

CEO's 100-day report

RECONNECTING WITH PEOPLE

August 2023







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Foreword from our CEO

This report summarises my experiences and insights since taking up post on 3 April 2023.

Before I joined NHS Orkney, I worked for the NHS in England for 20 years, 13 of which in senior and Board-level posts, ranging from the biggest acute teaching hospitals in the country to smaller, rural District General Hospitals, from Good and Outstanding-rated hospitals to poor performing hospitals.

While my experience prepared me well, there is no substitute for being on the ground and hearing first-hand about people's experiences of NHS Orkney.

Over the last three months, I have prioritised taking time to listen – so that I can begin to form a view about what it's like to work for and with NHS Orkney. I have set about this by having conversations, listening, and meeting a wide range of patients, our local community, partners and staff.

In my first 100-days, I have met over half of our 800 staff via drop-ins, visits and shadowing opportunities at different times of the day both in-hours and out-of-hours and listened to the views of a wide range of our partners and key external stakeholders spanning public and private sector partners, third sector organisations, politicians and local media. From day one, I have asked to see every complaint and concern that comes into the organisation so that I understand where there is room for improvement and to ensure personal contact is made with patients and their families where it is appropriate to do so in order that we listen and learn. I similarly see many compliments and letters of praise for our staff and teams which are shared with colleagues so that credit is given, where it is due.

What is already abundantly clear is that we have many amazing people working at NHS Orkney, and many stars of the future too, who we must invest in and nurture through development opportunities to support their personal and professional growth – recognising many are our leaders of the future.

I appreciate others may have different views to those I share in this report, including those who know Orkney and this island Board far better than I. I am very respectful of these views.

Before I started in post, I did interviews with local media about my approach and style of leadership and my immediate priorities. I described my commitment to openness and transparency, my desire to make

NHS Orkney the brilliant organisation I know it has the potential to be and my strong commitment to working in partnership with a wide range of organisations to ensure we stay focused on achieving this goal, recognising our patients, their families, our local community and staff deserve nothing less.

The purpose of this report is to summarise what I've heard, to share my reflections and observations on this vital insight, and to set out how I propose we now move forward as an organisation.

And context is always key. I make the observations in this report recognising the landscape and environment we are now operating in and living in has fundamentally changed how we must view our future. This includes creating the new norm in a post-pandemic world and NHS (holding on to the many positives to come from COVID), maintaining our strong focus on looking after our staff and addressing the backlogs and waiting times for treatment that have regrettably built over the last few years for patients.

Additionally, we must embrace the strong requirement to work in collaboration and partnership with others both locally and regionally. This means taking opportunities to accelerate integration where it makes sense to do so, and recognising strengthened partnership working is absolutely necessary given our reliance on other Health Boards and centres in Scotland to deliver some services and timely care and treatment for our patients.

At the heart of this report is one over-riding observation about our starting point at NHS Orkney which we must seek to put right together:

Prioritising people, which means finding meaningful ways to reconnect with our patients, local community and our staff.

Since joining NHS Orkney, there are a number of key themes that have repeatedly emerged from my many conversations and interactions with our staff and others – which can be summarised as:

- **Culture**
- **Leadership**
- **Recruitment and retention**
- **Getting back to basics**
- **A desire for having a clear direction and ambition for the future**

It is no coincidence that these priorities don't deviate from the five immediate priorities I shared on my first day in post with our partners, local community and staff. Rather they reinforce the fact that these priorities remain very relevant.

They are:

1. Stable, visible and compassionate **leadership** (Executive Team and Senior Leadership Team)
2. Organisational **culture** (creating a culture where staff feel valued, supported, listened to, involved in decision-making and one of continuous improvement. The latter will be driven by having a learning organisation with a strong safety culture)
3. **Workforce** (ensuring we have a long-term workforce plan that is future-proofed and reduces our reliance and spend on agency and locum staff)
4. **Financial recovery** (making this an organisation-wide priority – so we have sufficient 'grip and control' and live within our means, recognising healthy finances are a feature of a well-led organisation)
5. Aligning our Corporate Workplan and priorities for 2023/24 to our Clinical **Strategy** (we will involve you and our partners in the development of a new longer-term Corporate Plan which we will launch in 2024 so that this becomes our 'compass' for all decision-making moving forward, and so that our path to delivering our vision of being the best remote and rural care provider in the UK is a clearer one)

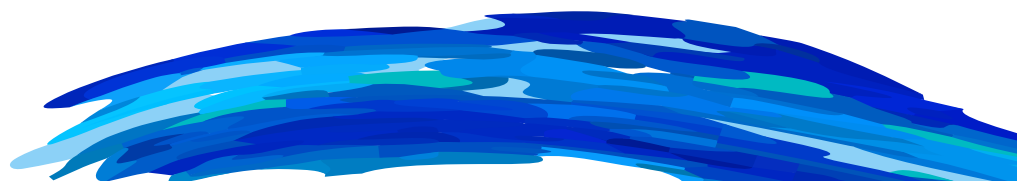
In this report, I will explore all of the above themes in full and set out what I mean by each based on what I've heard over the last 100-days, and most importantly, what we plan to do in response to this vital feedback.

Working in the NHS is a team sport, and it is for this reason that I would like us to describe our workforce as Team Orkney moving forward. We can no longer work in silos at any level in this organisation or in the wider health and care system – but instead need to recognise we are one team, all pulling in the same direction with a shared purpose – to do the best possible job for our patients and local community.



In order to achieve this, we have to be open-minded to changing how we work, think and put people and learning first – so that we become a continuously-improving organisation where leading with kindness is the norm, connecting us in our system better.

Laura Skaife-Knight,
CEO



Executive summary

Since starting in post, I have described the three features that I believe are at the heart of successful organisations.

1. **SHARED PURPOSE** – staying fully connected to our purpose so we never forgot why we're here and do what we do – which in NHS Orkney's case is to deliver the best care and services to our patients and the local community we serve.
2. **ONE TEAM** – every individual in Team Orkney has an equally important role in delivering our purpose and no-one is more important than anyone else in our organisation. Rather each member of the 800-strong Team Orkney make us who we are and I want difference and diversity to be embraced and celebrated. Central to our improvement is breaking down the silo working and putting Team Orkney first. At the heart of achieving this is understanding each other's worlds, walking in each other's shoes and being thoughtful about the impact of the actions we take and changes we make on other teams so that we have a greater appreciation of every cog that turns our wheel and showing respect for each other. We aspire to have a culture of fairness and equity where everyone is treated the same regardless of their role and level they work in our organisation – every person, contribution and role matters.
3. **LIVING OUR VALUES** – consistently living our values of care and compassion, dignity and respect, quality and teamwork, openness, honesty, and responsibility, leading with kindness and visible and authentic leadership. Kindness and respect start with how we treat one another as colleagues.

The fourth aspect I would add is the need to have very clear priorities based on evidence and good data (over time) – as without this focus, we end up in a position where we try to do everything, resulting in doing few things really well. Strategy is fundamentally about making choices, and from this year we will be clearer about the choices we are making so that we focus our time and energy on doing the things that really matter to our patients, local community and staff much better, and we give permission to staff to pause or stop doing things that are adding little value, in order to create the space to focus on the right areas. This will involve us embracing challenge of where value is beyond lost and discovering where value can be created.

We started 2023/24 with a Board-approved Plan on a Page which summarises what we set out to achieve against our five strategic priorities which remain consistent with previous years and those priorities

described on page 10: Workforce, Culture, Quality and Safety, Governance and Systems and Sustainability.

Changes to succeed

For us to succeed, this report argues that a number of changes are necessary, including:

1. Strong, courageous and kind leadership
2. Consistently listening to and acting on feedback from our patients, local community and staff so we can continuously learn and improve
3. Creating an open and transparent culture – so that honesty is at the heart of every conversation we have
4. Holding to account being embedded across the organisation and this being fairly applied - by 'holding to account' I mean that staff will be set clear objectives for the year, linked to our strategic goals and our values, and individuals and teams will be supported to take responsibility for delivering results so that we can further improve standards of care, quality and service delivery for our patients and local community. This is about setting clear expectations for everyone, so that we set staff up to succeed and empower staff to lead and own performance delivery in their own areas by setting clear goals which they will be held to account for achieving
5. Being brave enough to simplify our systems and processes so they enable staff to do their jobs, not get in the way of staff doing their jobs as they too often do now

If we can get these things right more often then we will better meet the needs of our local community and inspire confidence that we are able to respond to the challenges we face.

