

NHS GRAMPIAN

Review of Board Principles on Access Performance

1. Actions Recommended

The Board are asked to approve a variation to principles related to access performance to enable the sourcing of additional capacity during the period to 31 March 2021.

2. Strategic Context

The National Waiting Times Improvement Plan was published in October 2019. The Plan reconfirmed that the overall approach to health and social care is rooted in the right of people to have safe, effective and person-centred healthcare.

Following the establishment of the Integration Joint Boards there has been a focus in recent years on shifting the balance of care to address the evolving needs of the people of Scotland. However, increasing demand on our services makes it essential that we take action to guarantee that our whole system of health and care has the capacity, co-ordination and workforce to deliver the best care possible in every setting.

The Waiting Times Improvement Plan focuses on reducing the length of time people are waiting for key areas of healthcare. The plan also takes account of the wider context of national, regional and local planning, health and social care integration, workforce planning, primary care development and the overall reform agenda. This includes the recognition of the impact that unscheduled care demand will have on the capacity to deliver its objectives and the need to provide a balanced approach to ensure patients' needs are met.

This Waiting Times Improvement Plan outlines the actions and timescales to be implemented, together with the significant and focussed additional investment to support this work. It sets out the clear deliverables over the next 30 months and how these will lead to improvements throughout this period.

3. Key matters relevant to recommendation

The Board is required to agree an Annual Operational Plan with Scottish Government which includes a 30 month Waiting Times Improvement Plan. The Annual Operational Plan will be presented to the Board in June 2019 for formal approval.

In response to the improvement targets it is acknowledged that additional recurring capacity will be required to support the future growth projections in demand and temporary additional capacity will be required to reduce the current number of patients waiting for an outpatient appointment or treatment.

The principles governing the delivery of access performance were agreed by the NHS Grampian Board in 2013 and are set out in appendix 1. In order to increase capacity a number of opportunities are available which would require a temporary

variation to the principles d) and f) i.e. for the 30 month period of the Improvement Plan. The reasons for the variations are summarised below:

Extend the offer of choice of treatment to children outwith Grampian to cover all clinical interventions (in relation to principle d)

We currently refer children to other centres in Scotland and elsewhere in the UK for specialist treatments that are not available in Grampian. At present we have 189 children waiting for routine treatments where there is potential capacity for these to be undertaken outwith Grampian.

A variation to the existing principle would enable the Acute Sector management team to identify and potentially source capacity outwith Grampian to reduce the length of wait for patients for more routine treatments.

Any referrals outwith Grampian would be through agreement with the families and/or carers of the children and all patients would retain the right to wait for the treatment to be provided in Grampian.

To be able to utilise available additional capacity (both within the NHS and independent sector) and continue the use of waiting list initiative arrangements (in relation to principle f)

As previously reported to the Board, we have a medium term plan to increase capacity linked to the business case for the new Elective Care Centre funded through additional investment from the Scottish Government, and through a range of initiatives and improvements in the elective care programme.

During the transitional period, our local Waiting Times Improvement Plan will require the flexibility to source additional available capacity through the use of waiting list initiative arrangements and within the independent sector.

This variation will support the continued use of waiting list initiative arrangements and to extend the use of the independent sector within Grampian.

The sourcing of independent provider(s) will be selected through a transparent tendering process, must demonstrate additionality to core capacity, be consistent with the Waiting Times Improvement Plan and supported by additional funding from the Scottish Government Health and Social Care Directorate.

In relation to medical staff assurances will be required that agreed job plans will continue to be delivered by individuals who elect to deliver additional productivity through waiting list initiatives or the independent sector.

The engagement with independent providers is short term only and covers the period to 31 March 2021.

4. Risk Mitigation

The variations as set out above will increase available capacity and enable an improvement in waiting times performance and reduction in the time patients are waiting for an initial outpatient appointment or agreed treatment.

The Board will continue to implement the clinical elective surgery categorisation system to mitigate the clinical risk associated with the recurring demand and capacity gap. This is aimed at ensuring that those patients who require surgical intervention within a clinically defined time period receive it.

5. Responsible Executive Director and contact for further information

If you require any further information in advance of the Board meeting please contact:

Responsible Executive Director

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Contact for further information

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15 March 2019

Appendix 1

Principles approved by Grampian NHS Board in 2013:

- a. Patients will be scheduled according to clinical priority
- b. Within a given clinical priority, all patients will be booked in turn
- c. Wherever possible and where clinically appropriate, patients will be offered treatment within Grampian
- d. Children will not be offered treatment out with Grampian unless they require specialist care that cannot be provided locally
- e. Where patients wish to wait rather than be treated out with Grampian, they will be treated in turn and at the earliest available opportunity
- f. Waiting list management will ensure best value for the public and fairness for all staff – e.g. wherever possible, patients will be offered treatment in NHS facilities rather than private facilities and NHS Grampian will not utilise waiting list initiative arrangements.