

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 some of the items discussed at the Grampian Area Partnership Forum.

Recommendation

Board Members are asked to note the following items from the Grampian Area Partnership Forum meetings in March, April and May 2026.

Well Informed (Staff Governance Standard, SGS)

Organisational Priorities

Laura Skaife-Knight, Chief Executive, and colleagues from the Executive Team provide monthly updates on the work being done on the Organisational Priorities - People, Leadership and Governance; Prevention; Planned and Unscheduled Care; Value and Sustainability. This information ensures the Forum is aware of the actions taken against the priorities, as well being able to ask questions and provide constructive challenge. The Forum welcomed the updates, with recognition that some work is at an earlier stage than others, with some real progress made and GAPF acknowledged the work done, particularly in value and sustainability.

Appropriately Trained and Developed (SGS)

NHS Scotland Workforce Policies

Diane Annand, Staff Governance Manager, updated GAPF on the implementation of the third and final phase of the Once for Scotland Workforce Policies Programme, with new NHS Scotland Workforce policies now in place relating to staff health, safety, and wellbeing. These policies, which apply in all NHS Scotland Boards are: Adverse Weather, Alcohol and other Substances, Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH), Lone Working, Manual Handling, Menopause and Menstrual Health, Smoking and Vaping, Work-Related Driving, Work-Related Stress, Work-Related Violence and Aggression.

Involved in Decisions (SGS)

Policies for Approval

The Sustainable Postal Practices, Staff Immunisation, and Control of Noise at Work Policies were presented for approval. These updated policies had gone through the full policy review process including consultation that included a summary document for each policy, describing the changes made. GAPF welcomed the work done and the policies were approved.

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. A survey is being developed for staff to provide feedback on the implementation of the reduced working week, and its impact on staff wellbeing.

Provided with a continuously improving and safe working environment, promoting the health and wellbeing of staff, patients and the wider community (SGS)

HIS Inspections

June Brown, Executive Nurse Director, provided an update on the four different HIS inspections, which took place at the end of April. These visits were looking at Dr Gray's Hospital Ward 4, Dr Gray's Hospital, as well as maternity services in Dr Gray's and Aberdeen Maternity Hospital. GAPF welcomed the update and expressed gratitude to the staff, noting that the inspectors had commented on how supportive they had been during the visits, and they were a credit to NHS Grampian. Further updates will be shared when the reports are published and the action plans are agreed.

Stress in the Workplace

Martin McKay, Partnership Representative, presented a paper on behalf of UNISON Grampian Health Branch who had surveyed their members about stress in the workplace. The results indicated that staff absence due to stress and other mental health conditions had increased over time, in addition to concerns being raised about lack of the support that is available for staff who need it. GAPF acknowledged the report and its findings, as well as asking for the paper to be shared with the NHS Grampian Health and Safety Committee to help inform the organisation's response to these important issues.

Steven Lindsay

Employee Director

Co-Chair, NHS Grampian Area Partnership Forum

26 May 2026