In this report I make the case that these barriers, which can be summarised as: culture, leadership, recruitment and retention, getting back to basics and having a clear direction and ambition for the future, are the things we must prioritise above all else if we are to create the right foundations for NHS Orkney.

If we can focus on these areas together through our own and in our shared work, then I am of the view that we will demonstrably improve care and services for our patients and staff, make NHS Orkney a more fulfilling, attractive and enjoyable place to work and we will be a better partner.

In essence, this report makes **three broad recommendations** – and at the heart of this is the need to prioritise people and finding ways to meaningfully reconnect with our patients, local community and our staff.

These are:

- 1. To agree that culture, leadership, recruitment and retention, getting back to basics and having a clear direction and ambition for the future are the highest priorities.**

While these areas may seem obvious – if we don't give them the required focus and accept these are the highest priorities to remove the many barriers that our staff so often tell us get in the way and cause frustration, then we will not move forward. We must focus on both the 'what' and the 'how' we do things more than we ever have done in equal measure. Accepting these as our main blockers to moving forward is the first step to addressing them.

- 2. Recognising this report must have synergy with other workplans, we must ensure there is alignment between our Plan on a Page for 2023/24, Annual Delivery Plan, Medium-Term Plan, the emerging long-term Corporate Strategy, as well as the Board's Clinical Strategy and wider supporting workplans.**

Joining up the dots and ensuring synergy between our various plans is critical. Moving forward and by April 2024, our new Corporate Strategy, which will include our refreshed vision and strategic objectives, will become our 'compass' underpinned by supporting annual plans spanning: clinical, people, estates, financial recovery and digital.

- 3. To (1) invest in the development and upskilling of Team Orkney as a priority so we can ensure working here is a fulfilling and rewarding experience, so we can grow our own and so people who choose NHS Orkney feel able to reach their true potential and (2) put in place the building blocks that will support the creation of a safety-first, learning and continuous improvement culture.**

We will each year choose the areas we will prioritise to develop our teams and upskill Team Orkney to improve the experience of working here, to ensure our staff feel invested in and to allow the organisation to mature which means empowering staff across the organisation to lead positive change.

Listening to our people

In response to staff feedback, we have agreed five key areas of focus to further improve staff engagement and experience:

1. Staff health and wellbeing
2. Reward and recognition
3. Involving staff in decision-making
4. 12-month programme for listening to and responding to staff feedback
5. Leading with kindness and living our values

We have agreed a number of priority areas to upskill our staff – including improving written and verbal communications, developing Quality Improvement capability and leadership skills at all levels – so that we set people and teams up to succeed. Moving forward we will be more ambitious in this arena, so that our offering of opportunities is clearer, more attractive and meets the needs of all staff groups, including those in line management and leadership roles as well as those with professional responsibilities in leadership roles.

This report cannot stand alone. It is not a strategy in its own right, but a set of reflections from my first 100-days and a proposed approach to setting the direction we must take if we are to reach our true potential. There is a section at the end which deals with implementation. There are many initiatives and developments underway, and these must be seen in the context of the report's recommendations, and our governance arrangements. If the report is to have impact, its implementation needs to be led well and managed effectively but it cannot become an industry in itself and instead this needs to be business as usual and how we do things here at NHS Orkney.

The final observation as we set the scene for this report is that we have to better balance our focus between investing our energy and attention on the issues of today and the here and now, whilst spending sufficient time and energy looking to the future and anticipating what challenges lie ahead. This behaviour will help us to understand and address these proactively and move away from being in reactive mode most of the time to getting on the front foot and looking to the years ahead, so that we have services that meet the needs of our local community and are fit for our shared future.

National, regional and local context

With circa 800 staff and serving a population of 22,000, NHS Orkney is the smallest Territorial Health Board in Scotland, made up of 70 islands of which 20 are inhabited. Whilst the smallest Health Board, NHS Orkney has big potential to be the leading provider of remote and rural healthcare with so much going for it. We provide a comprehensive range of primary, community-based and acute services.

While post-COVID, the challenges facing NHS Orkney are not dissimilar to those across the NHS elsewhere in Scotland, including addressing the elective backlogs and longest waits, as a remote and rural Health Board, we have some unique challenges presented by our location, ferry-linked isles and forecast demographic changes in the decades to come.

NHS Orkney, as part of NHS Scotland, is one of 14 Territorial Health Boards in Scotland. The Scottish Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care, Michael Matheson, has set out a number of really clear national priorities, which we must do our very best to deliver.

National

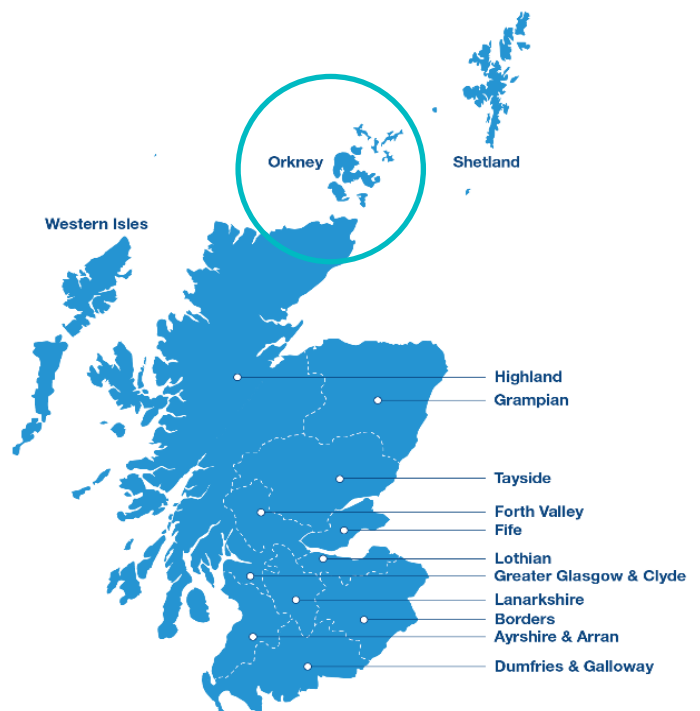
The national priorities set out by the Cabinet Secretary are:

1. Recovery – including returning to pre-COVID levels of activity and addressing our waiting lists (including our longest waiting patients)
2. Delivery and performance – having operational and financial grip
3. Valuing, supporting and listening to our staff and investing in health and wellbeing
4. Early planning for winter 2023/24
5. To develop an Annual Delivery Plan for 2023/24 and Medium-Term Plan, which makes sure we look to the next three years and what we need to deliver

Regional

The six Health Boards in the North of Scotland are home to approximately 25% of the Scottish population but are spread out over 65% of the landmass, creating unique challenges and also opportunities. The six north Health Boards are: NHS Orkney, NHS Shetland, NHS Western Isles, NHS Tayside, NHS Grampian and NHS Highland.

Collaboration is all the more important for the north, to ensure maximal use of the resources we have available to build more sustainable, value-based healthcare whilst staying connected to our unique local communities and populations we serve. Specific challenges to developing and maintaining sustainable and resilient cross-boundary services include those associated with patient or staff travel and capacity within Boards to meaningfully engage with wide-ranging improvement that is needed to support regional level activity through to delivery. Regional Networks/Alliances continue to provide the backbone of our collaborative framework and are supported by regional teams of staff in a variety of ways, dependent on specific needs of the service including trauma, cancer and imaging.



