

Core brief

**Message from Jane Grant, Chief Executive
(10 September 2021, 2.45pm)**

Further to my message to staff earlier this week, I made a commitment to keep you informed of any developments and action being taken to further reduce pressures in our healthcare system.

We understand how challenging it is for our staff and we are doing all we can to provide support to you all at this time. We know it remains a difficult set of circumstances, we very much recognise how hard everyone is working and we are enormously grateful for the commitment shown by our staff.

The Strategic Executive Group have been very focussed on making necessary changes rapidly to support staff to respond to the current challenges. We have been able to reassign non-clinical staff to support frontline operations and we are starting to see some positive changes as a result, but the team is also taking further measures to ensure we have additional support in the areas of greatest need.

We have taken steps to bring on board 600 newly qualified nurses ahead of schedule, with 150 already in post. All will start with us fully as soon as their registration is processed, but so far 150 have also agreed to join us early into Band Four positions, to provide key support to our services, for which we are very grateful.

We have also undertaken targeted redeployment of medical staff as well as seeking support from clinical academics. We are actively recruiting additional healthcare support workers and taking steps to build our resources in the staff bank. Each of these activities, when enacted together, should help to make an important difference to how we are working and help to reduce the pressures faced by our teams across our sites.

One of our newly qualified nurses is Beth Irvine (pictured). Beth is a Staff Nurse in one of the orthopaedic trauma wards and I understand she is very much looking forward to joining a supportive team within the ward environment as well as joining NHSGGC at such a challenging time. I would like to welcome all of our new recruits, particularly those like Beth who are newly qualified and ready to take their first career steps.

In addition, I am encouraged by a joint letter from Professor Stewart Irvine, Medical Director and Deputy CEO of NHS Scotland and Dr Ian Hunter, Chair of NHSS Directors of Medical Education, which was sent to all Health Boards earlier this week and notes their support for the redeployment of medical staff along with other staff groups due to the unprecedented situation we face. It is important that we have this flexibility in the system so that we can swiftly focus our attention on the areas which need it most.

Maintaining a training focus is essential as we actively optimise working arrangements to support learning where possible. As such, we welcome the support of the medical students returning to their studies and appreciate their valuable skills within the healthcare system.

We are also reviewing our social distancing requirements in order to ensure that staff have sufficient support to carry out their individual roles within the current guidelines. I recognise that for many adherence to the

guidelines has been difficult and that staff have been committed to doing all you can to fulfil your tasks within these parameters. As you will be aware, in Health and Social Care settings, we will continue to operate the two metre physical distancing guidelines wherever possible and we will continue to ask staff to wear a face covering. Should there be any changes to current physical distancing guidelines, these will only be implemented once a robust risk assessment has been undertaken. This will be carried out in partnership with staff and any outcomes will be communicated locally.

If you have symptoms of COVID-19, please stay at home, book a PCR test and self-isolate.

Finally, I would like to thank all of our staff for the efforts you are all making to support your patients and each other at this difficult time. Thank you.