

SURE Project Newsletter

Issue One - February 2026

Introduction

The NHS Grampian Urology Department delivers Urology inpatient and outpatient services to the populations of the Grampian, Orkney and Shetland health board areas. In addition, the department also delivers selected services to patients from Highland and Tayside.

At present, the service is predominantly delivered from the Urology inpatient department within the Phase 2 building at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary (ARI), with all major surgery taking place on this site. Other services are also delivered from Dr Gray's Hospital in Elgin and Stracathro Regional Treatment Centre.

Plans for UCAN service development include opening a one-stop diagnostic centre for people with symptoms of urological cancers - Swift Urological Response Evaluation (SURE). The SURE Unit, formerly the Rapid Diagnostic Centre (RDC), will enable more people with suspected urological cancer to be seen quicker, and to have all of their scans and diagnostic tests carried out during a single visit to hospital.

UCAN are teaming up with Friends of ANCHOR to raise £3.3 million to fund the new unit.

Kenny Anderson, UCAN Chief Executive said "The Partnership between NHS Grampian, UCAN and Friends of Anchor has made this transformational initiative a reality. With NHS Grampian Charities adding to our existing donors and

fundraisers including the Suttie Foundation. Patients will start benefiting from this summer ensuring Aberdeen Royal Infirmary continues to be a renowned centre of excellence for the delivery of urological services"

Friends of ANCHOR joined the project as a charitable funder in 2024, when the facility was re-branded as the SURE Unit. At the time, UCAN had already secured £400,000 of fundraising, and Friends of ANCHOR pledged to match all fundraising as a 50% partner. An initial contribution of £143,000 was raised at the charity's annual golf day that year.

The charity's Chief Executive, Sarah-Jane Hogg, said: "At Friends of ANCHOR it's often the tangible services and support that people see whilst in the hospital - but our funding commitments extend to early detection as well, and we've provided technology, equipment and research funding through the years.

"The SURE Unit will enable crucial early detection and it will also be a place of support and holistic care for patients.

"There are a significant number of people throughout our region who have to travel from far afield, often on numerous occasions, to meet all the various appointments that are involved in obtaining a diagnosis for their symptoms. To be able to reduce that travel to just one appointment for a large number of patients, instead of four or five visits, is a

huge benefit and reduces stress too."

In addition, NHS Grampian Charity is supporting the project with a contribution of £464,000 towards the £3.3million total, which will enable purchasing of advanced medical equipment and furniture for the new unit.

The SURE Unit will further enhance NHS Grampian clinical services and reputation as a hub of excellence for the diagnosis and treatment of urological cancer, including prostate, penis and testicular cancer as well as kidney and bladder. Once up and running, the SURE Unit will double the capacity of patients seen annually.

Location

The SURE Unit, will be located in the Phase 1 building (Yellow Zone) at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary. Whilst doing the construction work, NHS Grampian will also be taking the opportunity to improve the existing infrastructure by completing any associated backlog maintenance.

Governance

A Project Board, chaired by Alan Wilson, Senior Responsible Officer for the project, and Project Team has been established, with associated work streams being identified to take forward specific areas of work.

Following a successful procurement process, Thomson Gray has been appointed as the Lead Advisor and design team for the project. OCS have been appointed as the construction contractor.

The Project Team is meeting fortnightly and moving at pace to ensure steady progress.

Project Team membership includes representation from Thomson Gray and OSC, architects and engineers, as well as

NHS Grampian Projects Team, Urology clinicians, Estates, Infection Prevention and Control, IT, UCAN and Friends of ANCHOR.

Timeline/key dates

The project officially begun in spring 2025, with surveys carried out and the design team completing floor plans and compiling equipment requirements.

The team have agreed a layout for the unit and are now working on the details of each room and work is being done in the background on essential services including water and ventilation.

The key project dates are outlined below:

| ACTION | TIMESCALE | STATUS |
|-----------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Agree design brief | April 2025 | Complete |
| Contractor appointed | November 2025 | Complete |
| Enabling works | January 2026 | Progressing |
| SURE Unit operational | Summer 2026 | On target |

Keeping up to date

We plan to share regular project updates to keep all interested parties informed of progress, but are also keen to hear from you about what you'd like to hear about and how you'd like us to share those updates. Please let us know by emailing gram.sureproject@nhs.scot.

You can also use the above email address to contact us if you have any questions for the Project Team, would like to contribute to the updates, or if you'd like to be added to our mailing list.