

Wednesday 18 June 2025

Vacancy controls - update Vacancy controls were introduced at the end of 2023 in response to our financial position and to ensure we were recruiting appropriately. These controls have led to a reduction in the number of posts we are recruiting to. Our finances remain extremely challenged, so these controls will remain in place. As a reminder, **only** vacancies for replacement posts which meet one – or more - of the following criteria will be considered for progression by the vacancy control panel:

- Clinical and care delivery posts, providing front line care in hospital or community settings, and requiring cover to maintain rota compliance / safe staffing levels
- Support and administration posts, providing direct support to those clinical posts delivering front line care and maintaining the care environment
- Posts providing critical support and diagnostic services, including business services which the organisation cannot safely function without
- Posts we are legally required to fill, or where there could be adverse legal consequences from our inability to sustain current specialist service levels
- Posts that are part of an organisational change process that has reached Stages 3 – 7 and where staff are in a ring fence.

The panel will consider progressing **new** posts if they are required for additional activity funded by Scottish Government to address planned care performance or are posts within Research & Development funded via 2025-2029 VPAG funding. In these cases, the funding source must be clearly stated within the JobTrain application otherwise it will be rejected. All other new posts will only be considered for progression where a clear recurring funding stream is confirmed and, for fixed term vacancies, where a clear exit plan has also been agreed.

Regrettably, any vacancies in your team which do **not** meet the above criteria will not be approved and should not be submitted. We know this will add further to the challenges many of you are already dealing with. We hope these enhanced criteria will support a balanced approach to recruitment decisions, as well as an opportunity to redesign services, promote internally, and deliver financial savings. These controls will be reviewed at the end of November 2025 and further updates provided.

National Access Policy In a 'Once for Scotland' approach, health boards are expected to ensure that patients who are waiting for their appointment, test and/or treatment are managed fairly and consistently across NHS Scotland. The [National Access Policy](#) is a helpful, easy-to-digest guide to how that works in practice and how that can be conveyed. A 'Once for Scotland' approach should be embraced by boards, harnessing all opportunities to deliver patient care in the right place and closer to home where possible.

New national frameworks for population health and health & social care renewal The Scottish Government has published two new documents, focused on improving population health and charting the future course for health & social care services. The [Population Health Framework](#) includes legislating to make the balance of foods available on promotion in stores healthier. The [Health & Social Care Renewal Framework](#) is a guide for change, focused on services which are accessible, sustainable, efficient, and of high quality.

Health & wellbeing days – Turriff and Inverurie Hospitals With thanks to the NHS Grampian Charity for their financial support, there will be staff health & wellbeing days taking place at Turriff (Friday 20 June) and Inverurie (Wednesday 25 June) hospitals. Both events will have bookable sessions on yoga, creative writing, healthy eating, and getting started with Couch to 5K. For more information get in touch with Chris Coldwell via chris.coldwell2@nhs.scot

Wellbeing, Culture, and Development Wednesday

- **Movement for Health Day** Today is Scotland's first National [Movement for Health Day](#). This is a coalition of Scotland's leading health charities, working together to support and inspire those with long term health conditions to become more active in a way that works for them and their health condition. Sometimes our health can get in the way of our movement but engaging in sport and physical activity helps reduce the risk of chronic diseases, supports the management of health conditions, and maintains our physical and mental health and wellbeing. Big or small, all movements are counted. Information on how you can become more active, local walks and trails and free activities for NHSG employees can also be found on our 'We Care' [Keeping Active](#) webpage.
- **Time Management** New Time Management session dates are now live; for dates and how to book, please follow this link (log-in required): [Time Management Course | Turas | Learn](#)

To contact WCD please email gram.wcd@nhs.scot

Ticket offer – this week! If you're at a loose end tomorrow night or Friday, there are free tickets available to the following events at the Beach Ballroom:

[The music of Fleetwood Mac by candlelight – Thursday 19 June, 7.30pm](#)

[Country by candlelight – Friday 20 June, 7.30pm](#)

To claim your tickets, follow the relevant link, and use code AB101C. Tickets are limited; once they're all snapped up the code will no longer work. As always, NHS Grampian is not responsible for – and does not benefit from – any of these offers.

Tune of the day Thanks to Stephen Mitchell, a speech & language therapist at Royal Cornhill, for today's request. He's asked for [Our House](#) by Madness, dedicated to those (some of whom are NHS staff) affected by the RAAC issue in Torry. Thanks also for the suggestions of bands/artists you wished you'd seen, keep them coming, we'll be sharing them from tomorrow (EP)

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.communications@nhs.scot