

Area Clinical Forum Report to Grampian NHS Board Meeting on the 4th of November 2020

Purpose of Report

This report updates the Grampian NHS Board on key issues arising from the Area Clinical Forum (ACF) meeting on the 4th of November 2020.

Recommendation

The Board is asked to note the following key points:

Area Dental Committee

The ACF were delighted to welcome new members from the Area Dental Committee to their first ACF meeting since re-establishing their professional committee. Their membership completes the ACF clinical group membership for the first time in many years.

Health and Wellbeing

Staff health and wellbeing is frequently discussed at the ACF meetings and concerns were raised from a few professional committees around the level of pressure on staff throughout the COVID-19 response and now into the remobilisation phase. The change in activity throughout NHS services has placed additional pressure on staff whether in existing roles or when redeployed into new temporary or evolved roles. In addition to this there is uncertainty around the duration of the COVID-19 response and how the healthcare system will tackle the health debt. We appreciate that there is considerable ongoing work, planning and consultation with staff. However, this only in part alleviates some staff concerns and personal resilience in many staff is low. We have taken an action to discuss this with the SLT at our next session.

Remobilisation

The ACF membership report considerable challenges in stepping up services and note that there are some discrepancies and differences across areas and sectors regarding the ability to see and manage the challenges in what can be done 'face to face' and virtually and the potential that this has in creating inequity for our patients. In particular services such as dental have a considerable challenge remobilising services due the backlog of care and changes to guidance further limiting capacity.

Workforce

There continue to be challenges with workforce with significant gaps in healthcare science and additional pressures created by the pandemic situation. On a positive note Grampian Allied Health Professionals Advisory Committee (GAHPAC) report improved recruitment in AHPs due to more graduates staying in the local area and filling roles.

System Leadership Team (SLT) commissioning the ACF

The ACF continue to work on the commission from SLT around supplementary staffing; it has been challenging over the last 6 months and with changing priorities this work has been delayed. Meeting remotely has proved challenging with busy schedules. However, we have now returned to working on this.

SLT engagement

The ACF and SLT have continued to meet virtually 3 monthly throughout the COVID-19 period. We are finding this forum very useful for discussing key topics raised by the ACF and for relationship building and improved communication.

Board Programme

The board programme is a standing item on the ACF agenda to allow the forum to fulfil the role of providing clinical and professional advice to the SLT and Board on relevant topics. We look forward to planning our meetings in 2021 aligning with the new Board programme when it is available.

Kim Cruttenden
Area Clinical Forum Chair
November 2020