Our main challenges

Other cross-boundary services exist within Service Level Agreements (SLAs) between island Boards, including NHS Orkney, and other specialist centres, in our case mostly at NHS Grampian and NHS Highland. NHS Orkney has commenced a piece of work to review all SLAs to ensure they are fit for purpose, meet our local population's changing needs and to strengthen oversight of these vital agreements which are so pivotal to the experience of our patients and local community, including timely care and treatment.

Most regional work is commissioned directly from the North Chief Executive Group, guided by local need. The most recent set of priorities identified by the North Chief Executives are:

- Planned Care
- Mental Health Care (including Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services)
- Radiology Services
- Cancer Services

Local



- A growing and ageing population – more patients presenting with multiple long-term conditions and complex health and social care needs. There is a forecast increase of 30% more people over the age of 65 in Orkney (2020-2035) and those over the age of 80 are forecast to double over the same time period
- Widening health inequalities gap as a result of COVID, cost of living pressures, and addressing the pockets of deprivation
- Workforce fragility and skills shortages in key areas – including an ageing workforce (Nursing and Midwifery) and unstable locum medical workforce (inability to recruit to several posts substantively requires an innovative approach to collaboration)
- Higher than average staff sickness absence (including long-term sickness), and a worsening problem post-pandemic
- Challenges with the wider social care system i.e. residential care and care at home impacting people's transitions from hospital to community (delayed discharges impacts on 20% of our total bed base)
- Staff who don't feel listened to, valued, supported or invested in – resulting in low morale, in turn presenting a risk to achieving our ambition of delivering a consistently great experience and care to our patients
- Fragile services – including Pain Management, Ophthalmology, Dentistry and Pharmacy
- Complicated bureaucracy, overcomplicated processes and poor information flow
- Lack of leadership stability
- Leadership approach and style
- Transport issues within Orkney and from Orkney to the Scottish mainland (lack of national investment)
- Limited housing availability and affordability, which impacts adversely on recruitment and retention
- A lack of meaningful community engagement, which means we are at risk of being disconnected from the views of the local community we serve

2023/24 Plan on a Page

Our Plan on a Page sets out our key areas of focus for 2023/24, which in summary are:

1. Workforce
2. Culture
3. Safety and Quality
4. Systems and Governance
5. Sustainability

The full Plan on a Page for 2023/24 and associated actions under each strategic objective set out above can be found on our website (please see page 12 for full details).

Underpinning and aligned to our Plan on a Page is our Clinical Strategy (2022-2027) which is bold in its ambition and has an overarching aim of further improving health and wellbeing for the people in Orkney by focusing on improving health through concerted action in the key areas of stopping smoking, reducing alcohol use, managing bodyweight, and improving physical activity.



The priorities described in the strategy can be broadly grouped into three areas:

1. To improve the health of children and young people
2. To improve the mental health of the population of Orkney
3. To address the needs of the increasing number of people living with long-term conditions

A delivery plan for the Clinical Strategy is under development, with a six monthly-cycle of reporting agreed, and a quarterly reporting cycle in place for the Plan on a Page – with this strengthened reporting commencing August 2023, so there is clearer line of sight on how we're doing against our priorities and where we are on/off track and the actions we are taking where there has been insufficient progress.



2023/24 Plan on a Page

Chief Executive's Intent. The pressure on the NHS continues to grow, with few of the demands placed on the system in Orkney due to the pandemic abating.

As a whole system we need to focus our efforts in the year ahead (2023/24) on priority areas that allow staff to deliver the best care and services to our local community. We must, however, be suitably ambitious, yet realistic and pragmatic, recognising that due to our size and resource constraints, we cannot do everything. This plan on a page aims to summarise the priority areas and detail the associated actions that will support our Covid recovery efforts and progress our continuous improvement in the year ahead.

Action Plan. Each priority is underpinned by a set of actions at an organisational level. NHS Orkney is supportive of these priorities being taken forward and translated to local actions, including being built into personal objectives for staff as appropriate.

This Plan on a Page has been developed by the Senior Management Team and endorsed by the Area Partnership Forum.

Workforce

Workforce is at the heart of NHS Orkney and our local community. Now more than ever we face profound challenges, and we must take steps to retain the great staff we have through strengthened support and development options whilst attracting the best people to join us.

Action 1: Acknowledge the range of pressures our workforce face personally and professionally and maximise support for them through a range of actions.

Action 2: Invest in leadership and staff development.

Action 3: Use the Healthcare Staffing Act to enhance to shape our actions in relation to staffing.

Action 4: Support teams to review their roles, responsibilities and engage with others to promote shared learning and collaboration.

Action 5: Use the Workforce Plan to support succession planning.

Action 6 Explore how to strengthen our induction and orientation process.

Action 7: Build on learning from Covid, ensure wellbeing and resilience is central to our decision-making processes.



Culture

Improving our Culture is at the heart of how we continue to develop as an organisation. It will help us to secure the future that places the needs of those we care for central to how we act, by listening to our users, empowering staff to act, making decisions in a fair and open way, valuing high quality care and building a sustainable future.

Action 1: Using the key engagement forums such as Area Partnership Forum, agree how we will enhance communication internally (across) and outside our organisation.

Action 2: Ensure our Clinical Strategy informs our strategic decision-making process.

Action 3: Explore development opportunities for staff to support enhanced communication skills.

Action 4: Work to ensure governance work is visible and meaningful to staff.

Quality & Safety

Quality and Safety is critical to ensure we are delivering the best for those who need our care. Focusing on the experience of our patients and the outcomes they achieve will build confidence that we are delivering the highest quality care for our local community.

Action 1: Use latest guidance to ensure meaningful patient feedback mechanisms are in place which demonstrate that we listen, act and learn.

Action 2: Empower staff to make changes to improve care.

Action 3: Support staff to learn when things don't go as planned.

Action 4: Continue to embed the Serious Adverse Events and learning from incidents process.

Action 5: Explore where single points of failure exist what can practically be done to address these.

Action 6: Ensure learning from the HSE visit is acted on and risk management is firmly embedded with visible leadership present in all teams.

Systems & Governance

Systems and Governance supports everyone working in the organisation to know the way we work is aligned to our values, is fair and that decisions made will be consistent.

Action 1: Continue our focus on strengthening governance processes across NHS Orkney services.

Action 2: Empower staff to make decisions in a collaborative, open and transparent way.

Action 3: Learning from Covid remains a priority, ensuring we are mindful of the wider impact on health and wellbeing across our community.

Action 4: Services must not make patients suffer because we do not wish to change. We need to share information, collaborate and ensure an effective flow across organisational boundaries.

Action 5: Build on the communication successes to grow our impact.

Action 6: Strengthen training for leaders and managers to allow decision-making to take place at an appropriate level.

Sustainability

Sustainability has to be a goal that we strive for, not only environmentally but also financially and from a workforce perspective. NHS Orkney has profound challenges that will require consistent and multi-year efforts to achieve sustainability.

Action 1: Support the organisation to achieve a sustainable future by using the Clinical Strategy, Workforce Plan and Financial Sustainability Plans to inform and shape our decisions.

Action 2: Use Net Zero as a driver for change in our models of care.

Action 3: Continue the progress of the multi-year financial recovery plan by getting ownership across the organisation.

Barriers to achieving success

Notwithstanding the significant challenges the NHS and NHS Orkney faces, as we recover from the pandemic and reset our priorities and focus for the next chapter of our journey, it is clear to me that all too often we aren't helping ourselves.

Organisationally we are scoring some own goals presently, with many staff enjoying their jobs in spite of, not because of how we do things and how we set ourselves up, with too many over-complex systems and processes, making it challenging (and sometimes impossible) to 'get things done'.

