

**From:** NHS GGC, General Notification  
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NHSGGC - Official



## **April 2026**

### **Topics in this Newsletter:**

- GRI recognised as highest-ranked hospital in Scotland
- Building Skills, Confidence and Careers: DFN Project Search at GRI
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### **GRI recognised as highest-ranked hospital in Scotland**



Two NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde hospitals have once again been recognised in Newsweek's annual *World's Best Hospitals* league table, with GRI and the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital (QEUH) both named among the UK's top hospitals.

GRI is ranked **15th in the UK**, making it the **highest-ranked hospital in Scotland**, while the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital is ranked third in Scotland.

Newsweek's World's Best Hospitals rankings recognise leading hospitals across 28 countries, drawing on a range of indicators including patient outcomes, quality of care, access to health services, research, innovation and overall consistency of performance. The rankings assess more than 2,000 hospitals worldwide, including specialist centres.

**Neil McCallum, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde's North Sector Director, said:** "It is extremely positive to see Glasgow Royal Infirmary ranked among the very best hospitals in the UK and recognised as the highest ranked hospital in Scotland.

"This recognition reflects the continued commitment, professionalism and dedication of our staff, who work tirelessly to deliver high quality care for patients day in, day out.

"GRI is a hospital with a proud history, and this ranking reinforces its ongoing

role as a leading centre for care, teaching and innovation.”

The full list of the UK and global rankings is available on the Newsweek website: [World's Best Hospitals 2026 | Statista Rankings](#)

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## **Building Skills, Confidence and Careers: DFN Project Search at GRI**



DFN Project Search at Glasgow Royal Infirmary (GRI) continues to transform opportunities for young people aged 18–29 with learning disabilities and autistic spectrum conditions, offering full-time, immersive work experience within a real

hospital environment.

NHSGGC provides a base for the programme inside GRI, enabling participants to be fully embedded in day-to-day hospital life.

**Angie Black, Service Manager at Glasgow Supported Employment Service for Glasgow City HSCP**, describes it as: “DFN is a specially designed full time work experience programme for young people (18–29 years) with learning disabilities and/or autistic spectrum conditions who want paid employment,” with NHSGGC acting as the host business while job coaches from Glasgow City HSCP and a lecturer from Glasgow Clyde College provide daily on site support.

Participants spend their days immersed in real operational areas across the hospital, rather than in a traditional classroom setting.

“The course is different from a typical college course because it is based full time within a real working environment,” she added. “This helps participants pick up relevant work related skills but also become aware of a lot of the unwritten rules about being part of the workforce.”

Interns begin each morning at the Project Search base before heading into their placements, returning at 3pm for employability skills sessions focused on job searching, applications and workplace literacy.

This full time routine helps young people build stamina, resilience and confidence, with families actively involved. “Everyone is pulling in the same direction for each individual participant,” said Angie.

The programme has now expanded into Inverclyde, increasing opportunities for young people across the wider region. This matters because, as Angie notes, “people with learning disabilities remain one of the most excluded groups in today’s labour market. Only 5% of people with a learning disability are in paid employment.”



Expanding the programme gives more young people the chance to gain the experience they need and, crucially, to progress into employment.

For NHSGGC, the programme brings tangible benefits too. Over nearly thirteen years of partnership, DFN Project Search has produced almost seventy NHSGGC employees who first joined the organisation through the programme.

Participants move into roles including portering, domestic services, catering, decontamination and healthcare support, bringing enthusiasm, commitment and fresh perspectives.

The model's success — with nearly 80% of graduates securing employment — is built on consistent collaboration.

“There is a huge commitment from all partners involved to deliver model fidelity and also to continuous improvement,” said Angie, noting monthly cross partner meetings to monitor progress, share learning and strengthen the programme year on year.

A crucial part of this success comes from NHS staff acting as buddies. They provide daily support, encouragement and guidance, working shoulder to shoulder with interns.

“The buddies are definitely the unsung heroes,” added Angie. “The support they provide participants on a daily basis is invaluable and can be life changing.”

Their involvement not only boosts the intern's confidence but also enriches teams by strengthening communication, understanding and inclusive practice.

