



Message from Jane Grant, Chief Executive
(31 March 2023, 3.55pm)

Each year, as colleagues will be aware, the organisation agrees its key objectives to be delivered over the next 12 months. Within NHSGGC these objectives are focused on advancing our overall aims of better health, better care, better value and better workplace.

As we end one financial year and start on the next, I wanted to pause to reflect on all that has been accomplished over the past 12 months in what has continued to be a challenging year.

Under the aim of **Better Health**, we aim to improve the health and wellbeing of our population. Regrettably COVID remains with us – and indeed in recent weeks we have seen an increase in community prevalence and people in hospital with the virus - but the outstanding success of the vaccination programme has given the population good protection against COVID and seen mortality rates reduce. Other important public health measures also taken forward this year included a focus on child health and the development of child poverty action plans, schemes to support patients deal with the high cost of living and fuel poverty and action to tackle drugs deaths, such as issuing of thousands of take home Naloxone kits. All screening programmes have also now fully remobilised and are being offered to our population.

The aim of **Better Care** seeks to improve the individual experience of care. High levels of bed occupancy have been a constant challenge this year, driven by a range of factors including delayed discharges, patients requiring longer lengths of stay and temporary wards closures to comply with strict infection control procedures. Within this context, the whole system - acute, community and primary care teams - have worked resolutely to meet the urgent and emergency care needs of our patients. New approaches have been developed to support patients to remain out of hospital where appropriate, including the expansion and embedding of our Flow Navigation Centre, the Home First programme for frail patients and our Outpatient Parenteral Antibiotic Therapy service. Flow through our hospitals has also been a

key focus, with the introduction of the continuous flow model in all our adult hospitals and a focus on discharging patients earlier in the day.

Planned care was significantly disrupted by the pandemic but here too we have seen the green shoots of recovery this year. NHSGGC was one of only three Health Boards to achieve the target of having no outpatients waiting more than two years by August 2022. By December 2022 we had also met the revised target of no more than 1,200 outpatients waiting more than 78 weeks. At the end of December 2022, the agreed target of 1,650 patients due to receive treatment waiting more than 104 weeks was also achieved with 1,626 remaining, despite the impact of significant unscheduled care pressures. Whilst it needs to be recognised that waiting times are not where we would want them to be, there has been significant progress by colleagues to address the longest waits, whilst also continuing to prioritise emergency, urgent, trauma and cancer care.

Good progress has also been made in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and Psychological Therapies where there has been a significant focus on improving waiting times for patients with positive results. This is against a backdrop of increasing demand on these services. At the latest Board meeting it was noted that approximately 95% of patients referred to CAMHS patients were seen within 18 weeks of referral with 89.5% of patients being seen within the target time for Psychological Therapies.

Of course, our aim of Better Care also involves the continuous improvement of the quality of care and engaging with patients to ensure that healthcare needs their needs. Last year, there was a drive right across the organisation to listen to patients and the public and to encourage feedback. Each year, this activity is captured in an annual report and I look forward to seeing the next report which is due out in June.

Under the banner of **Better Value**, we require to achieve financial sustainability through the delivery of efficient services, supported by innovation and digital approaches. This year, NHSGGC has successfully managed a very challenging financial position and we are currently forecasting that at the end of the year we will report a balanced position in our budget.

Despite this achievement, 2023/24 is set to be another demanding year financially and we will all need to work together to identify efficient and new ways of working and opportunities to reduce spend. We are working closely with the six Health and Social Care Partnerships to ensure a common understanding of the financial position.

Innovation and digital technology play a key role in helping us to reform service delivery and reduce costs. This year saw notable progress in the roll out of technology solutions including the implementation of a new system to replace paper prescribing and medication administration (HEPMA), across more than 350 wards and theatres, increased adoption of electronic patient health and care

records and the development of remote patient monitoring. The Board's 2023-28 Digital Strategy, Digital on Demand, was also approved this year. The West of Scotland Innovation Hub, based in NHSGGC, continues to test, develop and launch a range of exciting and transformational initiatives, a number of which are now being scaled up and adopted by other Boards. Likewise, our estates and sustainability colleagues are using new technologies in our drive to reduce our carbon footprint, including use of low carbon heat and energy sources and alternative fuelled vehicles.

Our fourth aim of **Better Workplace** sets out our priorities for creating a great place to work. Three years on from the start of the pandemic, we recognise the toll this has taken on staff and so a key priority this year has been on supporting staff health and wellbeing. Through the Staff Health Survey that was carried out this year, we identified a number of areas for action around mental health. Our teams have put in place a number of preventative interventions and a range of services to support staff, including Occupational Health Counselling and psychological therapies and a peer support framework. Other achievements this year include the development of a Recruitment and Attraction Plan to support our efforts to recruit new staff and a new Internal Communications and Employee Engagement Strategy to further develop effective staff engagement. We have also continued to work towards achieving accreditation through Investors in People.

Of course, these achievements do not reflect all the excellent work being done by our teams but I hope they give a sense of the progress that we have made in many areas. Every day in NHSGGC, there are countless examples of compassionate high quality care, of staff introducing new and improved approaches and of colleagues going the extra mile for one another. I want to thank every one of you for all your hard work and for continuing to deliver for our patients.

Thank you.

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