Chief Exec's Update

Monday 2 November 2026

Hi all

Now into November, the clocks have gone back, and winter is here.

We are preparing for winter as a health and care system and ensuring we do all we can to maximise the safety of our patients and flow and capacity in our hospitals. There are three key pieces of work central to our winter plan and to improving the timeliness of care for our patients, launching in the coming weeks: (1) acute frailty bed expansion (2) our Full Capacity Protocol and (3) the How We Work launch which will set out very clearly our shared approach to timely patient flow, safe transfer of responsibility for patients, and respectful clinical decision-making. More to follow on this in the weeks to come.

In my last update, I reflected on our first online information session I held for all staff about NHS Reform. Since then, I have scheduled a series of in-person drop-ins, giving you the chance to come and speak to me and to Steven Lindsay, our Employee Director. The first of these took place last week at Woodend Hospital, with further dates set for this month, December, and into 2027 across all acute sites and community settings. I know how pressured everyone is, however, please know you are welcome to attend these, even if you can only speak for a few minutes. I want to be as open and honest with you as I can and you can ask me anything in these sessions. Thank you to everyone who came along last week, it was great to speak with you. Here are the dates, times, and locations of future sessions:

- Friday 6 November – Summerfield House, 12.30-2pm - Staff Canteen
- Friday 20 November – Dr Gray's Hospital, 12-1.30pm - Staff Canteen
- Friday 18 December – Royal Cornhill Hospital, 3.30-5pm
- Friday 8 January 2027 - Fraserburgh Community Hospital, 12.30-2pm
- Friday 22 January 2027 – ARI, 10.30am-12pm
- Friday 22 January 2027 - AMH 1.30-3pm
- Friday 5 February 2027 - Aberdeen Health Village, 10.30am-12pm
- Monday 8 February 2027 - Inverurie Hospital, 11.30am-1pm
- Friday 26 February 2027 – RACH, 12-1.30pm

Staying on the listening theme, the results of our first Everyone Matter 'pulse' survey come out today. 37% of you took the time to have your say online - thank you. More completed paper surveys and this number may therefore increase slightly. Please take the time to read the report, asking your line manager for a copy if you don't have easy access to email, and remember, action planning is not required here. The point of these surveys, which will take place twice a year, is to keep our finger on the pulse of how you are feeling, in real-time. They don't replace the national iMatter survey, but complement it, and enable us to better monitor your experience in the workplace. We will share the headline results with you in the next week.

Later this month we will welcome Cabinet Secretary for Health and Care, Angela Constance, to Aberdeen to lead our annual review. While we clearly still have challenges to overcome, myself and our Interim Chair, Professor John Connaghan, look forward to highlighting the great work which has taken place in Grampian over the last 12 months. We have much to be proud of, such as our

excellent catering operation. Along with Alex Stephen, our director of finance, I visited the kitchens at ARI last month and was really impressed by what I saw. The team work incredibly hard to provide balanced, nutritious, meals, suitable for all sorts of dietary requirements for our patients and they work as a well-oiled machine.

Since my last update I have also spent several days at Dr Gray's Hospital, including in the Emergency Department, High Dependency and Theatres, and did walkabouts to Critical Care, Cardiac ICU, Surgical High Dependency Unit, AMIA, our Site and Capacity Team and our Emergency Department at ARI. I had a Teams call with our fabulous Security Team to hear first-hand that we have listened to colleagues' feedback and followed through on what we said we would to to improve people's experience of working here. Last Friday I spent the afternoon at Woodend Hospital with the Rehabilitation and Stroke Teams. There is no substitute for spending time with you, listening and understanding what it feels like to be you working here, so we know what we need to do to make NHS Grampian a better place to work.

Thanks everyone for all your hard work and for all you do for our patients. Please know it is appreciated.

Have a good week.

Take care of yourselves and each other.

Best wishes

Laura