

Meeting:	NHS Grampian Board Meeting
Meeting date:	11 June 2026
Item Number:	10.1b
Title:	Operational Improvement Plan (OIP) Update Report Quarter 4 (January 2026 to March 2026)
Responsible Executive:	Alex Stephen, Director of Finance
Report Author:	Preston Gan, Head of Performance

1 Purpose and recommendations

This is presented to the Board for:

- Assurance
- Decision
- Endorsement

Recommendations

The Board is asked to:

- **Endorse** NHS Grampian's Quarter 4 performance against the Operational Improvement Plan (OIP), noting continued progress
- **Be assured** that there is increased visibility of system contributions to deliver the OIP through improvements in reporting
- **Note** the actions underway to progress implementation across the four Critical Areas.

This report relates to:

- Operational Improvement Plan (OIP)
- How Are We Doing (HAWD) Report

This aligns to the following NHS Scotland quality ambition(s):

- Safe
- Effective
- Person Centred

This subject matter of this report is relevant to the mitigation of the following strategic risks (further information provided in the Risk section below)

- Inability to meet population demand for Planned Care
- Significant delays in the delivery of Unscheduled Care
- Inability to affectively maintain and invest in NHS Grampian's infrastructure
- Deviation from recognised service standards of practice and delivery
- Inability to achieve the aspirations set out in Plan for the Future due to financial resource constraints and inefficiencies
- Inability to reduce demand through citizen engagement
- Insufficient change and innovation to create a system which can meet demand and deliver on our strategic intent
- Deteriorating Workforce Engagement
- Worsening health in Grampian particularly in those who experience multiple disadvantages

2 Report summary

2.1 Situation

This paper provides a Quarter 4 and end of year update on NHS Grampian's progress against the four critical areas within the Operational Improvement Plan (OIP). The report focuses on the operational priorities not covered within the How Are We Doing (HAWD) Report, including CAMHS, Psychological Therapies, and GP Access.

Several Deliverables are reporting delays and common factors contributing to this include factors slippage in national initiatives managed centrally, and Digital and Information Governance issues. Pressures within Primary Care, alongside wider system capacity and funding constraints, continue to influence the pace of delivery. Workforce capacity, recruitment challenges (availability and time to hire), and national or Scottish Government-related dependencies remain key risks across multiple focus areas.

In response to feedback from Executive Team (ET) and the Board following the Q3 cycle, further refinements have been made to the report format for Q4. The response template prompts were further improved and refined to provide clear articulation of quarterly actions and impact, next steps, and associated risks and mitigations, providing a more accessible performance narrative.

2.2 Background

The OIP published by Scottish Government in March 2025 is a national programme of reform to strengthen long-term sustainability, reduce health inequalities, harness the benefits of digital innovation, and improve population health outcomes in Scotland. The OIP is scheduled for delivery over 12–18 months, commencing in Quarter 1 of 2025/26, and is supported by additional investment through the 2025–26 Scottish Budget.

To support clearer and more focused scrutiny, reporting to the NHS Grampian Board on progress against the OIP and the Three Change Programmes is provided by separate stand-alone updates. Some priorities overlap between the OIP and the Change Programmes reported through the How Are We Doing report (HAWD), specifically KPI performance within Unscheduled Care and Planned Care, so these areas continue to be reported through HAWD.

The OIP Report therefore focuses on the remaining Critical and Focus Areas to avoid duplication and to provide a complementary performance update.

The format of the OIP Report is underpinned by the Integrated Performance Assurance Reporting Framework, which promotes an iterative, continuous improvement approach to the presentation of performance information. The structure of the report has evolved to improve clarity, alignment and assurance for Board members.

