

The GAPF is the main Grampian forum for the conduct of employee relations. It has delegated authority from the System Leadership Team (SLT) and the NHS Grampian Board to develop and reach agreements on Grampian-wide employee relations matters subject to approval by the relevant senior management and individual Trade Unions and Professional Organisations involved.

Purpose of Report

This report updates the Grampian NHS Board on items discussed at the Grampian Area Partnership Forum.

Points of note from the previously submitted GAPF Board Report:

July 2021

Prioritisation of forthcoming workforce surveys:

Acknowledging the ongoing pressure within the system, members were asked to consider the upcoming staff surveys and if one of the local surveys should be paused. GAPF supported the continuation of planned upcoming surveys to keep momentum and to build on the data sets being gathered. Positive communication was highlighted as a key factor for promoting the surveys. ***It was the We Care Pulse Survey. GAPF were asked to endorse the plan to pause the We Care Pulse Survey in Q2 and Q3 of 2021/22 to enable sufficient space for iMatter and the BPA Culture Survey, with resumption in Q4.***

Policies Sub Group Annual Update

Diane Annand, Interim Human Resource Manager, Staff Governance, provided a detailed update of the activity undertaken by the Sub Group over the last 12 months. This covered ***the level of local policy work***, interim measures introduced in response to the pandemic and the work of the National Once for Scotland Workforce Policies Programme.

Recommendation

The Board is asked to note the following items from the Grampian Area Partnership Forum meeting from August 2021 and September 2021.

August 2021

Policies approved:

Proposed amendments to the membership for the Employee Relations Protocol contained within the NHS Grampian Facilities for Trade Unions & Professional Organisations Policy were approved and email addresses to also be updated within the policy.

Electronic Employee Staff System (eESS) Project

The previously paused “go live” date, will now be the end of September 2021. NHS Grampian is the last Board to go live in Scotland. eESS will offer a single point of entry for staff information for managers and staff. GAPF members were asked to encourage staff to read the communication briefs.

Learning from Partnership through the Pandemic – Action Plan

GAPF members were asked to consider the 2018 Big Rocks themes in terms of their relevance and if they aligned with the themes identified at the June 2021 development event. It was also discussed and agreed that GAPF would be given the opportunity to engage more broadly to ensure strategy development was relevant to members over the next few months.

Whistleblowing update

It was reported that the first quarter had been completed since the Whistleblowing Standards had been introduced as of 1 April 2021. The first quarterly report will be presented to the Staff Governance Committee meeting in September 2021 and the NHS Grampian Board in October 2021. GAPF were asked by Albert Donald, Non Executive Director & Whistleblowing Champion, if they had a view on where NHS Grampian was in relation to implementing the Standards and the interpretation of the low number of cases. It was noted it was important that communications were effective and the learning from the concerns raised was recognised and implemented. NHS Grampian was in line with national numbers.

Operation Snowdrop/ Remobilisation/ Portfolio Changes

Adam Coldwells, Director of Strategy, Deputy Chief Executive & GAPF Co-Chair, took the group through the progress and timeline for the 3rd version of the remobilisation plan along with the NHS Grampian Strategy planning. Adam explained that the Strategic intent would cover a package including sustainable workforce approach which had three components – culture, staff experience and staff wellbeing. The Strategy will be submitted to the NHS Grampian Board in February 2022.

NHS Grampian Plan for the Future

Adam Coldwells, gave a presentation on the NHS Grampian Plan for the Future (2022 – 2028). Members of GAPF were encouraged to be involved and were provided with information on how to do this.

Finance Update

The July 2021 report had been previously circulated. Alan Gray, Director of Finance, highlighted that for financial planning and resources, the three main areas of focus were: understanding the new post COVID underlying finance position, working with colleagues to understand the resources required for remobilisation and the existing COVID related expenditure which will continue.

GAPF Endowment Sub-Group Annual Update

The GAPF Endowment Fund Sub-Group are delegated endowment funding each year. Applications for funding are considered by the Sub-Group with representation from across the System. The group had approved applications from staff related to rest areas, changing areas and white goods. The fund also supports groups and individuals staff members to undertake personal development. The Sub-Group were asked to consider a sliding scale for individual staff development instead of the current maximum 50% contribution, to ensure equality and accessibility across all bands of staff. The Sub-Group were also asked to consider the process of the Fairer Duty Scotland Assessment which covers a broad range of socioeconomic factors.