The impact on individuals is powerful and long lasting.

**One former intern, Jack O'Rourke, now working for NHSGGC,** first learned about DFN Project Search through his brothers, who also completed the programme.

“My first placement was as a patient porter and I did a lot of walking and learned my way round the hospital pretty quick,” he said.

Following his second rotation in the Decontamination Unit, a vacancy became available and Jack applied for the role alongside other candidates.

“I applied for the job the same as everyone else and was lucky enough to be successful at interview.”

For Jack, the programme changed the trajectory of his life. “I felt stronger and more relaxed as I learned the ropes. I am earning a wage, saving up and plan on taking driving lessons and one day getting my own flat.”

He also emphasised that the programme helped him discover roles he didn’t know existed, or hadn’t realised would suit his skills.

**Gillian Ayling Whitehouse, Head of HR for the Directorate, said:** “DFN Project Search is an outstanding example of how we can open up real opportunity for young people while strengthening our organisation. The commitment and talent that our interns bring enriches our teams, enhances the care we deliver, and shows the very best of what inclusive employment can achieve.

“We are incredibly proud of the partnership behind this programme and the life changing impact it continues to have for interns, their families, and our staff.”

**Neil McCallum, North Sector director for NHSGGC, said:** “DFN Project Search is a fantastic programme and has made a real difference to many young people over the years, helping them build confidence, skills and a genuine route into employment.

“We are proud to support it at Glasgow Royal, not only because of the life changing impact it has for participants, but because the interns bring real value to our services and teams.”

With recruitment underway for the fourteenth cohort, DFN Project Search continues to encourage applications from young people who meet the criteria.

Applicants must live within the Glasgow City Council boundary (or Inverclyde boundary for the Inverclyde site), be aged 18–29, have a learning disability and/or autistic spectrum condition, be able to travel independently, and want paid employment.

Anyone interested in finding out more about DFN Project Search, or about how to apply, can contact the team at [supportedemployment@glasgow.gov.uk](mailto:supportedemployment@glasgow.gov.uk).

For anyone who feels unsure, the message from both the team and graduates is simple: it's okay to have questions. Getting in touch is the best first step to finding out more about the programme and whether it's right for you.

As Jack adds: "Keep at it and focus on your own progress — you might be surprised at how much you can achieve."

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**Critical Care Psychology Service supporting GRI ICU**



Dr Suzie Mason-Roberts (middle), Consultant Clinical Psychologist, Dr Sarah Shand, Principal Clinical Psychologist (left of middle), and the nursing and AHP team.

The Critical Care Psychology Service (CCPS) is now supporting patients, families and staff within the GRI Intensive Care Unit (ICU), as part of a two-year pilot across NHSGGC.

The service is embedded directly within critical care teams and is led by Dr Suzie Mason Roberts, Consultant Clinical Psychologist, alongside Dr Sarah Shand, Principal Clinical Psychologist. CCPS aligns with national guidance recommending integrated psychology provision within intensive care to support recovery, communication and wellbeing.

### **Support for patients**

An admission to intensive care can be frightening and overwhelming. Many patients experience anxiety, low mood, trauma responses or delirium related distress, which can affect engagement with care and rehabilitation.

At GRI, CCPS provides psychological assessment and support to patients experiencing distress related to critical illness, helping reduce anxiety and support engagement with treatment and recovery. Early patient feedback describes psychological input as invaluable, with one individual reporting that regular support helped them overcome severe anxiety, enabling them to return to the ICU environment and plan a future role as a peer volunteer.

### **Support for families**

Families of patients in ICU often experience high levels of stress and uncertainty. CCPS offers guidance to help families cope, communicate effectively with the care team and maintain their wellbeing while their loved one is critically unwell.

Where family dynamics or emotional distress are affecting care, the service can offer psychological consultation and support, alongside signposting to appropriate services if ongoing help is needed.

### **Support for staff**

GRI ICU staff work in a highly complex and emotionally demanding environment. CCPS provides psychologically informed consultation and support around complex or highly stressful clinical situations, helping staff feel supported and valued in their roles.