2.3 Assessment

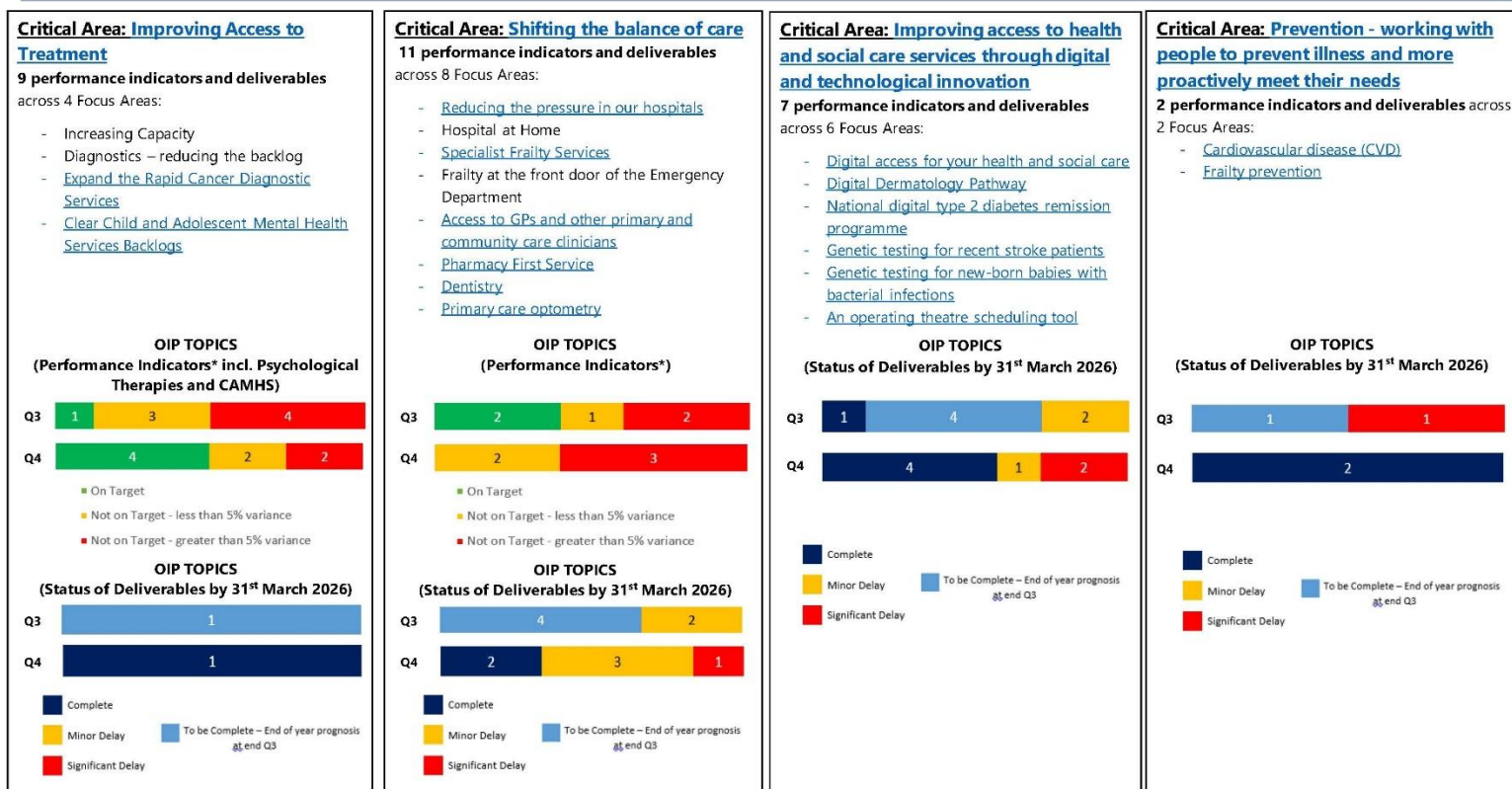
This report provides an update on NHS Grampian’s progress against the four critical areas of the Operational Improvement Plan (OIP):

- Improving access to treatment
- Shifting the balance of care
- Improving access to health and social care services through digital and technological innovation
- Prevention – ensuring we work with people to prevent illness and more proactively meet their needs

Latest progress continues to be reported through narrative submissions from operational teams.

