

Robert Wilson (NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde)

From: Communications <press.office@ggc.scot.nhs.uk>
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To: Robert Wilson (NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde)
Subject: [Test] North Sector Newsletter - September 2026



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September 2026

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Message from Susan Groom, Interim North Sector Director

Welcome to the September edition of the North Sector Newsletter.

As we move into autumn and begin preparing for the challenges and opportunities that the winter months can bring, I want to take a moment to thank every member of staff across the North Sector for your continued commitment, professionalism and compassion.

Over recent weeks, I have had the opportunity to meet colleagues across a number of our sites and services, including Glasgow Royal Infirmary, Stobhill Hospital and Lightburn Hospital. These visits have reinforced what I already knew: our greatest strength is our people. Every day, staff across the North Sector go above and beyond to provide high-quality care for patients and support one another through what can often be demanding circumstances.

This month's newsletter highlights several examples of that commitment in action. From innovative work improving care for critically ill patients through our psychology pilot in Intensive Care, to the visits from our Chair and Non-Executive Board Members that provided opportunities to showcase services and hear directly from staff, there is much to be proud of across the sector.

We're also focusing on the importance of kindness, compassion and staff wellbeing. With World Kindness Day next month, I encourage everyone to use the upcoming time to reflect on the difference small acts of kindness can make to colleagues, patients and visitors. You'll also find information on our Safe Space Listening Sessions, upcoming Peer Support Training opportunities, and services available across NHS GGC to support your health and wellbeing.

As always, your voice matters. Whether through engagement opportunities, staff feedback or simply sharing your experiences with colleagues and leaders, your insights help us continue to improve and build on the many strengths that exist across the North Sector. I would also encourage you to share your good news stories so we can continue recognising and celebrating the fantastic work taking place every day.

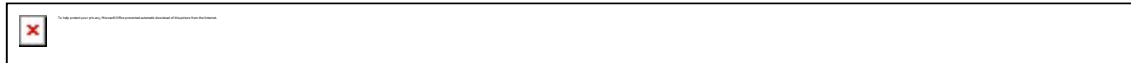
Thank you for everything you do for our patients, communities and each other. I

hope you find this edition informative, helpful and inspiring.

Susan Groom

Interim North Sector Director

World Kindness Day 2026



This year, World Kindness Day falls on a Friday. To make sure everyone in your team is included, we want you to choose the days that suit you and your team the most. That's any day from Monday 9 to Sunday 15 November!

We encourage you to get involved on the day, either by visiting stalls or attending events at your site, celebrating with colleagues, or even just making time for a cuppa and a chat.

We all have a part to play in building a caring and compassionate culture at NHSGGC. This event is all about the small, everyday gestures that can make a big impact and require little effort or expense.

This links into our Civility Saves Lives campaign, aiming to promote positive working relationships and raise awareness about how our behaviour with colleagues can have a direct impact on patient care and outcomes, and staff experience and wellbeing.

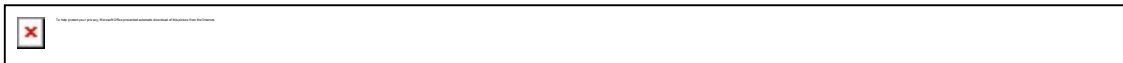
Six-Week Kindness Challenge

We encourage staff to participate in our six-week challenge in the lead up to the day.

You can find the challenges by clicking the link below, or in this print-friendly [Six-Week Kindness Challenge Pack](#) that you can share with colleagues.

[Click here to view the World Kindness Day 2026 webpage](#)

Psychology Pilot Transforming Care in Intensive Care Units



A pioneering two-year psychology service embedded within NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde's adult Intensive Care Units (ICUs) is already making a significant difference for patients, families and staff.

The Critical Care Psychology Service (CCPS) was established in November 2025 as a two-year pilot operating across Glasgow Royal Infirmary, Queen Elizabeth University Hospital and the Royal Alexandra Hospital. The service supports patients, families and staff, recognising that critical illness can have a significant psychological impact on everyone involved.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) advocates psychological assessment and support for critically ill patients, while the UK's Intensive Care Society recommends embedded psychology provision as a key component of high-quality intensive care services. Evidence suggests psychological assessment and intervention can improve recovery, reduce psychological morbidity in patients and families, and support staff wellbeing.

The CCPS team, comprising a Consultant Clinical Psychologist and Principal Clinical Psychologist, works alongside ICU multidisciplinary teams (MDTs) to provide specialist support for patients experiencing distress, support family members during difficult periods, and help staff deliver psychologically informed and trauma-informed care.