Staff feedback highlights the benefit of having psychology led reflective practice within the unit:

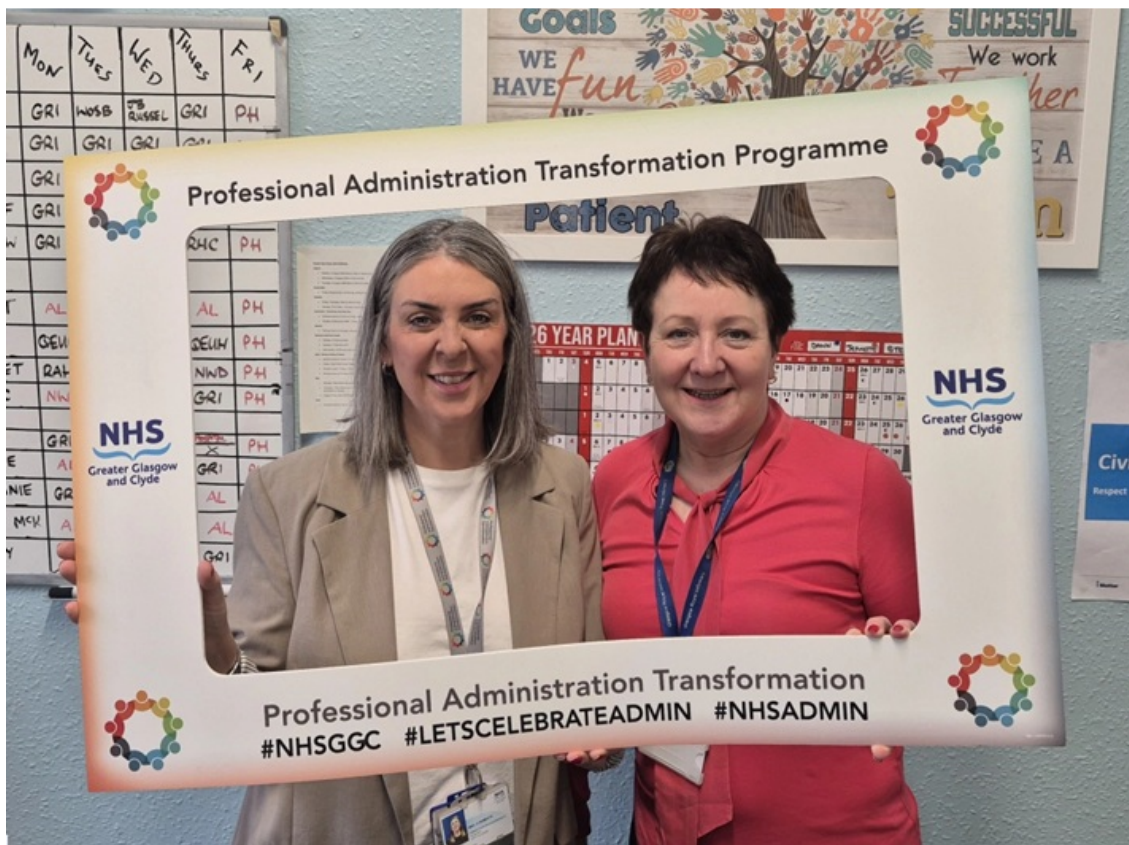
“As nurses, and as a team, we do like to think we are good at talking things through and reflecting. However, it is invaluable to have someone lead us through it and show us that how we feel is valued.”

During more acute situations, staff have also emphasised the importance of real time psychological support within ICU:

“The psychology service are invaluable within the unit. The support provided helped both the patient and staff feel calmer and more able to manage what was happening.”

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## International Administrative Professionals Day



Last week (22nd April), NHSGGC celebrated International Administrative Professionals Day, an opportunity to recognise the essential contribution of administrative colleagues across NHSGGC and our Health and Social Care Partnerships.

Administrative professionals play a vital role in supporting patient pathways, coordinating services, ensuring data quality, and enabling clinical and managerial teams to deliver safe, effective care. Their work underpins every service we provide.



Teams across NHSGGC took time today to recognise and celebrate their administrative colleagues and the difference they make.



