

**The GAPF is the main Grampian forum for the conduct of employee relations. It has delegated authority from the System Leadership Team (SLT) and the NHS Grampian Board to develop and reach agreements on Grampian-wide employee relations matters subject to approval by the relevant senior management and individual Trade Unions and Professional Organisations involved.**

## **Purpose of Report**

This report updates the Grampian NHS Board on items discussed at the Grampian Area Partnership Forum.

## **Recommendation**

The Board is asked to note the following items from the Grampian Area Partnership Forum meeting from October 2021 and November 2021.

### **October 2021**

#### **RRP Update**

GAPF were pleased to receive confirmation that the Recruitment and Retention Premium (RRP) and RRP application for some Estates staff had been extended for four years. There would be a mid-term review, therefore work needed to continue to monitor the effectiveness of RRP and the progress of the action plan. Thanks were given to all those involved in developing the application.

#### **System Update**

Professor Caroline Hiscox, Chief Executive, outlined that over the last 20 months, the organisation had been under enduring pressure, the consequences of which were far reaching. The pressure on colleagues delivering health & social care was acknowledged and experiences were getting harder in the context of the pandemic, with some staff experiencing moral injury. Caroline explained that the organisation recognised the pressure at work and the levels of stress people were experiencing and acknowledged the efforts of everyone from support services and volunteers to the public. Caroline highlighted the proposed approach to the next six month period, and that GAPF, as an advisory forum to the NHS Grampian Board, would be given the opportunity to discuss and provide feedback.

#### **NHS Grampian Plan for the Future**

GAPF received a presentation providing an update that over 2000 detailed survey responses had been received. Almost a fifth of these were identified as staff members or staff teams. Both staff and public representatives completed the survey. Responses included comments giving praise for how staff were dedicated and working throughout the pandemic and acknowledgement of the situation staff were facing by the public. There were also areas of concern raised which were outlined in eight high level themes. The detail of the themes would be considered as part of phase II engagement plan. Open and transparent conversations were planned to

discuss the concerns raised and how we can move forward. The draft plan is hoped to be ready in December 2021 with publication scheduled for February 2022.

### **Finance Update**

The September Finance report was presented to GAPF. Consideration was now being given to the budget setting process from April 2022 onwards and discussions with the Scottish Government regarding planning assumptions was ongoing.

### **Whistleblowing update**

GAPF were advised that the first quarterly report had been presented to the NHS Grampian Board in October 2021 and had been well received. The presentation included an update on the improvements that had been agreed in regards to training and development.

### **Staff Health & Wellbeing**

Staff Side had previously raised concerns in relation to the health and wellbeing of staff and a response had been developed through the People and Culture Directorate. The concerns raised by Staff Side, were welcomed and had been discussed at the Chief Executive Team. The wellbeing of colleagues was taken seriously and remained a priority.

### **NHS Scotland Superannuation Scheme (SPPA)**

GAPF were given a presentation on the pension reform changes from April 2022. Scottish Public Pensions Agency (SPPA) would be writing to all scheme members regarding the April 2022 pension reforms.

### **GAPF Learning from Partnership through the Pandemic Action Plan**

Geraldine Lawrie, Head of Workforce & Development, provided a brief overview in relation to the work being undertaken in relation to hybrid working. Themes, which needed to be considered, had been identified with associated questions. The questions would be circulated to the Local Partnership Forums, with responses requested to contribute to the wider discussion planned for the GAPF meeting in November 2021.

### **NHS Scotland “Once for Scotland” Workforce Policies Programme**

A letter had been received explaining that the Once for Scotland Flexible Working Location Policy implementation had been paused until no later than April 2022. The letter also explained the whole Once for Scotland Workforce Policy National Programme Phase II had been paused also with the work commencing no later than April 2022. In the meantime current policies remain in place including the NHS Grampian Flexible Working Policy, which included homeworking.

### **Annual Review**

Rachael Little, GAPF Co-Chair, had been asked to develop and submit a report on behalf of GAPF for the annual review 2020/21 which included reflections looking back and considerations for looking forward. Due to the timings it had not been

possible to consult and discuss at a meeting however information from previous meetings and development events had been used to develop the report.

## **November 2021**

### **Baird and ANCHOR Project**

GAPF were provided with a presentation including an update on the progress of the Baird Family Hospital and ANCHOR Centre.

### **GAPF Learning from Partnership through the Pandemic**

GAPF discussed the re-introduction of reports, as part of the meetings, from within the System and working with the Staff Governance Committee to develop a reporting template which could be used for both meetings.

The responses to the Hybrid working themes, with associated questions, previously circulated to the Local Partnership Forums, were discussed and it was agreed that the responses would support the activity of the Smarter Working Programme Board. It was acknowledged that the Once for Scotland Workforce Policy National Programme was currently paused, including the implementation of the Once for Scotland Flexible Working Location Policy. A response from the Scottish Terms & Conditions Committee (STAC) was also awaited on a number of issues related to terms & conditions for staff.

### **Operation Iris**

GAPF were given the opportunity to discuss and provide feedback on the System approach for the next six months, Operation Iris, following the presentation from Professor Caroline Hiscox, Chief Executive, at the GAPF meeting in October. It was agreed this would become a standing agenda item to support ongoing communication and engagement.

### **Rachael Little**

**Employee Director**

**Co-Chair, NHS Grampian Area Partnership Forum**

## **November 2021**