

Report of Secretary for Scotland to Guild Council Meeting 28/11/12

Group Meetings

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

In the Press

29/10/12 It was reported that over £1 billion obtained through Health Board targets of three per cent efficiency savings each year has been reinvested in the NHS across Scotland to boost frontline care for patients over the last four years. In 2011/12 NHS boards made £319 million efficiency savings, against a planned target of £317 million, which was the fourth year in a row that boards have exceeded the target. There is concern, however, that further efficiencies can only be made by cutting jobs and/or services.

25/10/12 Audit Scotland have warned that NHS health boards are facing a £1 billion bill to repair crumbling hospitals. The huge maintenance backlog will pose "a significant cost pressure" to boards already struggling to stay in the black. NHS Scotland owns more than 1,000 buildings, of which a third are more than 50 years old, and an estimated £1 billion bill for bringing their buildings up to standard. Audit Scotland also said that the requirement for health boards to break even each year had encouraged a short-term focus on spending, leading to maintenance being neglected.

2/11/12 Polypharmacy is being tackled at a national level in Scotland, with the publication of guidance by the Scottish Government. The guidance aims to improve patient care by reducing the risk of adverse drug reactions associated with polypharmacy. "Necessary polypharmacy is a feature of modern therapeutics. It is not without risk and elderly or frail patients are especially vulnerable," the guidance states. The document includes guidance for clinicians undertaking a polypharmacy review and management information for NHS boards.

On-call

Apparently, only two health boards are ready to implement the recent agreement. Implementation will be delayed until all health boards in Scotland are ready. Despite the target that had been set, it is looking extremely unlikely that it will be implemented by the end of January 2013. Implementation Groups have been set up in each health board to deal with all the local issues.

Pensions

It is looking extremely unlikely that there will be any progress on a Scottish pension solution. The last meeting and the next meeting have both been cancelled.

Maternity Changes

The changes in the law which mean that women on maternity leave are entitled to pay or time-off in lieu for public holidays has led to some health boards attempting to get these included in statutory leave (to deny staff the extra days) but this is being opposed by the unions.

e-Payslips

At a recent Unite meeting, it was noted that e-payslips were to be introduced from the summer of 2013. This is an NHS Scotland initiative to save money.

Unlicensed Medicines Review

A meeting to discuss the workforce plan and requirements for the new build has been arranged for 18th December.

Other

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

Colin Rodden
27.11.12