The new CCPS for NHSGGC was developed following an endowment bid submitted by ICU teams, who identified an opportunity to strengthen the psychological support available to patients, families and critical care staff as part of the wider critical care pathway.

Critical illness can have a profound cognitive and psychological impact. Research suggests that more than half of ICU survivors experience clinically significant symptoms of anxiety, depression or post-traumatic stress during the first year after discharge.

Families can also experience significant psychological distress, with studies suggesting 20-40% experience symptoms of anxiety, depression or post-traumatic stress following a loved one's critical illness.

Intensive care staff work in one of the most psychologically demanding areas of healthcare, with research indicating that approximately 25-45% of critical care professionals experience symptoms of burnout due to repeated exposure to trauma, bereavement, ethical dilemmas and high-pressure decision-making.

The team provides specialist psychological assessment and intervention for patients experiencing distress associated with critical illness, including anxiety, low mood, delirium-related distress, and difficulties adjusting to the physical and emotional impact of serious illness. The service also supports families during periods of uncertainty, complex decision-making and end of life care.

In addition, the team works closely with ICU staff through reflective practice, debriefs, consultation and psychologically informed approaches to care. The service offers psychological support to help staff navigate some of the most complex and emotionally demanding situations in healthcare.

During its first six months, CCPS received 176 referrals from ICU MDTs, demonstrating strong engagement and integration into existing care pathways. Around half of referrals involved family support, highlighting the wider impact critical illness can have beyond the patient themselves.

The team has also identified emerging demand from High Dependency Unit (HDU) patients, with 18 referrals relating to HDU patients during the review period. This suggests psychological need extends beyond ICU and into the wider critical care pathway.

Early outcomes demonstrate the value of the service, with patients reporting improved psychological adjustment following critical illness. Benefits include a better understanding of their ICU experience, reduced emotional distress, greater resilience in coping with treatment and recovery demands, and increased participation in rehabilitation.

Patients described the positive impact the service had on their recovery.

One patient said: "I found their help invaluable during my admission."

Another said: "It made sense of everything that had happened to me in ICU."

A third reflected: "Made me feel secure and safe when my mind cleared."

Another patient reported: "It was helpful to learn techniques to cope with trauma and discuss my journey."

Families have also described the service as a source of support and reassurance during some of the most difficult periods of their lives.

One family member said: "We felt supported at a time when everything was overwhelming."

Another commented: "[CCPS] made a very difficult and traumatic time so much easier."

The service is also helping to strengthen psychologically informed working within critical care. Teams report increased psychologically informed decision-making, improved communication in complex situations, greater support around rehabilitation, and a stronger focus on trauma-informed and psychologically safe care.

One member of the multidisciplinary team said: "They helped us understand and work around several barriers to engagement. Their advice was practical,

person-centred and easy for us to put into practice, leading to a significantly more positive outcome than would otherwise have been possible. Their input not only had a real impact on this patient's recovery but also helped build the team's confidence in delivering trauma-informed care."

In a recent staff survey gathered across the three ICU sites, 95% agreed that the service has had a positive impact within ICU, improves the quality of patient care, supports care for families and relatives and adds value to the MDT.

The qualitative feedback from staff has been particularly strong, with one member of staff saying: "Cannot speak highly enough of the value the psychology team have added to ICU."

Another said: "The psychology service are invaluable within the unit. Keep the psychology service forever!"

Dr Suzie Mason, Consultant Clinical Psychologist and Clinical Lead for CCPS, said: "Critical illness affects far more than a patient's physical health. Beyond the physical consequences of critical illness, patients, families and staff may experience significant psychological distress that can persist long after the ICU stay has ended.

"By embedding psychology directly within our ICU teams, we are ensuring support is available for everyone involved when it is needed most.

"Our early findings demonstrate the positive impact an embedded service can make, helping people manage distress, strengthen recovery and helping create an environment where psychological wellbeing is recognised as a vital part of high-quality care."

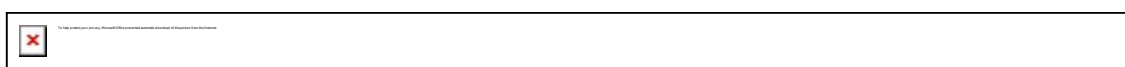
Professor Tara Quasim, Professor of Anaesthesia, Critical Care and Perioperative Medicine, said: "As a Critical Care Consultant, I strongly welcome the addition of psychologists to our team.

