot water boilers. Please [follow this link to find out more](#).

MedWatch newsletter Please [follow this link to the latest MedWatch newsletter](#) which includes shared learning on key findings from HIS inspections in other health boards. Please share widely with your colleagues and teams.

Bed Base and Tier 4 Provision Review As a follow-up to the staff update shared in April 2026, [follow this link to a Sway](#) which provides a brief update on progress, key successes and opportunities for staff involvement.

HOPE conference 2026 The HOPE collaborative brings together key person-led approaches - Getting it Right for Everyone, Putting People First, Realistic Medicine and Trauma-Informed Practice to put people, relationships and communities at the centre of health and care across Grampian. Join us on Monday 9 November at Cults Academy, for an inspiring day of learning, connection and shared practice. For further information and to register your interest, [please follow this link](#).

New collaboration at Dr Gray's In a new collaboration to improve patient care, Dr Gray's Hospital (Wards 5 and 6) and the Podiatry department are targeting a 50% reduction in hospital-acquired heel wounds by September 2027. By introducing an inflatable offloading

wedge to every inpatient bed, the teams aim to protect vulnerable patients by simplifying care and fostering closer cross-departmental learning.

Book Blether is Poetry Blether on National Poetry Day. Looking for a mindful lunchtime break? Join us at 1pm on Thursday 1 October for a Poetry Blether. Through listening, conversation and a little creative writing, we'll explore poems inspired by wonder, in the world around us. No preparation or prior experience required but a pen and paper to hand would be great. Email cornhill.library@nhs.scot for a joining link and [follow this link for more information](#).

Tune of the day Today is International Microorganism Day! A shout out to our microbiologists and thank you to consultant microbiologist and infection prevention & control doctor, Kal, who has requested [Phospholipid](#) by Blood Cultures to celebrate the day and raise awareness. Did you know phospholipid is the main component of the bacterial cell wall and blood cultures are the specimen used in the microbiology laboratory to diagnose bloodstream infections? As Kal says, the song is also a banger.

If you want to request a tune, follow up on items included in this brief, or suggest an item for sharing, drop us an email via gram.dailybrief@nhs.scot