

Grampian Area Partnership Report (GAPF) to NHS Grampian Board

The GAPF is the main Grampian forum for the conduct of employee relations. It has delegated authority from the Chief Executive Team (CET) 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.

Recommendation

The Board is asked to note the following items from the Grampian Area Partnership Forum meeting in November 2024.

Well Informed (Staff Governance Standard, SGS)

Review of Portfolios

Tom Power, Director of People and Culture presented the report and recommendations from the review of portfolios. GAPF welcomed the opportunity to discuss these and acknowledged the work done and future direction of travel, which are a good example of making change in response to feedback from staff. Further updates will be given to GAPF in the coming months, as the recommendations are implemented.

Non-Pay Elements of Agenda for Change Pay Award

Tom Power, Director of People and Culture and other colleagues continue to provide monthly updates to GAPF on the workstreams which are being progressed under a Programme Board to implement the Non-Pay Elements of the 2023/24 Agenda for Change Pay Award, which impact just under 15,000 NHS Grampian employees. Significant progress has been made by departments to implement the reduction in the working week for rostered staff, which will help us meet the Scottish Government deadline of the end of November. Backfill funding has been agreed allocated to allow some areas to maintain the level of service provision, which was in place prior to the reduction of the working week. Work continues to be done on protected time for learning and the review of Band 5 nursing profiles, which are longer term.

Soft Launch of Phase 2.2 of Once for Scotland Workforce Policies

Diane Annand, Staff Governance Manager, updated GAPF on the soft launch of Phase 2.2 of the Once for Scotland Workforce Policies Programme. There are eight policies and four topic-specific guides, which will replace the existing NHS Grampian policies in February 2025. The three month period of soft launch allows HR and staffside colleagues to complete preparation work so that NHS Grampian is able to implement the new policies, by supporting managers and staff to understand any differences between the current and new policies.

Involved in Decisions (SGS)

AMIA Test of Change

Geraldine Fraser, Portfolio Executive Lead, Medicine and Unscheduled Care, provided GAPF with an update on the test of change to reduce the ambulance stacking for patients who need to be assessed by AMIA, which was discussed at the last NHS Grampian Board meeting. Support is being given to staff at all levels, with recognition given that there are challenges, given the pressure in the system, as well as the priorities for NHS Grampian and the Scottish Ambulance Service, with discussion about maintaining staff governance standards which sometimes appear to differ.

Winter Plan 2024/25

Geraldine Fraser, Portfolio Executive Lead, Medicine and Unscheduled Care, provided GAPF with an update on the development of the Winter Plan, with the draft document being circulated to members of the forum for their input, prior to it coming to the December meeting of NHS Grampian Board.

Finance Update

Alan Sharp, Deputy Director of Finance, provided an update on the NHS Grampian's financial position as well as the planning for the next financial year, which GAPF has been able to contribute to. Since this was his last meeting before retirement, Alan was thanked for his significant contribution to GAPF throughout his time with NHS Grampian.

Treated Fairly and Consistently, with Dignity and Respect, in an environment where Diversity is Valued (SGS)

Concerns about Staff Experience

GAPF were advised of the collated concerns which staff have been reporting to the recognised Trade Unions and Professional Organisations over the past few months. In broad terms, these reflect the gap between the messages being communicated to staff and the experience for staff in the workplace, including the continued use of non-standard bed spaces; the lack of adequate lockers and changing rooms; and the low morale given the combination of financial challenges and sustained service

pressures. It was noted that there had previously been a Memorandum of Understanding agreed by GAPF back in the early 2010s and that an updated document may be beneficial. It was agreed that a small group of GAPF members would discuss the concerns and develop responses to them for discussion at a future meeting. This was an example of the nature of partnership working in GAPF, which had been described as “robust and respectful” by those who undertook the Ministerial Review in October.

Steven Lindsay

Employee Director

Co-Chair, NHS Grampian Area Partnership Forum

December 2024