

Report of Secretary for Scotland to Guild Council Meeting 13/5/10

Group Meetings

There have been no meetings since my last report to Council.

In the Press

8.02.10 - The NHS Quality Strategy that was announced today recognises that the patient's experience of the NHS is about more than speedy treatment - it is the quality of care they get that matters most to them. For the first time, the quality of care provided by the NHS will be measured through the experience of patients and the information will be used to drive up standards. Patients will be encouraged to be partners in their own care and can expect to experience improvements in the things patients have said they want from their health service. Over the coming months, all NHS boards will be expected to identify steps they can take to improve the quality of care they give.

9.02.10 - The Scottish Office of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society celebrated the opening of its new premises in Edinburgh at an official ceremony with the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing, Nicola Sturgeon. Located next to the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh city centre the office move represents a new start for the Society as it gears up to becoming the new professional leadership body (PLB) for pharmacy in Scotland later this year. Ms Sturgeon met with guests and toured the office with Sandra Melville who thanked her, on behalf of the Board, for her time and support.

11.03.10 - Revenue funding for NHS Boards for 2010-11 will rise by 2.7 per cent to a record £8.464 billion, it was announced today. The extra money will prioritise spending on frontline services for patients across the country. Each territorial board will receive, as a minimum, an above inflation uplift of 2.55 per cent while some boards (*NHS Fife, NHS Forth Valley, NHS Grampian, NHS Lanarkshire, NHS Lothian and NHS Orkney*) will receive higher increases to take account of health needs with regard to changes in population, and deprivation levels. NHS Special Boards, like the *Scottish Ambulance Service* and *NHS 24*, will receive an increase of 2.15 per cent.

Revenue allocations for each NHS Board for 2010-11 are as follows:

These figure are presented as:

NHS Board	Initial allocation 2010-11 (£million)	Uplift 2010-11 (%)
NHS Ayrshire and Arran	570.2	2.55
NHS Borders	166.0	2.55
NHS Dumfries and Galloway	238.3	2.55
NHS Fife	502.9	2.80
NHS Forth Valley	398.8	2.85
NHS Grampian	678.5	2.82
NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde	1,871.4	2.55
NHS Highland	480.6	2.55
NHS Lanarkshire	798.4	2.94
NHS Lothian	1,018.2	3.14
NHS Orkney	31.3	2.63
NHS Shetland	36.8	2.55
NHS Tayside	592.9	2.55
NHS Western Isles	58.1	2.55
Scottish Ambulance Service	197.1	2.15
NHS National Services Scotland	256.6	2.15
NHS 24	57.2	2.15
The State Hospitals Board for Scotland	35.5	2.15
NHS National Waiting Times Centre	42.1	2.15
NHS National Education Scotland	399.4	2.15
NHS Health Scotland	21.5	2.15
NHS Quality Improvement Scotland	17.2	2.15
Total	8,464.0	2.66

11.3.10 - Drugs commonly used to treat osteoporosis could make limbs easier to break if used too long, research suggests. Scientists found that bisphosphonates improve quantity at the expense of quality. Although the medicines helped preserve bone, over time they appeared to impair its structure. Two new US studies by scientists in New York show the drugs also upset the mineral and crystalline structure of bone.

14.3.10 - Health Secretary Nicola Sturgeon has angered senior NHS staff by axing their bonuses for the current financial year to protect front-line services. The move to end performance top-ups is targeted at employees who earn between £43,000 and £173,000 a year. Although the NHS does not formally recognise the word “bonus” as part of remuneration, senior staff are instead entitled to “non-consolidated” payments. Between 2006 and 2009 NHS chief executives and senior managers shared a £2.3m performance pot. About 1,300 staff, less than 1% of the workforce, are covered by the awards. Most senior managers in the NHS have also had their pay frozen, while the options for pay progression among high performers have also been limited.

16.3.10 - Health Secretary Nicola Sturgeon has officially marked the beginning of the biggest NHS hospital build project ever undertaken in Scotland with a promise that it will provide a “shot in the arm” for the local economy. The £840 million project to amalgamate maternity, children’s and adult services in the south-west of Glasgow has been touted as providing a “gold standard” model

for healthcare in Scotland. The project, due for completion in 2015, will locate the trio of hospitals on the site of the *Southern General Hospital* in Govan. Some 2,500 jobs will be created during the five-year project, which is expected to contribute about £30 million per year to the local economy. Brookfield Construction has been awarded the contract to complete the new campus. The company's UK director, Ross Ballingall, said: "Where possible we will be advertising for local sub-contractors and offering jobs and training local apprentices and people who are currently unemployed."

22.3.10 - Pharmacists can save up to £84 a year on their PLB membership fee through tax breaks, the RPSGB has announced. The savings, which follow negotiations with HM Revenue & Customs, mean the membership fee could be reduced to around £9 per month. However, only pharmacists earning more than £43,875 per year with a standard tax code can take advantage of the highest savings. Pharmacists with a standard tax code earning under £43,875 will save around £36 per year, reducing the membership fee to £13 per month.

21.3.10 - People in Scotland over the age of 40 are to get access to universal health checks, Health Secretary Nicola Sturgeon has announced and she outlined plans for health workers like GPs to play a greater role in tackling alcohol abuse. Ms Sturgeon said the road to universal health checks would start with the trial of a web-based scheme in *Grampian* from April, and a pilot scheme to trial face-to-face checks in two health board areas later this year.