The most common feedback I have heard to date is:

Culture

- A lack of kindness, compassion and respect for each other
- Little evidence of putting staff first by investing in staff development, prioritising staff health and wellbeing and valuing and recognising staff
- Engagement isn't always meaningful (we put action plans and tick boxes ahead of meaningful conversations and engagement)
- We are not a listening and learning organisation (there is much for us to do to ensure we are consistently learning from significant adverse events, near misses, incidents and complaints as well as patient and staff feedback)
- We all too often put finance first (that's how it feels) and need to get back to putting people, patient experience, safety and quality first, whilst recognising we have a duty to deliver our financial plan and associated recovery plan so that our focus is more rounded
- A culture where we are very good at 'diagnosing' and describing the problem, but slower to own problems and develop solutions to our problems
- Staff often give up – as they spend time sharing ideas, feedback, writing papers and business cases and rarely get a response (the loop doesn't get closed often enough)
- There is perceived inequity, with hybrid and home working arrangements causing resentment in the organisation and rules needing to be reset so that these arrangements are clear and fairly and equitably applied
- It is common that people wear multiple hats in the NHS, but in smaller Boards like NHS Orkney, staff wear many more hats and therefore currencies can get muddled. We need to understand when different hats are being worn so we have greater clarity and so that interests are not conflicted
- Linked to the above point, there is often a blurring of boundaries between personal and professional for staff because we are so small and because we are an island community. By focussing on the professional nature of our work this will give everyone a handrail to ensure these boundaries are kept in check and respected and will enable our patients, families and local community to be assured by professionalism at all times
- Lack of basic etiquette, courtesy and niceties, such as responding to emails in a timely way, saying thank you and saying hello to each other
- A culture of describing why things can't be done more often than describing 'what would it take?'
- Too many relationships at different levels of the organisation are broken and this is preventing us from moving forward as an organisation
- Linked to the above, there are opportunities to strengthen Multi-Disciplinary Team working

Leadership

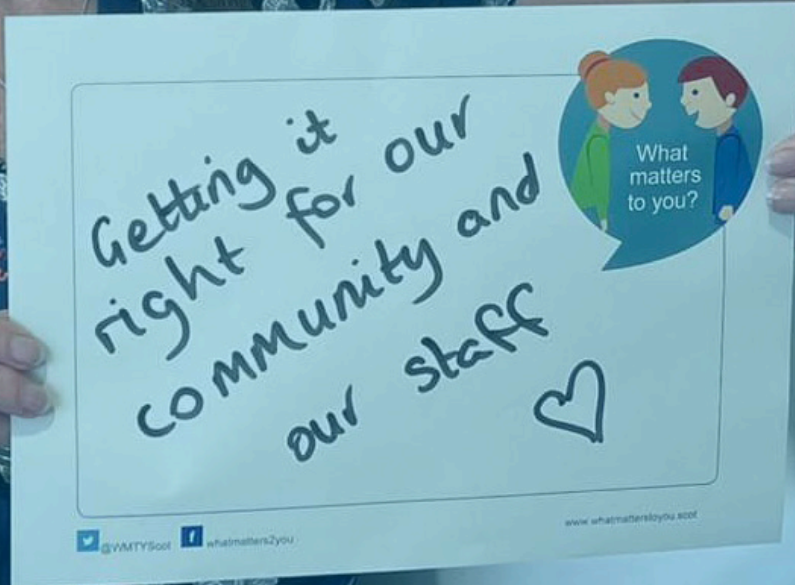
- Absence of visible and consistent leadership
- A lack of compassionate and kind leadership from senior leaders, who do not role model this behaviour consistently enough
- Stability is needed at the top of the organisation (and linked to this, the Executive Team aren't currently seen as a cohesive and unified team)
- The Health Board needs to do more to own its purpose and identity so that we are transparent and adding value to the system. Central to achieving this is ensuring we invest more time making the role of the Board easier for people to understand
- It isn't clear (1) how decision-making works at NHS Orkney or (2) where to go to get things done, to get support, or to know who's who from Executive level down (and who leads on what)
- There are too many occasions when decisions are made often without using evidence and data and by a single department/area which does not factor the wider picture or consequences, making it impossible to deliver. Furthermore, there are too many occasions where decisions are made and unpicked even though the rules are clear and then aren't followed
- Accountability and linked to this, ownership of issues
- Recruitment and retention
- There is a view that we are losing too many good people, and if we put people first more often this may be avoidable in some cases and we could retain more staff and benefit from their many years of experience
- We need to be ever more mindful that The Balfour is a place of work for some of our staff and isn't NHS Orkney in its entirety – with those working in the community and on the isles becoming increasingly frustrated at being ignored and seen as an afterthought. We need to therefore be more inclusive as an organisation and ensure we are not Balfour-centric even though many staff are based at The Balfour, and instead focus more of our efforts on getting our service models and models of care right so that most of our interactions with our community happen outside of The Balfour, with only those needing hospital care coming into this facility
- Succession planning needs to be taken seriously with an agreed approach, starting with the senior team and then cascading down the organisation, and we need to connect more with our community so that we encourage and grow our NHS Orkney workforce of the future

Getting back to basics so we can create a sustainable future

- Being clear what support and ‘the offer’ is from our Corporate Teams, including HR and Finance, to the organisation, so that support can be maximised and relationships between Corporate and Clinical Teams strengthened
- There is an absence of basics in place presently and therefore unstable foundations on which to build, with many examples being cited – from on-call arrangements to oversight of Service Level Agreements
- The need to upskill staff to support them in their day-to-day roles, e.g. with communication and leadership skills to set Team Orkney up to succeed at every opportunity
- Ensuring staff have Job Descriptions that are fit for purpose, reviewed regularly and updated in a timely manner
- Ensuring those with line management responsibilities are fulfilling this important role with: regular team meetings, regular 1-2-1s with line reports, appraisals, objective setting, supporting time to ensure mandatory training is in-date. Line managers should be sharing information as well as providing forums for direct reports to share feedback and ideas and setting personal development plans for team members so that we can support career aspirations and development, and importantly, hold managers to account for delivering on these basic aspects of their role

Having a clear direction and ambition for the future

- There is a strong appetite for change from staff
- Staff want clear direction and to know our ambition and strategy for the future and want to be part of shaping this
- Ensure moving forward we have a clear ambition for education, teaching and training, professional development and research at NHS Orkney recognising its criticality for ensuring we have a skilled workforce that is fit for the future and to becoming a learning organisation. There has been significant under-investment in this area and this will be essential to our success moving forward
- Moving into The Balfour should have been a positive experience and one which was a catalyst for changing how we work and how we deliver care through digitising and transformational work. Yet the pandemic has slowed progress, and there is now more of a negative connotation to The Balfour and a narrative about missed opportunities, lack of space and lack of engagement, rather than seeing this fantastic facility as an asset and opportunity to deliver outstanding and innovative care. Returning to how we move to new ways of working and models of care in our fantastic new build and state-of-the-art facility will be an area of focus that we will return to in the coming year and beyond
- Having a clear digital strategy which is understood by staff and driven by clinical teams, recognising there are lots of frustrations about technology and digital systems which are holding us back presently and systems that don’t talk to one another. Staff and clinical voices need to be at the heart of change moving forward so that changes are clinically-driven
- Linked to the above, there needs to be a recognition that some current arrangements are not fit for purpose, such as the open office, hot desk arrangements in our administration areas, which causes frustration, often making it impossible for people to do their jobs well given the environment in which they are working in is less optimal



Our response to overcoming our challenges

OVER-RIDING PRIORITY

Prioritising people, which means finding meaningful ways to reconnect with our patients, local community and our staff.



PRIORITY 1 -

To agree that culture, leadership, recruitment and retention, getting back to basics and having a clear direction and ambition for the future are the top priorities.

While these areas may seem obvious – if we don't give them the required focus and accept these are the highest priorities to remove the many barriers that our staff so often tell us get in the way and cause frustration, then we will not move forward. We must focus on both the 'what' and the 'how' we do things in equal measure. Accepting these as our main blockers to moving forward is the first step to addressing them.