Tier 1: Operational Improvement Plan

The **Operational Improvement Plan (OIP) Critical Areas** reflect the Scottish Government’s national priorities for improving access, efficiency, and sustainability across the health and care system. It sets out 4 Critical Areas ([Improving Access to Treatment](#), [Shifting the Balance of Care](#), [Improving Access to Care through Digital and Technological Innovation](#), and [Prevention](#)) encompassing 20 Focus Areas that are being actioned by NHS Grampian, with 29 associated actions.



*Performance Indicators (excl. Psychological Therapies and CAMHS) can be found in the Three Change Programmes sections of the Q4 How Are We Doing (HAWD) Report

The completion of Deliverables by March 2026 is slightly lower than the Q3 prediction. Of the 16 Deliverables,

- 9 have been delivered, against an expectation of 11 by year end.
- 4 are experiencing a **Minor Delay** - Access to GP, Pharmacy First, Primary Care Optometry, Genetic testing of Stroke Patients
- 3 are at **Significant Delay**, an increase of 2 from Q3 - Dentistry, Digital Dermatology, and Digital Type 2 Diabetes

KPI measures have shown more variation this quarter, with some improvement observed in Improving Access to Treatment, but a decline in performance within Shifting the Balance of Care. These KPIs are covered in detail within the Unscheduled Care and Planned Care Change Programmes and therefore reported separately in the Q4 and End of Year How Are We Doing Report.

2.3.1 Quality / Patient Care

This report includes information on elements required to achieve high quality, patient focused care, including waiting times, patient flow, diagnosis, finance, and workforce.

2.3.2 Workforce

This report includes performance elements indirectly relating to workforce.

2.3.3 Financial

Financial issues that may impact on the likelihood of delivery of the SG outcomes is detailed where applicable in the individual topic areas.

2.3.4 Risk Assessment / Management

Delivery of the Operational Improvement Plan (OIP) continues to be influenced by a small number of cross-cutting risks which are consistent with the themes reported throughout the year. These include:

- Capacity and workforce pressures, particularly within specialist services and Primary Care. Dependence on national programmes, policy decisions, or system releases, which affect the timing of several Deliverables.
- Digital and information-governance requirements, which must be met before new pathways and tools can be implemented.
- Supplier, technical or infrastructure dependencies, particularly for digital programmes and national technology roll-outs.
- Recruitment of personnel resource to support our planned deliverables

Operational teams have set out specific mitigations for each Focus Area within the main OIP report. Board members are encouraged to review these in detail to gain full assurance on the actions underway and the expected impact on delivery timelines.

2.3.5 Equality and Diversity, including health inequalities

Equality and diversity factors are included in this report.

2.3.6 Other impacts

All are outlined above and in attached report.

2.3.7 Communication, involvement, engagement and consultation

- All Programme Leads, System Leaders, Exec Leads for the Change Programmes are jointly involved in the design, development and agreement of Outcomes, KPIs, Deliverables and Outputs of the Three Change Programmes and the OIP.
- Executive Leads, Chairs/Vice Chairs and Committee Members of the Board and Assurance Committees were involved in the consultation, review and agreement on the NHS Grampian Integrated Performance Assurance and Reporting Framework and Performance Model, enabling the production of the How Are We Doing and OIP Board Performance Reports.
- Chief Executive, Chair and Committee Members approval of revised formatting of update template to provide improved assurance at last PAFIC meeting 26th November 2025.
- Involvement of System Leaders, Executive Leads, and Chief Officers on providing updates to the OIP.
- OIP Report presented at Executive Team (ET) Performance Review Meeting on 5th May 2026.
- OIP Report presented at PAFIC Meeting on 27th May 2026.

3. Recommendations

The Board is asked to:

- **Endorse** NHS Grampian's Quarter 4 performance against the Operational Improvement Plan (OIP), noting continued progress
- **Be assured** that there is increased visibility of system contributions to deliver the OIP through improvements in reporting
- **Note** the actions underway to progress implementation across the four Critical Areas.

Appendix

Appendix 1 – Operational Improvement Plan Update Report Quarter 4 (January 2026 to March 2026)