29.3.10 - A new £44 million IT system which will pave the way for a paper-free NHS was today launched. The Patient Management System (PMS) will be used to streamline in-patient and out-patient bookings, manage waiting lists, order tests and report test results. Health Secretary Nicola Sturgeon said that PMS is the first system that can be used in any hospital in the NHS and will replace paper processes, improving security and freeing up time for staff to spend on other vital tasks. It will enable staff to keep track of patient records much more easily and allow information to be communicated back to GPs. Until now, health boards have had different patient management systems in place. Ensuring they are all using the same one will make it easier for information to be shared securely when a patient is being treated by more than one health board. So far, six NHS boards across Scotland have signed up to the system, covering 70 per cent of Scotland's population, with the rest set to join in the coming months. The TrackCare™ connected healthcare information system, developed by InterSystems Corporation, will be implemented as the Patient Management System by health boards in *Ayrshire & Arran*, *Borders*, *Grampian*, *Greater Glasgow & Clyde* and *Lanarkshire*, NHS Lothian has already implemented the programme.

8.4.10 - Patients will be able to access their medical records online as part of a pilot scheme being launched in Scotland at two GP practices in *Ayrshire*. The scheme could be rolled out across the whole country if it proves successful. Patients can log on to a secure website to access their records, view test results, book appointments and track their blood pressure. The pilot will cut down on the need for frequent surgery visits and allow patients to access their records from the home or office.

12 April 2010 – A new project to improve the survival of cancer patients by helping to personalise their treatment is being launched in Scotland. Teams across the country will collect samples of tumours from every kidney cancer removed, for study in Edinburgh. Researchers will run tests to look at the different characteristics of each cancer to discover which treatments might work best if the disease returns. The so-called "biorepository" could mean Scottish patients are the first to

benefit from experimental new drugs. It should also help make expensive cancer therapies more affordable to the NHS, as drugs will only be directed at those patients who will benefit. If successful, it is hoped similar projects could be launched for other forms of cancer, particularly the less common and most deadly types for which there are currently few treatment options.

7.5.10 - Hundreds of jobs are to be lost, investment in mental health services cut and plans for community hospitals face being redrawn as the NHS in Scotland aims to slash spending by more than £270 million.

NHS Lothian, which covers Edinburgh and the surrounding region, plans to cut 700 staff and has ruled out increasing the size of its cancer care team in submissions to the health and sport committee of the Scottish Parliament. Desired investment in cancer care, weight management projects and services for patients with mental health problems and the elderly are among the developments already on hold across Scotland because of the cash shortages. In *Ayrshire and Arran*, proposed investment in mental health provision has been slashed and managers say they have not been able to create a special unit for kidney patients in Ayr. Considerable changes have had to be made to plans for community hospitals in Falkirk and Stirling by *NHS Forth Valley* because of cash shortages. *NHS Shetland* said: "For several years the board has only invested in developments that were more or less unavoidable." *NHS Grampian* lists pressure to comply with national standards in areas such as hospital cleanliness, cancer and the care of sick newborn children, as budget risks.

As part of its scrutiny of the health service budget, the health and sport committee had asked boards questions about their financial position, including how much money they have to save to break even. Their responses show *NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde*, Scotland's largest board, has the most to claw back at £62m, followed by £34m at *NHS Grampian*, £31m in *Lothian* and £30m in *Tayside*. Added together, the regional boards which run hospitals and other mainstream patient services, have to reduce spending by £262m to avoid mounting debts. When other NHS departments, such as helpline *NHS 24* and the staff training arm, are included the figure is more than £270m. *NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde* has already outlined controversial plans to replace 386 registered nurses with 229 nursing assistants by 2013.

10.5.10 - Every health board in Scotland is to introduce a scheme to free up more nurses' time for direct patient care, thanks to the NHS Quality Strategy. The Releasing Time to Care (RTC) initiative will now be rolled out to all health boards. The strategy seeks to improve the quality of care patients receive from the NHS, recognising that the patient's experience of the NHS is about more than speedy treatment - it is the quality of care they get that matters most to them. The Quality Strategy will see the quality of care provided by the NHS measured for the first time through patients' experience and the information used to drive up standards. A Quality Alliance, which will include senior representatives from stakeholder groups, will be set up to monitor progress towards the three ambitions set out in the Quality Strategy. These are developing an NHS which is safe, clinically effective and person-centred. RTC is currently running in eight health boards in Scotland and is now being extended to every board.

Scottish Health Sector Senior Representatives Committee 23.4.10

The main topics discussed at the meeting were the current financial situation, elections to health boards, the Quality Strategy, Agenda for Change and Michael Fullers retiral in March next year.

Meeting on PRB Recommendation on RRP 3.3.10

Michael Fuller, Dave Thornton and myself met with the civil servants involved in the decisions on implementation of the PRB recommendations to discuss whether there is a way forward on the issue. The meeting was useful and it was agreed a further meeting would be held when the results of a vacancy survey carried out in January were available.

Review of NHS Production in Scotland

Since the decision that the preparation of the business case should be taken forward by *NHS Tayside*, nothing further has been heard.

AfC

There has been no update on the Review results in *Greater Glasgow & Clyde* for those staff for whom the process is not yet complete. Several pharmacy JAQs have been completed.

Other

I have dealt with a number of member queries and a few new membership applications.

Locally, I have commented on a new *NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde* policy on dealing with employee capability . I have pointed out to the senior Unite reps that pharmacists are now covered by NCAS and should probably be included in the policy for doctors and dentists rather than the general policy. Supporting information from the NCAS website was provided to back up the assertion.

Colin Rodden

10.5.10