

Chief Exec's Update



Monday 13 October 2025

I wanted to send a message to you all at the start of the new week - recognising and acknowledging that we had a difficult few days at the end of last week:

- the media coverage following the publication of the KPMG Diagnostic report
- the challenges with the central decontamination unit and the impact on patients' planned operations
- and the emergency incident we responded to on Friday evening with our blue-light partners which resulted in our Emergency Department closing for a few hours to ensure everyone's safety.

On the KPMG Report, I recognise many of the media headlines on Thursday and Friday were centred on the parts of the report that made recommendations about workforce and staffing.

There will be no redundancies - and that is a guarantee.

The recommendations in the KPMG Report are simply that - a set of areas for us to look at and explore - some will be taken forward (indeed many already are) and some simply won't because they are not the right thing for us to do or won't support our improvement journey.

All Health Boards, including NHS Grampian, are tasked with looking at how they provide care and how it could be done differently. This is reinforced in the recently-published Service Renewal Framework which sets out the future vision for health and social care in Scotland. We are continuing to explore and adopt new ways of working. This means redesigning our services to ensure they are safe, sustainable, effective and affordable, and so patients receive the right care in the right place more of the time.

My first 'Ask Laura' was recorded on Friday and will be available this week - so you can see my updates on the KPMG Reports in more detail should you wish to.

As of Friday we had regrettably postponed 429 dental outpatient appointments and 298 planned procedures as a result of the shutdown of our Foresterhill CDU. Thank you to staff involved, recognising many had had some difficult phone calls and conversations to have with our patients who have had their procedures postponed and to the four staff who are working in Glasgow to minimise the impact on patients as we arrange repairs and equipment replacement to ensure resilience moving forward. We are grateful for the offers of support and mutual aid from Boards across Scotland, and specifically to Glasgow, Orkney and Highland who we are working with. We are doing all we can to minimise the impact on patients and our Planned Care Programme, recognising many patients have already been experiencing unacceptably long waits, and get our Foresterhill CDU open as quickly as possible. We will continue to keep you informed as we work this through as a priority. In the meantime, it was a pleasure earlier this afternoon to visit staff in our Foresterhill CDU to say thank you and to recognise it has been far from an easy few weeks.

Recognising Friday evening's incident which led to the temporary closure of our Emergency Department, I would like to take this opportunity to thank those involved for their excellent teamwork and for responding so well to what was a difficult set of circumstances for all concerned. I know from the escalations I received, that patient and staff safety was paramount and the strong partnership

working with other agencies working swiftly alongside us, including Scottish Ambulance Service, Scottish Fire and Rescue and Police Scotland - was exemplary.

This morning myself and our Board Chair met with the Cabinet Secretary for Health, Mr Neil Gray. We discussed our progress, how staff are feeling and the importance of getting the balance right when it comes to facing up and responding to the challenges we are facing, whilst recognising there is so much positive and innovative work to celebrate and recognise, which was a position fully supported by the Cabinet Secretary and one he wanted to ensure was balanced with his part to play accepted too. We updated on our system-wide Unscheduled Care Improvement Plan and the collective determination of all partners to re-double our efforts to do everything we can to improve the timeliness of care for our patients. This was followed by a walkabout in our Emergency Department, which was hosted by the Medical and Unscheduled Care Team. Mr Gray thanked you all for your hard work and focus on delivering outstanding patient care, many examples of which he saw and heard about this morning, along with our many ideas for improvement.

Let's keep moving forward and look to our future together.

Have a great week. Take good care.

Best wishes

Laura Skaife-Knight
Chief Executive