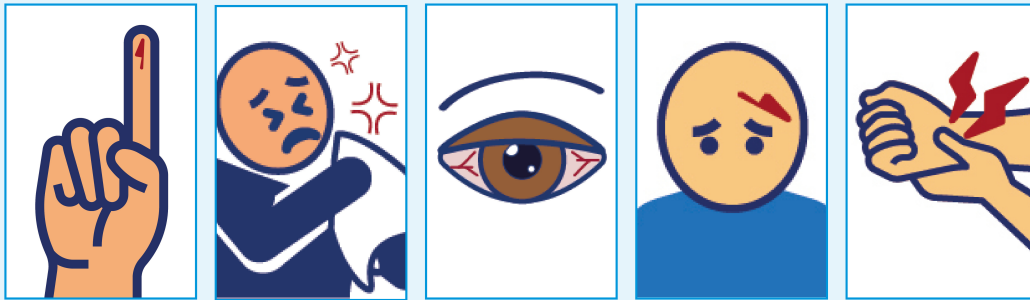
[Click here to view more photos from International Administrative Professionals Day](#)

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**Knowing where to go for care can make all the difference – while  
A&E remains there for emergencies**

For helpful advice on managing some common injuries and illnesses, and avoiding a trip to A&E visit:

**[www.nhsggc.scot/avoidAandE](http://www.nhsggc.scot/avoidAandE)**



**Unless it's an emergency - think **ABC** before visiting **A&E**.**

Accident and Emergency departments across NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde (NHSGGC) are always there for people who need urgent, emergency care. Every day, NHS staff provide lifesaving treatment for patients who are seriously ill or injured.

At the same time, NHSGGC is encouraging people to be aware that many common injuries and illnesses can often be treated just as safely, and sometimes more quickly, at home or through services in the community. This helps ensure A&E teams can focus on those who need emergency care, while people with less serious conditions can access support that's right for them.

This approach, known as Right Care, Right Place, is about helping people get the care they need in the setting that best suits their situation, at the right time.

### **Many everyday conditions aren't emergencies – and that's okay**

Alongside emergency care, A&E teams also see some people each year with minor injuries and illnesses. Common examples include:

- Sprains, strains and minor fractures of ankles, wrists and fingers
- Minor cuts and simple lacerations to hands or scalps
- Minor head injuries without any warning symptoms

- Coughs, colds, sore throats and other viral infections
- Stomach upsets such as diarrhoea and vomiting
- Urinary symptoms and mild eye problems

To make it easier for people to know what to do in these cases, NHSGGC has launched a new [webpage](#) that brings together clear, practical guidance on treating some of the most common injuries and illnesses, and on where to turn if more support is needed.

The information is designed to help people feel confident managing minor conditions at home, while clearly explaining when and where to seek further help.

### **Knowing when to seek urgent help is key**

NHSGGC continues to stress that some symptoms should always prompt urgent medical advice.

People should seek urgent help via NHS 24 on 111, or call 999 in an emergency, if symptoms are severe, worsening or worrying. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Head injuries with loss of consciousness, confusion or vomiting
- Badly deformed or visible bone injuries, heavily bleeding wounds
- Severe pain, breathing difficulties, or being unable to keep fluids down
- High fever, seizures, mottled skin. or becoming poorly responsive
- Signs of a stroke (new Face, Arm, Speech deficit)

If something doesn't feel right, people are encouraged to trust their instincts and seek advice.

### **Clear advice when you're unsure**

Dr Claire Harrow, NHSGGC Deputy Medical Director for Acute Services, said: "Our A&E departments are always there for people who are seriously ill or

injured, and no one should ever hesitate to come to an A&E department or call 999 if they need emergency care.

“At the same time, many everyday illnesses and injuries can often be managed safely at home or with help from other NHS services, and we want people to feel supported and informed about the choices available to them.

