

# Daily Brief...



Monday 5 January 2026

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**Thank you** What a start to 2026! We start today by expressing our enormous gratitude to everyone who has been hard at work across the festive period. Even before the snow landed, we know how busy everyone was. It would be impossible to list every team, so we simply say thank you to everyone in health and social care who has helped keep the show on the road. You are seen and you are valued.

**Weather update** The Amber warning for snow currently in force across Grampian will expire at 10am. A Yellow warning for snow and ice remains in place until 11.59pm on Tuesday. You can keep up to date with the forecast on [the Met Office website by following this link](#).

**Service disruption** Please be advised the sewing room at Mile End remains closed today. In addition, the University of Aberdeen is closed today; as such, Medical Illustrations will not be available.

**Chief Executive's blog** Laura Skaife-Knight shares her ambitions for 2026 in her latest blog post, [available to read by following this link](#).

**Deputy medical director - unscheduled care** We are pleased to announce the appointment of Dr Stephen Friar as deputy medical director for unscheduled care, effective from today. Stephen is well known to many colleagues through his roles as consultant in critical care and portfolio medical director for unscheduled care. He brings extensive clinical and leadership experience to this position. His appointment marks an important step in strengthening our leadership capacity across unscheduled care. Please join us in congratulating Dr Friar and welcoming him into his new role.

**Mental Health and Learning Disability bed base and Tier 4 provision review** [Please follow this link](#) to view the Winter update on the MHLDD bed base and Tier 4 provision review. This programme is a strategic initiative aimed at optimising mental health inpatient and community services. It focuses on ensuring the right care is delivered in the right place, reducing unnecessary admissions and improving patient flow across the system. As a result of the review, 7 priority projects were identified and include - consultant on-call medical rota, unscheduled care pathway, MHLDD advanced practitioners' evaluation, ICU pathway, adult MH rehab pathway, Moray MH delivery model, and older adult MH pathway. This programme is overseen by senior leadership and the Chief Executive Team. Further updates of the review will be issued as work continues to progress.

**ICYMI - Scottish COVID inquiry – Do Not Destroy Order** The Scottish inquiry can call for a variety of evidence in support of its considerations. It is essential all staff retain all information that may be of relevance. This includes emails, Teams messages, text or other messages, etc around what we did, how we worked, and how we made or received decisions, as well as more formal information such as reports, reviews, briefings, minutes, papers, notes, correspondence etc. All medical records must be retained, even where they have moved beyond their normal retention periods, as we cannot know which cohorts of patients and their outcomes will be in scope. To be clear, you must not destroy any information that could be relevant to the inquiry. All medical records are to be retained and must not be destroyed, even where it would be normal to do so.

**To flush, or not to flush** The only items which should be flushed down any toilet are pee, poo, and (toilet) paper. Paper towels, wipes of all kinds, and period products should never be flushed; these materials do not break down like toilet tissue and are repeatedly causing significant blockages within our wastewater infrastructure.

Each blockage requires estates staff to be diverted from essential planned maintenance tasks to clear the system and prevent further damage. This reactive work not only increases operational costs but also reduces the time available for critical preventative maintenance that keeps our facilities safe, compliant, and functioning reliably. Wipes (even those which say they are safe to flush), paper towels, and period products must be disposed of in the appropriate bin.

**Save the date – reproductive health and childbirth network lunch and learn** The next lunch and learn webinar, hosted by the NRS reproductive health and childbirth network will take place on Wednesday 18 February 2026, 12-12.55pm. This informal session - entitled 'PEPPY Trial and The Diagnostic Journey of Uterine Adenomyosis' - will be hosted live on Microsoft Teams. You can book your spot [now by following this link](#). If you are interested in presenting your work, suggesting topics, or collaborating on future webinars, please contact Champion Support Manager, Annie Ganguly on [anushree.ganguly@nhs.scot](mailto:anushree.ganguly@nhs.scot)

**Royal recognition for Zosia** As highlighted in Laura's blog, Zosia Miedzybrodzka, service clinical director of genetics and professor of medical genetics at University of Aberdeen, was recognised in the New Year's Honours. Professor Miedzybrodzka has been appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) for her services to genetics medicine and research. Her work ensures advances in genetic research - for rare diseases, cancer risk and inherited disorders - translate into real diagnostic services, testing programmes, preventive screening and better healthcare for communities in Scotland. Congratulations, Zosia!

**Pause for thought** As we begin another year, what opportunities do you see, and what would you like to achieve?

**Tune of the day** Yesterday marked 40 years since we lost Phil Lynott of Thin Lizzy. That's all the excuse I need to play [Dancing In The Moonlight](#) (and to encourage you to listen to Live And Dangerous to hear a band in their absolute pomp) (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](mailto:gram.communications@nhs.scot)