

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 August 2025.

Well Informed (Staff Governance Standard, SGS)

Putting People First

Luan Grugeon, Strategic Development Manager, provided GAPF with an update on the work being done for colleagues and citizen engagement to support service delivery and redesign. This includes Community Appointment Days which have been well received by the public as well as the staff who deliver service, and have found the new method of engagement to be very helpful.

Plan for Sustainability and Performance Improvement

Philip Shipman, Interim Director of People and Change, provided an update on the briefing sessions which Adam Coldwell, Interim Chief Executive, had delivered across the organisation about the escalation to Level 4 and the development of an Improvement Plan, which will be presented to the Scottish Government Assurance Board, who will then hold NHS Grampian to account on delivery against that plan.

The External Diagnostic Review by KPMG has been completed, with a report due to be submitted to the Scottish Government, who will then determine when it should be published.

Phil Tydeman, Interim Director of Improvement, presented an update on the Value and Sustainability work which is currently underway to identify further financial savings, while maintaining compliance with the requirements of Clinical and Staff Governance. GAPF continue to be concerned about the ongoing uncertainty, the potential changes to the workforce, and the impact of all of this on the morale of staff at all levels.

Finance Update

Sarah Irvine, Deputy Director of Finance, provided GAPF with an update on NHS Grampian's financial position at the end of July, which continues to be a challenge, particularly given the service pressures across the system.

Review of Portfolios

Geraldine Fraser, Chief Officer of Acute Services, updated GAPF on the transition of portfolios into the new Acute Sector and mapped out the work being done to create an Acute Sector Leadership Team. Related work is underway to review and amend line management arrangements, as well to ensure governance arrangements are in place, which will cover all acute services in Aberdeen and in Dr Gray's Hospital in Elgin. GAPF acknowledged the work done and sought assurance that the governance arrangements would include health and safety reporting.

Staff Governance Committee Report

Joyce Duncan, Non-Executive Director and Chair of the Staff Governance Committee advised that, at the July meeting, Estates Support Services had presented to the Committee for the third time, and the Committee were assured by the work done and had tackled areas of staff governance well. The final delivery plan for improvement was being worked on and being discussed. This will follow in future reporting to the Staff Governance Committee.

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

Diversity Monitoring Report and Gender Pay Gap

Roda Bird, Interim Equality & Diversity Manager, presented both of these documents to GAPF which have to be published by NHS Grampian under the cycle of reporting of statutory reports under the Equalities Act.

Non-Pay Elements of the 2023/24 Agenda for Change Pay Award

Philip Shipman, Interim Director of People and Culture, and colleagues continue to provide monthly updates to GAPF on the ongoing work being done by the Agenda for Change Programme Board, sharing progress with the ongoing work on the Reduced Working Week, Protected Learning Time and the Band 5 Review, beginning with Nursing. The work has continued to focus on the further reduction in the working week, due to start in April 2026, with an organisation-wide plan to be approved by GAPF and then submitted to the Scottish Government by 1st October.

Involved in Decisions (SGS)

Policies for Approval by GAPF: Freedom of Information Policy

Alan Bell, Information Governance Manager, attended the meeting to present the updated version of the policy which has gone through the standard process including consultation. As a result GAPF approved the policy without any further amendment. Steven thanked Alan for his work on this.

British Summer Time Clock Changes

Lorraine Hunter, Head of HR Service Centre presented a paper explaining that for many years there has been custom and practice in NHS Grampian to pay staff an extra hour's pay for working a shift that spans when the clocks go back by one hour in the Autumn, but make no adjustment to pay where clocks go forward an hour in the Spring and staff on shift are working one hour less.

The Scottish Terms and Conditions Committee (STAC) had provided guidance that neither the clock change adjustment in the Autumn (end of British Summer Time) or Spring should be taken into account for pay purposes, which was different from NHS Grampian current practice. After discussing the options and reflecting the importance of sensitively communicating the change, GAPF agreed to change practice before the next clock change at the end of October 2025.

Steven Lindsay

Employee Director

Co-Chair, NHS Grampian Area Partnership Forum

September 2025