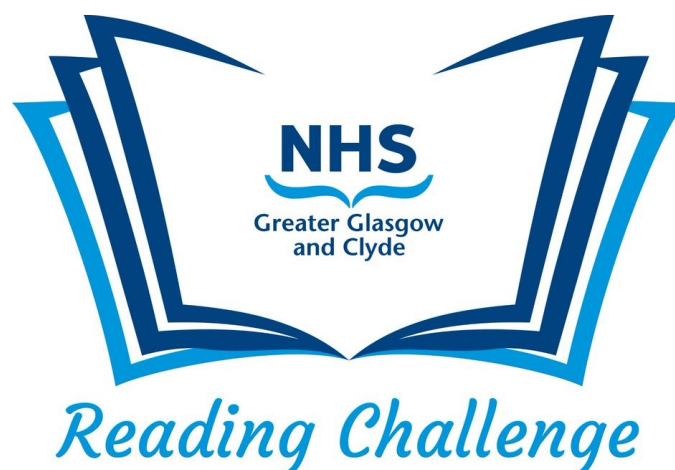
“We’ve brought together clear, trusted advice on a new webpage to help people understand how to look after common conditions and where to go if they need more help. NHS inform and the NHS 24 Online app are also great places to find reliable information, symptom checkers and self care guidance at any time.

“If symptoms don’t improve, things get worse, or more support is needed, services like community pharmacies, GP services and Minor Injuries Units are there to help. That’s what we mean by Right Care, Right Place – helping people get the care that’s most appropriate for their situation.

“And if you’re unsure where to turn, or your usual services aren’t available, NHS 24 on 111 is there to offer advice and guide you safely to the right service.”

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## **NHSGGC Reading Challenge 2026 – Now Open for Registration**



Staff across NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde are invited to take part in the NHSGGC Reading Challenge 2026, which launches on 1 May 2026 and runs until 31 October 2026.

The Reading Challenge encourages staff to make time for reading, wellbeing and personal development. Participants are invited to read or listen to between 3 and 48 books over the six-month period, choosing from a wide range of formats including books, eBooks, graphic novels, poetry and audiobooks.

The Challenge is open to all NHSGGC staff and partner organisations and is designed to be flexible and inclusive, allowing participants to engage in a way that suits their lifestyle and reading preferences.

### **How it works**

Participants log the books they read and can achieve award milestones as they progress:

- Bronze – 3 books
- Silver – 6 books
- Gold – 12 books
- Platinum – 24 books
- Emerald – 36 books
- Diamond – 48 books

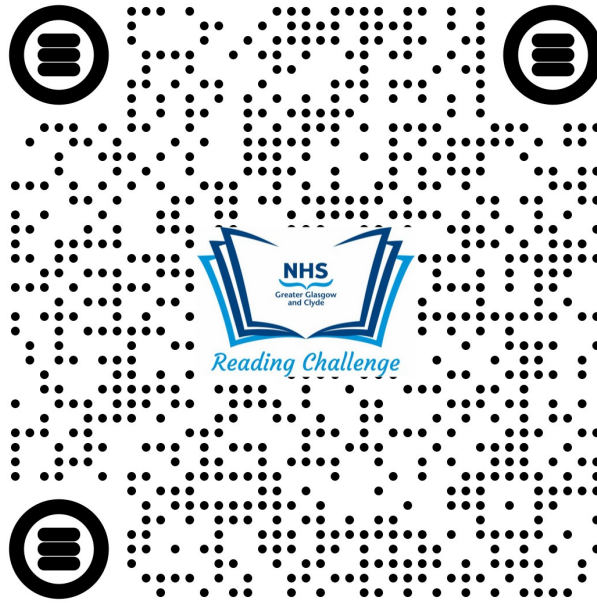
In addition to supporting wellbeing, the Reading Challenge contributes to staff development and can be used as evidence for KSF Core Skill 1 (Communication) and Core Skill 2 (Personal and People Development).

### **How to take part**

Registration is now open. Staff can sign up by contacting their local NHSGGC library or by completing the online registration form:

### **NHSGGC Reading Challenge 2026 registration:**

<https://link.webropol.com/s/nhsggcreadingchallenge2026>



Throughout the Challenge, participants will be supported by the NHSGGC Library Network, with reading resources, themed recommendations and optional activities designed to keep readers motivated and connected.

