

## **Area Clinical Forum Report to Grampian NHS Board Meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup> of January 2023**

### **Purpose of Report**

This report updates the Grampian NHS Board on key issues arising from the Area Clinical Forum (ACF) meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup> of January 2023.

### **Recommendation**

The Board is asked to note the following key points:

### **Dr Gray's Hospital Plan for the Future**

At the November ACF meeting the programme lead for the Dr Gray's Plan for the Future work provided an overview of the ongoing work. Adam Coldwells (Director of Strategy/Deputy Chief Executive) provided an update focusing on the emerging themes around people, places and pathways. In particular the ACF were interested to hear about the plans for staff development and training, promoting new models of care and multidisciplinary working and creating a centre for excellence where staff can fulfil their potential. The ACF are keen to keep involved with the plans going forward.

### **Winter Response**

The ACF welcomed Sandra MacLeod (Chief Officer, Aberdeen City IJB/ Portfolio Lead Medicine and Unscheduled Care and Mental Health) to the meeting to update on the winter response and tactical planning. It is very useful to have a better understanding of the measures within the system which help planning and monitoring of activity over this very challenging period of time in the health and social care system.

The ACF have also started short weekly update meetings with members of the systems leadership team (Chief Executive, Medical and Nursing Directors) around the winter response. Again data has been a key point and there has been a request from the ACF to have access to systems data which should help inform the services and professional groups during this very challenging period. This is in progress with health intelligence. It is proving very useful to have this direct engagement between the SLT and ACF, opening up channels of communication and sharing of challenges and concerns.

### **NHSG Financial Position**

The ACF also welcomed Alex Stephen (Director of Finance) and senior finance colleagues to the meeting to discuss the current NHSG financial position. The focus of the discussion was around the redesign of sustainable services and pathways of care and how to ensure good engagement and communication around the redesign of services. There were many relevant points raised and the chairs of the professional committees agreed to invite finance colleagues to their individual committee meetings to discuss the same topic and widen the understanding, promote discussion and sharing of ideas.

### **Workforce challenges**

This was a theme from the meeting felt by all disciplines. Healthcare Science noted the reduction in funding for the scientific training programme meaning locally there is one new trainee instead of six. This will likely have a large impact on future staffing as many of the professions rely on 'in house training' and the staff numbers for services can be very low providing challenges with succession planning and resilience of vulnerable services. The Allied Health Professions (AHP) group noted significant challenges across all specialities. Medical committees noted the vacancy level in GP practice to be approximately thirty percent and also fifty percent of consultant psychiatrist posts are filled by locum staff. The Pharmacy group noted a shortage in pharmacists and pharmacy technicians having an impact across the acute, primary care and community pharmacy services. Dentistry noted a move to more

private dentistry and less NHS services which is particularly challenging for patients requiring NHS care.

### **Radiology**

Following the concerns raised in the last ACF board report (Nov 2022) there has been an allocation of funding to increase service capacity. However, there is still a gap in funding and there is currently not a plan for this from April 2023. Engagement of hospital management with staff and wider awareness of the problem have both improved.

### **ACF integration**

Following engagement meetings and a workshop, the ACF are still working on connecting with the new portfolios and systems. The chair has attended meetings with two of the portfolios and others are still yet to happen. We are spreading the message about the composition and purpose of the ACF which is helping raise awareness but are still requiring a steer from system leaders on how to link into the relevant forums. We need to ensure that we have representation across the system so that we are able to volunteer for appropriate activities and link into suitable strategies in development at an early stage.

### **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 SLT and Board on relevant topics. We look forward to planning our meetings in 2023 aligning with the new Board programme when it is available.

**Kim Cruttenden**  
**Area Clinical Forum Chair**  
**January 2023**