Specific actions to address challenges:

- Once we agree these priority areas, we will not deviate from them (the plan is the plan)
- As part of the Plan on a Page we will have clear actions under each of these five areas that will drive improvements so that monitoring can take place
- This will include some actions out with the Plan on a Page – including: a development programme for the Executive Team and Senior Leadership Team, development of a new Corporate Strategy which will be launched in April 2024 and a new organisational culture programme
- Review of operational governance so that we can look below the new Senior Leadership Team to ensure consistent practice across our governance system, ensuring high quality and efficient services
- Taking a whole system approach to leading NHS Orkney rather than being Balfour-centric in what we do

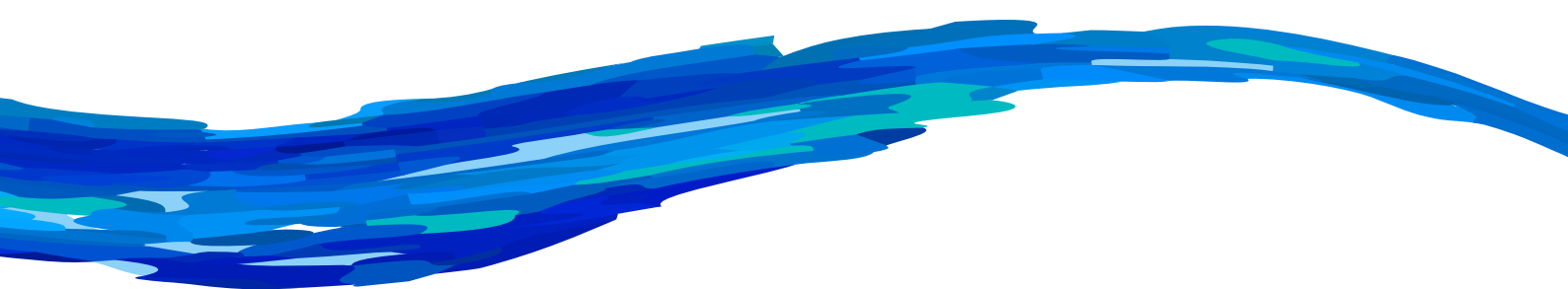
PRIORITY 2 -

Recognising this report must have synergy with other workplans, we must ensure there is alignment between the Plan on a Page for 2023/24, Annual Delivery Plan, Medium-Term Plan, the emerging long-term Corporate Strategy, the Board's Clinical Strategy and wider supporting workplans.

Joining up the dots and ensuring synergy between our various plans is critical. Moving forward and by April 2024, our new Corporate Strategy, which will include our vision and strategic objectives, will become our 'compass' underpinned by supporting annual plans spanning: clinical, people, estates, financial recovery and digital.

Specific actions to address challenges:

- New annual planning cycle which will commence in Quarter three of 2023/24
- Quarterly extended Senior Leadership Team sessions to focus on strategy and annual planning commencing October 2023
- New cycle of reporting progress versus Plan on a Page (quarterly reporting commencing August 2023 via Senior Leadership Team and the Health Board)
- Strategy, planning and performance to sit under the leadership of the Chief Executive, creating a strengthened and unified planning function
- Annual delivery plans for all underpinning plans – clinical, estates, people, financial recovery and digital and regular reporting to the Senior Leadership Team on progress on each



PRIORITY 3 -

To (1) invest in the development and upskilling of Team Orkney as a priority so we can ensure working here is a fulfilling and rewarding experience, so we can grow our own and so people who choose NHS Orkney feel able to reach their true potential and (2) put in place the building blocks that will support the creation of a safety-first, learning and continuous improvement culture

Specific actions to address challenges:

- To create a single Improvement Team/function by no later than 1 April 2024
- To ensure staff are encouraged to lead change and submit ideas for improvement and there are mechanisms to take these forward, which includes feeding back to people, and sharing good practice, learning and ideas more widely across the organisation
- To introduce Quality Improvement (QI) training for staff and develop organisational QI resource and capability
- To be clear on the offer of training for staff spanning: leadership, communication skills, QI and budget management
- To introduce a new managers' induction for new and existing managers in April 2024 so that we make it clear what is expected of line managers at NHS Orkney
- Grow our own plans as part of our recruitment strategy, including a strong focus on apprenticeships and work experience for local young people

- Succession planning to commence with the Executive Team and Senior Leadership Team, followed by wider discussions across the organisation so that there is a consistent approach
- To make learning, education and research and associated governance an explicit priority and begin to create the necessary conditions and environment in which such a culture can flourish

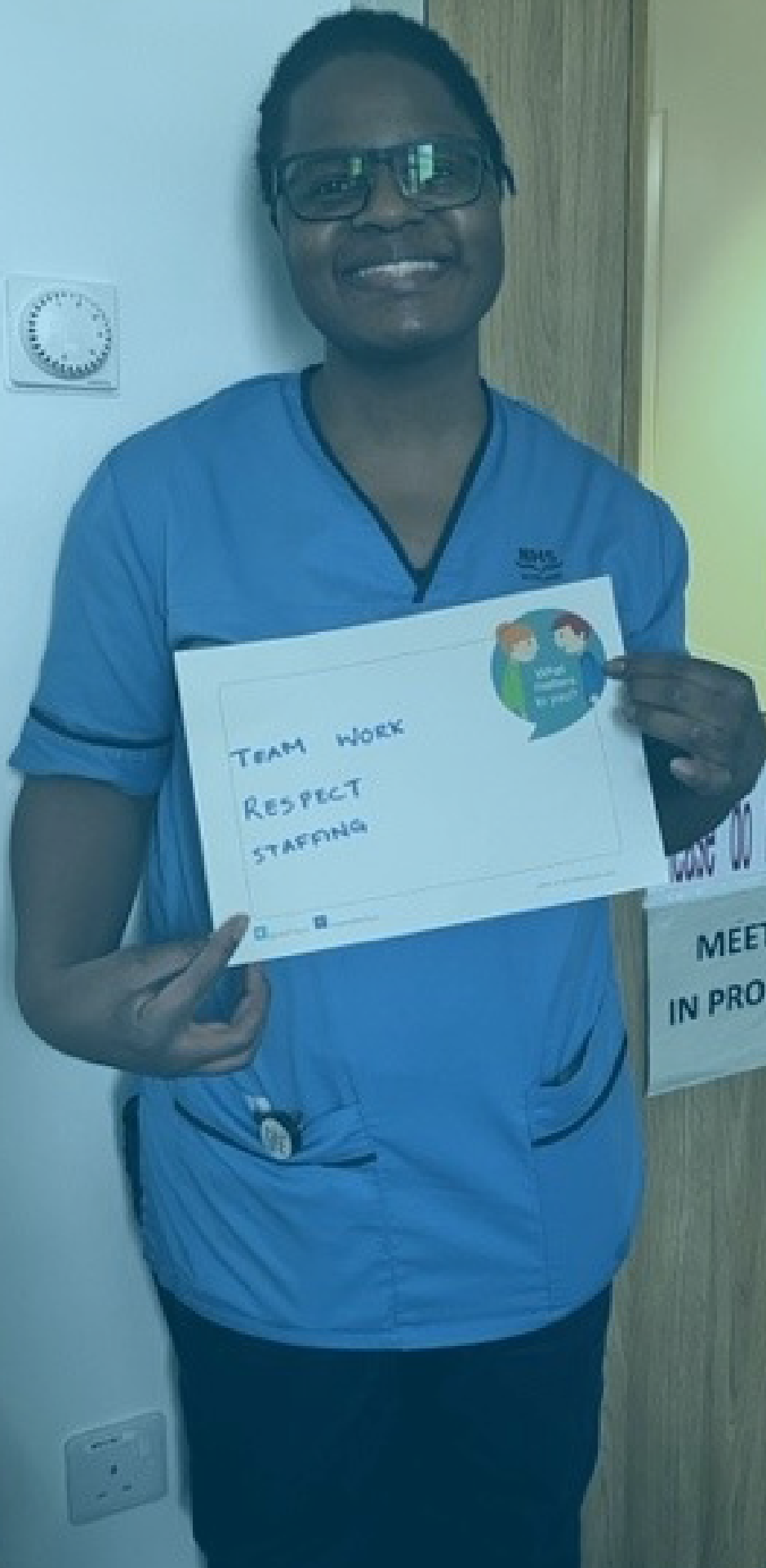
It should be highlighted that in my first 12-weeks in post two changes have already been made in response to staff feedback, notably:

- Decision-making – staff asked for quicker decision-making and clarity on how decisions are made and more clinically-driven and evidence and data-based decision-making to be in place
- Knowing who's who in the organisation, where to go for support and who leads on what

With effect from 1 July 2023 two changes came into place:

1. Refreshed Executive Team portfolios
2. A new approach for the Executive Management Team (EMT) and Senior Management Team (SMT)

EMT no longer exists in its previous form and ceased being a formal decision-making forum at the end of June 2023. Instead, an informal weekly meeting with the CEO and Executive Team, called the Corporate Leadership Team now takes place. SMT has been renamed Senior Leadership Team (SLT) with a new core membership which ensures clinically-led decisions in the organisation, meeting every two weeks with this core membership so that timely decisions can be made. SLT reports directly to the Board and its purpose is to oversee the day-to-day management of an effective system of integrated governance, risk management and internal control across the whole organisation's activities, which support the achievement and delivery of our overarching objectives. It is a key forum for holding teams and colleagues to account for the delivery of plans and operational performance.



