

# Report of Secretary for Scotland to Guild Council Meeting 19/9/12

## Group Meetings

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

## In the Press

**26/7/12** The contract between NHS Lothian and Consort to build a new Sick Children's Hospital in Edinburgh was finalised yesterday at the meeting of the health board. A crucial land swap deal between the health board and Consort – the private company which built and runs the ERI and owns the Little France site where the new Sick Kids will be situated – have been finalised. With the agreement due to be formally signed off within days, the health board can now look forward to putting the contract to build and run the £250 million hospital out to tender by September. The hospital will be built under a non-profit distribution model, a similar arrangement to the private finance initiative which was used to construct the new ERI, which opened in 2003. The new Sick Kids is set to open in 2017.

**2/8/12** Figures published by the General Register Office on causes of deaths in Scotland were published yesterday. Deaths related to C.Diff and MRSA fell by 37% and 47% respectively between 2010, while deaths related to heart disease and stroke also fell. The percentage of deaths caused by cancer rose by 7%, while the number of alcohol-related deaths decreased by 5%.

**16/8/12** Laura McIver has been appointed Chief Pharmacist for Healthcare Improvement Scotland.

**27/8/12** A discovery showing how the immune system reduces cholesterol levels could lead to improved heart treatments. Cholesterol levels are suppressed as part of the process that fights off viral infections. Researchers suggest that drugs that mimic the natural mechanism could be as effective as statins while avoiding their side effects.

**27/8/12** Figures given to The Herald newspaper appeared to show at least 390 staff left their jobs under compromise agreements last year and were paid more than £12 million by the NHS. The deals involve an employee agreeing not to pursue an employment-related claim, normally in exchange for a cash sum. The number of people leaving this way has risen steadily over the past five years. Many of those who depart sign clauses preventing them from criticising the organisation or speaking about their reasons for going.

**28/8/2012** The Scottish Government brought in a target of reducing senior management positions in the NHS by 25% by 2015. The latest figures show that since March 2010 a drop of 16.1% has been achieved so far. The reduction in senior management positions comes as figures show that the NHS workforce in Scotland is 2.6% higher than it was in September 2006.

**5/9/2012** The Scottish Government's new Cabinet team has been announced by First Minister Alex Salmond, subject to the necessary parliamentary approval. Deputy First Minister **Nicola Sturgeon**, Scotland's longest serving health secretary, will now become Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure, Investment and Cities, playing a key role in the Scottish Government's programme for economic recovery. She will also take lead responsibility for Government Strategy and the Constitution, including preparations for the independence referendum. **Alex Neil** will become Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing taking forward this key public service with the support of the existing strong team of Ministers, Sports Minister Shona Robison and Public Health Minister Michael Matheson.

**4/9/2012** First Minister Alex Salmond announced details of his 2012/13 plans in the Holyrood chamber. The government will bring forward 15 bills in all. The SNP administration wants a referendum on independence to be held in autumn 2014. Other legislation is being focused on the integration of health and social care; improving support available for victims and witnesses; reforming post-16 education and to bringing bankruptcy law into the 21st Century.

## **Review of NHS Pharmaceutical Care of Patients in the Community - Scotland**

A stakeholder meeting was attended on 23<sup>rd</sup> August in which some areas were explored further.

## **Unlicensed Medicines Review**

Work continues on the business case for a single site for the manufacture of unlicensed medicines in Scotland.

## **Consultation on the Integration of Adult Health and Social Care in Scotland**

A GHP response was submitted on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2012.

## **Notes of Unite Regional Health Sector Conference 14<sup>th</sup> September 2012**

A separate report of this meeting has been produced and attached to this report.

## **Prescribing Review**

The Secondary and Primary Care Interface Subgroup has yet to meet.

## **Other**

I have dealt with a number of member queries, several new membership and new PII applications.

Colin Rodden  
17.9.12