

Monday 30 January 2023

System pressures and what we are doing to manage them We have previously highlighted the unscheduled care improvement plan, itself part of our winter plan. One of three critical areas where priority work is being undertaken to help support flow and deliver rapid, sustainable, positive change, both for this winter and beyond, is Cath Labs.

- What is, and why Cath Labs?

The Cardiac Catheterisation Laboratory Service (Cath Lab) provides essential diagnostic and interventional treatment to inpatients, urgent outpatients and emergency patients in NHS Grampian, NHS Orkney and NHS Shetland on a 24/7 basis in addition to time-critical emergency care for NHS Highland out of hours. Cath Labs was identified as being a focus area due to an inability to meet unscheduled demand and the impact this was having on patient journeys, resulting in longer length of stay, and increasing the likelihood of planned procedures becoming urgent.

Since October 2022, work has been ongoing to recruit a multi-disciplined team to create additional inpatient capacity within the Heart pathway. In November 2022, support was secured to establish Improvement Trajectory targets and undertake the activity to achieve them. As a direct result of the additional inpatient capacity created in the Cath Labs and the additional medical support in the inpatient wards, waits for intervention have been reduced (with an improving trajectory) along with a reduced non-elective length of stay. This has helped save unnecessary bed days for patients by reducing their inpatient stay, increasing the capacity for other patients. The average number of inpatients awaiting a procedure in the Cath lab remains the same as at the start of the project. The overall boarding numbers continues to be a challenge due to pressure in the system, as the service has experienced an increase in non-cardiology patients in their footprint due to demand in other areas.

- What's next?

Focus will remain on improving North of Scotland transfer times and reducing boarder numbers within Cardiology to support flow and ensure that people get the right care, in the right place and at the right time. The increased capacity will continue for as long funding allows, and the Business Case for a Third Cath Lab will be finalised to ensure a sustainable service that will meet projected demand.

Want to know more? If you have questions, please contact gram.uucteam@nhs.scot

Staff vaccinations The Mobile Information Bus will be at Dr Gray's Hospital next Monday (6 February), 11am-4pm, offering drop-in staff 'flu and/or COVID-19 vaccinations. No appointments necessary, all staff welcome.

Saving energy at home Are looking for advice and support to save energy at home? Home Energy Scotland are running a series of free sessions, especially for NHS Grampian staff. Each session starts at 12.30, is delivered online, and lasts just 30 minutes. To book your space, just click on the link below, or scan the QR code if you are reading a printed copy of the brief:

[Wednesday 8 February](#)



[Tuesday 21 February](#)



[Thursday 9 March](#)



There are further sessions planned in March and April; we will share those dates nearer the time.

Assistant Practitioner awareness sessions The Practice Education Team will be running Assistant Practitioner Role awareness sessions this Thursday (2-3pm) and again on Friday 10 February (10-11am) via MS Teams. This is a new role within NHS Grampian for nursing and midwifery students; it is a Band 4, fixed term, position. The sessions will cover the benefits of the role, how to get the most from it, and how to complete the scope of practice proforma. Nurses and midwives are warmly invited to attend either session; to book a place contact the Practice Education Team on gram.practiceeducation@nhs.scot

Endowment Fund – limited capacity The NHS Grampian Endowment Fund is currently operating at reduced capacity. Please give plenty of notice when submitting funding applications, and we will respond to these as quickly as possible. Thank you for your patience.

Pause for thought From last week's Guided Journaling sessions, offered as part of the We Care programme:

What flits across your attention, vanishing before you can properly focus upon it? If you had a chance to catch more than a glimpse, what might you notice?

And finally, We return to Care Opinion today and [this heart-warming post](#) about Aberdeen Maternity Hospital. Here's a short excerpt:

Care at AMH was excellent. All midwives, doctors, theatre staff and health care assistants were endlessly kind and compassionate. The midwives went out of their way to be supportive, and nothing seemed to much bother... Thank you to everyone we met, every single person did an exemplary job. You are all a credit to the NHS and deserve to be recognised as such.

Thanks to the team at Peterhead vaccination centre for today's request; they're dedicating [Thank You by Dido](#) to all the healthcare support workers whose contracts are concluding – they are so grateful for your support throughout the winter vaccination programme (EP).

If you want to request a tune, follow up on items included in this brief, or suggest an item for sharing, drop us an email via gram.communications@nhs.scot