TEAM WORK
RESPECT
STAFFING

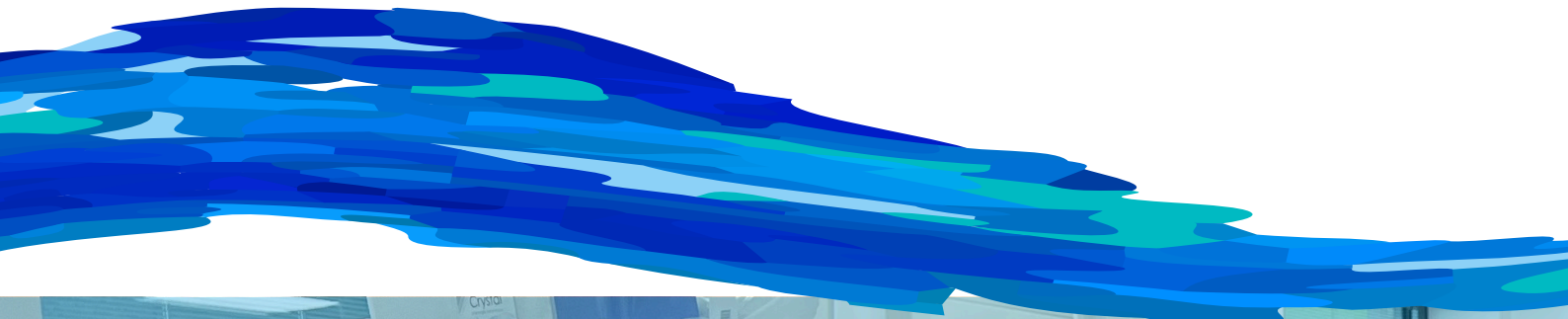


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MEETING
IN PROGRESS

Implementation

An appropriate governance process will be put in place to track progress. This will use existing reporting and monitoring systems, including through Board Committees and the Senior Leadership Team.



Summary and next steps

1. Establish the monitoring approach and frequency through existing governance arrangements
2. Following the introduction of a newly-formed Senior Leadership Team which began meeting in July 2023, a review of operational governance will commence so that staff voices are heard and drive decision-making at all levels of the organisation
3. Ensuring join-up with wider workplans – including clinical, people, financial recovery, digital and estates and our new Corporate Strategy which will be developed following engagement later in 2023/24
4. Create a clear implementation plan which captures the key actions linked to this 100-day plan for oversight, monitoring and assurance re: delivery
5. With the development of a new long-term Corporate Strategy (internal and external engagement will commence Autumn 2023), to ensure there is a single clear annual workplan setting out what will be taken forward each year and deliverables by quarter



Appendices



Appendix 1 – A view from our Chair

I became Board Chair on 1 March 2020 and have often reflected that the NHS in Scotland, and Orkney, has felt like being in a tumble dryer ever since. It has been clear to me, in the conversations I have had with people, that what is so desperately needed is stability and clarity at every level of the organisation.

When the Board embarked on the recruitment exercise for a Chief Executive we flung the net far and wide in the hope that NHS Orkney would attract someone that understands us, as an organisation and community because we are so closely connected.

Laura was impressive from the very first conversation we had, and what was equally impressive was that she spoke with people throughout our system including Orkney Islands Council, other Executives, and Scottish Government colleagues to learn more. That's one of the things that comes across in Laura's approach: she is hungry to learn as much as she can about NHS Orkney, so she can lead effectively.

It has been a privilege to watch Laura step into the organisation and go about listening and learning and valuing all the pockets of difference and practice that make us who we are. I am also struck by how evident her listening and learning is in the report she's produced.

The challenge for all of us is to follow through with these brave and necessary reflections. This report, and its recommendations are an opportunity for us to do things differently by truly being a learning organisation that values its staff and its community. This means hearing messages that are difficult, it means challenging one another to behave differently, and it also means we need to be kind in all our interactions with one another.

It has been immensely powerful to see the hope and joy come back into people's expressions as Laura has delivered on her promises. Now we have to make them our promises, because no one can operate in isolation and it will take all of us working together to change things for the better.

I want to first of all thank Laura for coming to the organisation and for producing such a necessary and brave report. She has listened to so many people including teams throughout the organisation, patients, and partners. I would also like to thank those of you who have shared your stories with her. I don't underestimate how much bravery it takes.

I am committed to doing all I can to ensure we honour those stories by following through on this report's recommendations.

Meghan McEwen, Chair

Appendix 2 – Commitment to change from our Executive Team

Stephen Brown, Chief Officer, said:



“I will be surprised if anyone in the organisation reads Laura’s 100-day report and does not recognise many of the themes she has identified. For a small organisation we have found ways of over-complicating and confusing things. We have conspired to stymie good ideas and innovation and we have not been good enough at ensuring everyone has the tools they need to do the job that they are asked to do.

This is in no way a reflection on any one individual but, instead, has evolved over many years and made worse by a very high turnover in key leadership posts.

“There have also been occasions where poor behaviour, including at a very senior level, has fallen short of what we should all expect. If we are to make NHS Orkney a great place to work, then we all have a part to play in calling out such behaviour. We need to work towards making NHS Orkney a caring, kind and compassionate place to work whilst creating an environment that allows for appropriate challenge and accountability.”

“We need to work together to create the best future possible for our community.”

Monique Sterrenburg, Interim Deputy Medical Director, said:



“In this comprehensive 100-day report Laura is truly capturing the significance of reconnecting and supporting people placing patients, staff, and community as equally important groups that will be the centre of attention.

Upon joining NHS-Orkney Laura immediately started engaging with a number of people from each group, listening closely to their suggestions and feedback. Key themes that emerged from this

engagement quickly came to the fore and Laura has already managed to implement and develop some changes, especially in the structure of the trust, with other essential items being prioritised so they can be addressed quickly in due course.

In the report Laura has also shown a robust determination to focus on creating teams with strong and compassionate leadership, and where ownership and accountability are integral to solving problems, but in a collaborative and supportive environment. A rural setting such as that on Orkney can truly flourish with supported out-of-the box thinking, and Laura has shown a desire and commitment to make this happen.

Throughout the report there is a strong theme of creating a positive culture, at the trust, where people will be proud to work and patients will feel welcome, safe, and confident that they will receive the appropriate care and treatment.

Finally, the importance of omnidirectional communication and improving transparency is emphasised. This will serve to extinguish a siloed way of working, resulting in improved understanding and engagement of all staff, both internal and external to the hospital, making for a truly exceptional Team Orkney.”

Sam Thomas, Director of Nursing, Midwifery, AHPs and Acute Services, said:

“We all recognise the themes outlined by Laura. Identification of key priorities and engaging all staff across the system through truly integrated collaborative approaches will enable us to have the needed courageous conversations over the coming months as we strive to create a diverse, nurturing, caring and compassionate health and social care system which meets the needs of Orkney.”