September 2021

GAPF Development Sub-Group Recommendations

GAPF were asked to consider and approve the recommendations from the GAPF Development Sub-Group in relation to three applications which had been submitted for inclusion as mandatory training. Following discussion, the recommendations were approved with the elearning refresh periods for one of the applications to be reviewed by the applicant. The discussion highlighted the need to consider the wider issue of completion and compliance with mandatory training.

We Care Programme

Dr Emma Hepburn, Clinical Psychologist & Programme Lead We Care, presented a general overview of the We Care Programme and asked for GAPF to provide feedback on the following questions, what do you want to see from We Care?, what would help with your wellbeing at work? and what do you think We Care priorities should be until March 2022?. It was acknowledged the Programme was complex and should include validation of lived experience of staff and meaningful and sincere engagement with staff.

Job Evaluation SBAR

Karen Watson, GAPF Staff Side Lead for Job Evaluation and Unite the Union Representative, presented an SBAR for information, co-authored by Ashley Catto, Management Lead for Job Evaluation and HR Manager, detailing the work which has been undertaken and is in progress to further develop and promote Job Evaluation within NHS Grampian.

Staff Testing

Caroline Hartley, COVID 19 Testing Project Team, attended GAPF to promote the availability of twice weekly lateral flow device testing for staff and to ask members of GAPF to communicate this through all their networks. A number of resources are available to promote and support staff who wish to participate in the testing.

Microsoft 365 Update

Scott Sim, General Manager eHealth, provided GAPF with an update on the National Microsoft 365 programme. Highlighting the work which is underway locally to support staff with training & development, development of a digital skills framework and establishing a community of Digital Champions. Scott also highlighted the activity related to data migration. Scott was asked to provide a further update to GAPF later in the year.

Staff Governance Standard Monitoring Return

Gaining assurance that the Staff Governance Standard is being met remains a fundamental element of the Scottish Government's national work to ensure continued efforts of achieving and maintaining exemplary employer status. The aim of the Staff Governance Monitoring process is to provide assurance both locally and nationally that:

- The Staff Governance Standard is being fully and properly applied in all Boards, and where there are areas for concern that support is provided; and,
- It allows good practice to be shared to help drive continuous improvement across all NHS Scotland Health Boards.

The Scottish Government utilised information previously shared with them over the course of the pandemic e.g. Remobilisation Plans, interim Workforce Plans etc to identify information which already supports compliance with the Staff Governance Standard within our Board. The range of information has enabled the Scottish Government to triangulate the data and has provided, in some cases, the opportunity to consider areas that may require greater attention.

NHS Grampian received a return which provided an overview of the assurances the Scottish Government has gathered in relation to NHS Grampian and detailed tailored questions where there were potential gaps in the information they hold.

The Chief Executive Team endorsed the process at their 22 June 2021 meeting. Thereafter the identified sources provided information which was collated and edited by Diane Annand, Staff Governance Manager on behalf of the Staff Governance Committee. The sources included the groups or individuals leading on the topics highlighted and Sector Partnership Forums, which gave a broad representation across the organisation, reflected in the service examples which form part of the Return at Appendix 1.

Prior to submission to GAPF the Return had been reviewed and commented on by the Chief Executive Team and the Staff Governance Committee.

GAPF were asked to provide final validation of the Return at Appendix 1 to enable submission by the deadline of 24 September 2021.

RRP Update

A communication from the Scottish Terms & Conditions (STAC) Sub-Group had been received, highlighting their recommendation to the full STAC meeting on the 30th September 2021, to approve the application to extend the RRP. GAPF will be updated with the outcome following the full meeting of STAC.

System Update

Adam Coldwells and Alan Gray provided updates to GAPF on the work of the Change Management Oversight Group, Strategy Engagement, Version 4 of the Remobilisation Plan and the financial position.

GAPF Learning from Partnership through the Pandemic Action Plan

Geraldine Lawrie, Head of Workforce & Development, provided a brief overview in relation to the work being undertaken in relation to hybrid working. Themes, which needed to be considered, had been identified with associated questions. The questions would be circulated to the Local Partnership Foras, with responses requested to contribute to the wider discussion planned for the GAPF meeting in October 2021.

Rachael Little

Employee Director

Co-Chair, NHS Grampian Area Partnership Forum

September 2021