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## North Sector Support & Information Services



**The Glasgow Royal Infirmary Support & Information Service** is based on the ground floor of the Queen Elizabeth Building in GRI.

This service is open Tuesday to Thursday 10am - 4pm, and Friday 10am - 3.45pm.

**Stobhill Support & Information Service** is based on the ground floor atrium.



This service is open Tuesday to Thursday, 10am - 4pm.



These services are here to support all patients, carers and staff who use our hospitals.

They can offer support in a variety of non-clinical matters, helping to signpost people to the most appropriate service that matters to them.

Some examples of services they can provide:

- Money Advice (Benefits, Income Maximisation Checks etc)
- Crisis Home Energy Services - support to anyone struggling with home energy matters
- Signposting to carers support services
- Two day Emergency foodbags for vulnerable patients going home
- Signposting to Community Support Services

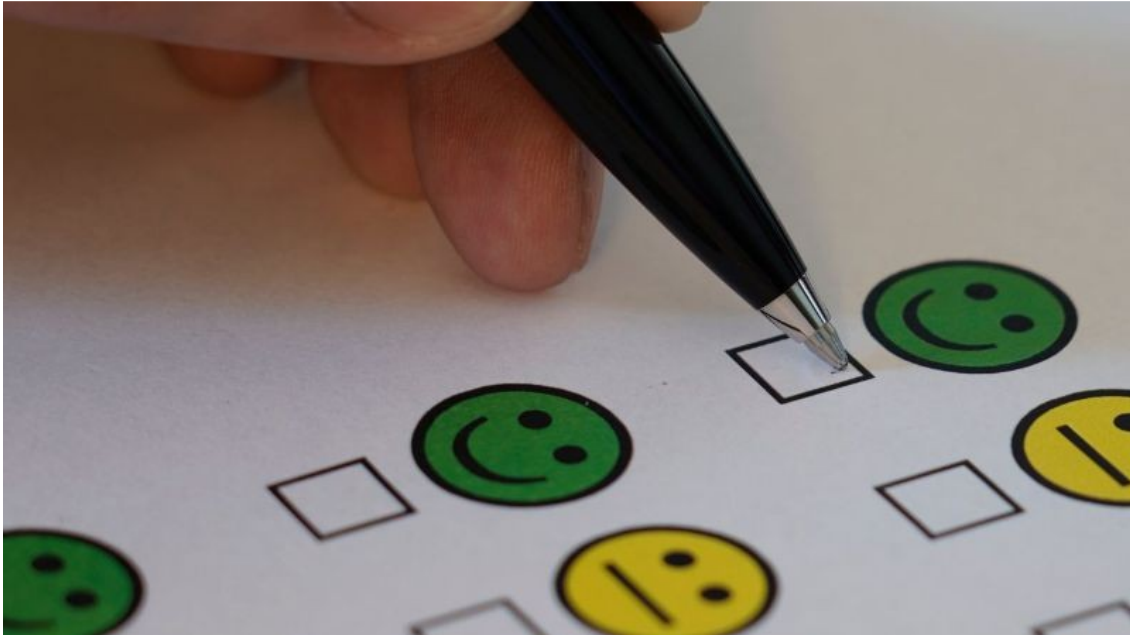
These are just a few examples of ways they can support.

Everyone is welcome to drop in, say hello, and find out more about what they do.

You can also email them with any enquiries at [ggc.sis@nhs.scot](mailto:ggc.sis@nhs.scot) or call 0141 531 9127 (GRI) / 0141 355 1527 (Stobhill).

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## Your stories and feedback



## **We want to hear from you!**

We want to highlight all the amazing and dedicated work going on throughout the North sector. No matter how small you think your success or your story might be, please let us know. It could be about you, your colleagues, your team, or anything within the North sector.

Either contact your line manager with your story, who can contact the newsletter team on your behalf. Alternatively, [email us](#) and be sure to copy them in.

We also want your feedback. Is there something you want to see more in the newsletter? Or something you'd recommend we change? Big or small, send us your feedback by clicking the button below or [clicking here](#).

[Click here to submit your feedback](#)