Louise Wilson, Director of Public Health, said:

“Having had the privilege of working in Orkney for well over a decade I have seen those working in, and with, NHS Orkney rise to a range of challenges over the years. I have never failed to be impressed by the dedication and ingenuity shown by so many staff, and their underlying commitment to protecting and improving the health of our local community. For me this was most recently demonstrated in our response to COVID-19.



“As we face new challenges, both global and local, having this clear shared understanding of our priorities and a focus on people will be a real benefit for us as an organisation, for staff, patients and the wider community. I also welcome the increased focus on clinically-driven decision-making. We need to work together to create the best future possible for our community.”

Mark Doyle, Director of Finance, said:



“Having worked for the NHS for over 20 years in various leadership roles, I have gone through many significant periods of change and the updates and reflections shared in Laura’s 100-day report are very familiar to past experiences. What is most important over the next periods - short, medium and long-term is how we as senior leaders and an organisation use this information to build on what many staff would already consider to be a

great place to work and take the learning from those that have not felt this was their lived experience and how we bring this together.

“I have observed and worked with many outstanding individuals and teams from all over NHS Orkney over a number of years and I know that we absolutely have the ability and determination as an organisation to take any actions and learning forward.”

“I have been impressed with so many colleagues and have been fortunate in having a great team, going that extra mile.”

Appendix 2 – Commitment to change from our Executive Team

Sara Lewis, Acting Director of Public Health, said:

"I welcome Laura's 100-day report. It outlines the difficulties to be overcome to work as one team that recognises the contribution everyone needs to make to deliver compassionate care for our community. The pandemic has highlighted and, in many cases, exacerbated the scale of the challenge we face as a small system working to meet the increasing demands of our community during very difficult times. We need to care for each other whilst we strive to care for our community and work to become a service that puts the wellbeing of everyone at the front and centre of all we do."



Lorraine Hall, Interim Director of HR, said:

"The 100-day plan pulls together a number of themes that will resonate for many of us. In that recognition we need to acknowledge our history for what it was, and if wasn't what we had hoped then let us shift our focus and energy on where we are going and collectively take responsibility for how we will get there. Leadership is only part of our future. We need to be bold and not stick to our traditional silos; we need to be curious, we need celebrate more of the little wins as each little win builds into something big and powerful and when it hasn't gone as well as it could we not only need to learn but to implement our learnings. We not only need to be kind and considered, in some instances we need to forgive. In my three years supporting NHS Orkney, I have been impressed with so many colleagues and have been fortunate in having a great team, going that extra mile. There is a choice in how we act so if we are truly to be Team Orkney then let us live up to our values."

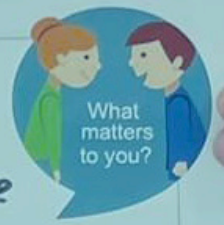




"We have conspired to stymie good ideas and innovation and we have not been good enough at ensuring everyone has the tools they need to do the job that they are asked to do."



- Sustainable care
- Realistic healthcare
- Being compassionate

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Appendix 3 – Contributions from wider members of Team Orkney and our leadership community

Moira Sinclair, Clinical Nurse Manager, said:

“For me the culture shift is palpable. It feels like we are in a very different place to where we were a few months ago. It’s refreshing to feel listened to, communication channels improved and to see things actioned. We can and should be a centre of excellence for remote and rural healthcare and owe this to our patients and staff. This now feels achievable, the future feels exciting and full of opportunities.”

Morven Gemmill, Lead Allied Health Professional, for NHS Orkney, said:

“There is a palpable sense of the focus on people at the heart of NHS Orkney being valued regardless of job title. There is a sense of a refocus on people who rely on NHS Orkney at the best and worst times, from birth to end of life.

“I see a tangible change in the corporate construct and architecture and the business of NHS Orkney is being clearly articulated but most importantly clearly communicated.

“There is a significant shift to not just passively “hearing” the clinical voice but engaging and enabling clinicians and care teams to flourish under the leadership of the clinical Executives.

“I am optimistic about the future of NHS Orkney and the future of the Orkney Health and Care Partnership.”

Anthony McDavitt, Director of Pharmacy – NHS Orkney & NHS Shetland, Controlled Drugs Accountable Officer, said:

“Socrates captured where we find ourselves well those few millennia ago: “The secret of change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new.”

“I feel that in NHS Orkney, we’re in a renewal phase after some challenging years, laying the groundwork necessary for positive changes. People are working on making our operations more efficient and clarifying our main objectives recognising the challenges. As we all go forward, it’s crucial to align our organisation’s structures with our strategic priorities. There’s a renewed energy in getting back to our basic principles, values and sharing an understanding with each other. Focusing on improving these fundamentals is key to our progress, as we are gradually developing with our medicine’s governance approach. Our approach will strengthen our teams and pathways, aiming to empower teams and enabling them to provide consistently high-quality service to our communities. Our collective actions go beyond just planning - they reflect a renewed commitment to the community - intentionally working towards the future we’re trying to create.

“From recent discussions, it’s evident that our focus on key areas - our culture, leadership, retention of our people, recruiting the best possible, and having clear direction - is paving the way for a more stable and efficient service delivery. We’re going through this phase of renewal with a collective understanding of our direction and where we’ve been, leading us towards a more stable and sustainable future. We should continue to test new approaches, and champion suggestions from teams on improving outcomes for people and the experience of work for staff. It’s important for us to remain open, kind and curious in these spaces, paying attention to our own behaviours, those of others and relationships we all need between each other for us to be successful.”

Malcolm Colquhoun, Head of Estates, Facilities & NPD Contract, said:

1. What I feel is different in recent months – the atmosphere across the workplace has improved significantly. Communication, not just what is said, but the way it is said – compassionately and respectfully, has had a huge positive impact in a very short space of time. We are quite clearly being led from the front, by a leader who knows where she wants to take us. The culture at NHS Orkney is now being influenced and challenged in a positive way by openness and honesty and the gradual removal of uncertainty, which has led to (in some cases) fear being a driver for far too long. The communications and interactions within the workplace that I have witnessed, and am part of, has improved way beyond what I would have imagined possible in such a short space of time. In summary, NHS Orkney is now a much nicer place to work.

2. What we now need to focus on – first and foremost we need to focus on people. We need to invest and create a workforce that is fit for purpose, that is engaged, that feels respected and valued. We need to review the sustainability of our services and invest time in the right places and move away from a financially driven and focussed culture. We need to build on our partnership arrangements and review our performance as a matter of urgency across the whole organisation. We need to review NHS Orkney's appetite to risk – we are process driven, tick-box and this is contributing significantly to our financial challenges and creating a culture of "nothing gets done" we don't change, we stay the same, spending more money complying with process that contributes very little to the organisations overall outcomes.

3. How I feel about the future – I feel excited! The creation of the new Senior Leadership Team which is dominated by clinical people is inspirational and it is a very clear indication that the future is going to be very much about healthcare and patients, for far too long NHS Orkney has done everything and anything before it does the correct thing. The empowerment of clinical people is very long overdue by NHS Orkney. It is clear that many of our challenges are not going to go away overnight however I feel that we have a Chief Executive who is going to listen and involve all staff groups, and will embrace innovation and give people the opportunity to contribute to a future that is sustainable.

Maureen Swannie, Head of Strategic Planning and Performance/Interim Head of Children, Families and Justice Services, Orkney Health and Social Care Partnership, said:

"The sense of belonging and feeling included is starting to widen again, through the hugely increased communication, the sense of openness and an encouragement to speak up. Messages are delivered with kindness and in a way that helps each of us to understand where we fit and what our part in this is.

"I am optimistic that Laura's overriding observations, and the action taken to drive towards achieving those, will help to magnetise NHS Orkney - in keeping existing staff and in drawing others to come and be part of our family, or Team Orkney.

"I think we need to focus on values, ownership and professional responsibility. I think we need some short, sharp targets and longer-term aims. I want NHS Orkney to be bragged about, for our young people to choose to stay here and make careers out of health and care and for our community to blow the NHS Orkney trumpet with and for us. I also want equal opportunities for all staff and for people not to be slotted into posts without due process (again, this relates back to values)."

