



Daily update
(10 September 2026, 6.05pm)

Letter issued on behalf of Interim Chief Executive of NHS Scotland & Director General for Health and Social Care, Christine McLaughlin to all NHS staff

Full Q&A [here](#)

Dear colleagues,

Last week the Scottish Government published its Programme for Government, setting out priorities for improving health and social care services and ensuring they are sustainable, responsive and effective for future generations.

You will have already heard about the intention to move from the current 14 territorial NHS Boards to two strategic territorial Boards, covering the east and west of Scotland, as well as simplifying the special board structure. I know many of you will have questions about this and how it impacts you and your work.

This modernisation is ultimately about ensuring that we can support you to provide the best possible care to the patients of NHS Scotland. It will mean you and your colleagues can plan and deliver services more dynamically and in different ways that the current structure is not set up for. We can share resources across boundaries and cut out the duplication across the system we have all seen happen in the past. It will build on the important work that boards have already been doing via sub-national planning structures.

For patients, this will mean less variation in how and where services are delivered, access to a single waiting list for each specialty and faster access to the most appropriate team or service, rather than care being determined by smaller organisational or geographic boundaries. For staff, we are keen this leads to clearer pathways, a 'Once for Scotland' approach to reward and recognition, and greater opportunities to collaborate, train and work across a connected NHS Scotland.

These changes will take time and will be designed carefully with you, the workforce, and trade unions. There will be no immediate change to individual staff roles, and for most NHS staff the principal change will be the transfer of employment from your current Board to one of the new NHS Boards.

As the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Care set out in her letter to trade unions on 3 September, we will work with trade unions as key delivery partners at every stage of this ambitious and transformative journey. Together, we will work to create a system that fully values our workforce and helps people stay healthy, independent and connected to their

communities for as long as possible. This is alongside ensuring access to high-quality treatment, care and support when it is needed.

The First Minister has also reaffirmed our commitment to the principles of Fair Work as well as committing to our policy on no compulsory redundancies. I hope this will provide reassurance to you.

The aim is not to create fewer organisations for its own sake. It is to provide fairer access to consistent, high-quality services in a more joined-up NHS that gives staff better tools and support, reduces unnecessary barriers and enables teams to focus more of their time and expertise on patient care.

I want to ensure we work closely together to improve our NHS, making it sustainable for future generations and making it a better place for you to work. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely
Christine McLaughlin



Interim Chief Executive of NHS Scotland & Director General for Health and Social Care

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