Nancy Faulkner, Senior Charge Nurse, Theatres and Day Unit, said:

"What has felt different in the last three months is a new positivity amongst staff about the future of NHS Orkney, and a Senior Leadership Team which is becoming more visible and more 'hands-on'. I think we now need to focus more on recruitment and retention of staff, but I am optimistic about the future for NHS Orkney. It feels as though the things which were already great about NHS Orkney are now being allowed to shine."

Jacqui Hirst, Interim Service Manager - Children's Health Services, said:

"Since Laura has taken up role as Chief Executive of NHS Orkney, there has been a renewed focus on the culture within our organisation. I admire her ability to challenge the status quo in a really compassionate way which you can't be offended by! I have experience of her listening well to staff and getting back to them on points they raise. She leads by example, and she communicates effectively in a range of mediums. This is well received by staff. There is a new sense of honest conversations and following up on planned actions. Laura sets out clear expectations of her senior leadership team and I am sure she will hold us to account."

Julie Tait, Patient Experience Officer, said:

"The last few months have been unsettling, but... not in a negative way. More from optimistic anticipation! A hope that every member of staff will feel valued for what they do which will then have a direct impact on how we do our work. A more positive workplace should result in better engagement from staff but more importantly have a direct impact for our patients. Going forward, what we need to see is action! Talk is good, doing is better! For me, I'd like to see person-centred care becoming the focus for everyone, no matter what role we play. "What matters to you" asked of all our patients (and staff) and for this to be listened to and learned from. There are amazing people here at NHS Orkney doing amazing things. With a valued workforce, an improved work-life experience will benefit all of us, especially the people we are here for, our patients."

Carl Savage, IT Desktop Lead, said:

"It has become clear to me over the last few months that visibility and engagement have improved across the organisation, colleagues seem much more approachable and visible with improved meeting attendance and a willingness to engage across departments. I hope that we carry on this path, and we all improve our personal and departmental accountability with a focus on inter-department co-operation. It feels to me that here at NHS Orkney we have a lot to be proud of, we care first and foremost for our patients and loved ones and I believe we can do great things together."

Gordon Jones, Chaplain and Spiritual Care Lead, said:

"The culture of management and accountability really seems to be improving. Priorities and right attitudes are being clearly defined. It is good to have a Chief Executive who is approachable, genuinely listens, is collaborative, and who models respectful interaction. I feel that my professional opinion is valued. I and colleagues I have spoken with are hopeful that the positive change that has begun will continue, and enable us to deliver to the best of our ability the thing that we got into healthcare to do: caring for people. Going forward, it would be good to focus on how best to translate our values into positive, real-world change. That means finding a way to end what has often felt like endless firefighting. It will always be helpful to improve the quality and reduce the quantity of comms, emails, and so on. Paperwork and process will always be necessary but should never detract from a person-centred focus. Staff wellbeing needs to be meaningfully and effectively supported by ensuring adequate staffing levels, fostering an ever more collegiate atmosphere, and by embedding regular opportunities for teams and individuals to utilise restorative facilitated values-based reflection on practice."

Liam McArthur, MSP, Liberal Democrat, Orkney, said:

“In the short time Laura has been in post, I have been impressed by Laura’s strong commitment to good communications. Her willingness to respond quickly to issues raised and to keep stakeholders updated on developments, often ahead of time, is very helpful. “Laura also appears to attach great importance to meeting with and listening to staff across NHS Orkney. In an organisation of this size, that is critical and can only help as NHS Orkney looks to meet the significant challenges it faces now and into the future.”

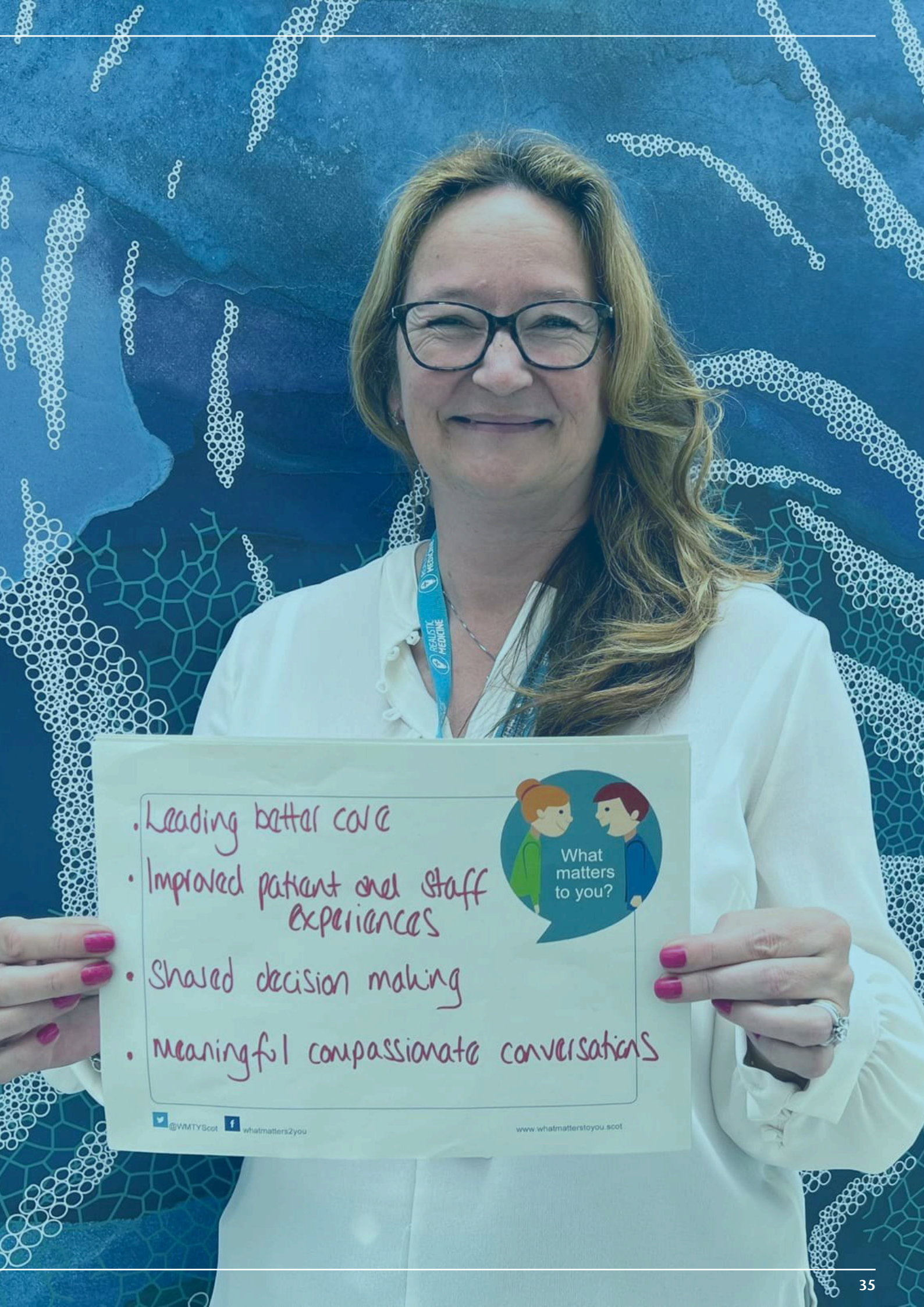
“I think we need to focus on values, ownership and professional responsibility. I think we need some short, sharp targets and longer-term aims.”

Appendix 4 – Commitment needed from Team Orkney

Moving NHS Orkney forward is a team sport. We need every member of Team Orkney to be up for this, to sign up to the direction of travel and ambition and to play their part.



Part of my ask here is that staff will:

- Continue to share feedback so that we can celebrate our position progress and have honest conversations about where we need to improve and change things
- Focusing on the small things, which often matter most – including, saying ‘thank you’
- Ensure we don’t tolerate poor behaviours and challenge when we see or experience that are not in line with our values



- Leading better care
- Improved patient and staff experiences
- Shared decision making
- meaningful compassionate conversations



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