"Having dedicated professional psychological support is a hugely positive step,

ensuring that everyone affected by critical illness has access to the specialist support they need."

As the pilot develops, the team will continue to evaluate its impact, strengthen links with wider hospital and community services, and explore opportunities to further embed psychologically informed care across critical care pathways.

Chair Visits Glasgow Royal Infirmary to Meet Staff and Learn About Service Developments



Chair of NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, Dr Lesley Thomson KC, visited Glasgow Royal Infirmary (GRI) on Monday 31 August alongside Non-Executive Board Members Libby Cairns and Graham Haddock OBE, meeting staff and volunteers from across the site and hearing about a range of developments supporting patient care.

Hosted by Susan Groom, Interim Director for North Sector, the visit provided an opportunity for Board members to hear directly from staff about the challenges, opportunities and innovations shaping services at one of Scotland's busiest hospitals.

The visit began at the Friends of Glasgow Royal Infirmary Museum, where volunteers shared the rich history of the hospital and its longstanding contribution to healthcare in Glasgow. Visitors heard about the work of the Friends of GRI in preserving the hospital's heritage, as well as their role in welcoming patients, visitors and members of the public to the museum and gardens.

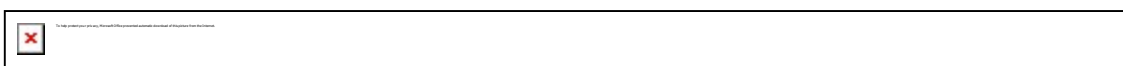
The group learned about the history of the site and some of the individuals who have shaped healthcare at GRI over the years, including pioneering medical figures associated with the hospital. The Chair and Non-Executive Board Members also heard about the medicinal and biodiversity gardens, which are

maintained with the support of volunteers and provide a welcoming space for staff, patients and visitors.



The visit continued with a tour of Critical Care, led by Dr Kerry Litchfield, Interim Deputy Chief of Medicine, Maria Boothroyd, Clinical Service Manager for Theatres, Anaesthetics and Critical Care, and Dr Barbara Miles, Clinical Director for Critical Care. The team outlined the vital role the service plays in caring for some of the most seriously ill patients across the North Sector and discussed future plans for the unit.

During discussions, staff highlighted the importance of supporting patients and families throughout their care journey, alongside ongoing work to promote staff wellbeing through a range of support initiatives, training opportunities and team debriefs.



The final stop of the visit was Ward 70 and the Urology Service, where Varisha Keeper, Clinical Service Manager for Urology, and Mr Seamus Teahan, Clinical Director for Urology, showcased improvements in patient pathways and service delivery. The Chair heard about work to reduce waiting times, manage increasing demand and improve patient experience across urology services.

Staff also discussed the positive impact of innovations in surgical care, including robotic-assisted surgery, which is helping to improve recovery times and outcomes for patients.

Dr Lesley Thomson KC said: "It was a pleasure to visit Glasgow Royal Infirmary and meet so many dedicated staff and volunteers. I was impressed by the passion, professionalism and commitment shown across every area we visited.

"From those preserving and sharing the hospital's remarkable history to the teams delivering complex and specialist care every day, it was clear to see the

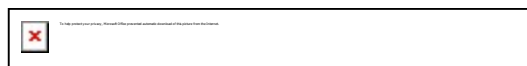
difference people are making for patients, families and communities across NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde."

Susan Groom, Interim Director for North Sector, said: "Visits like this provide a valuable opportunity for our Board members to see first-hand the dedication and expertise of colleagues across Glasgow Royal Infirmary.

"I would like to thank everyone who took part in the visit, including our volunteers and staff, for sharing their experiences and showcasing the excellent work taking place across the hospital."

The visit formed part of the Board's ongoing programme of engagement with services across NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, providing opportunities for Board members to hear directly from staff about their achievements, challenges and ambitions for the future.

Non-Executive Board Members Visit Stobhill Hospital



Non-Executive Board Members Martin Cawley and Ann Cameron-Burns visited Stobhill Hospital this week to learn more about service developments within Day Surgery and Gynaecology, and to meet staff delivering innovative care across NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde.

The first part of the visit was hosted by Dr Kerry Litchfield, Interim Deputy Chief of Medicine, Dr Andrew Harvey, Lead Clinician for Anaesthetics, Dr Lindsay Hudman, Consultant Anaesthetist and Clinical Lead for Day Surgery, Maria Boothroyd, Clinical Service Manager for Theatres, Anaesthetics and Critical Care, and Kevin McAuley, Chief Nurse for North Sector.

During the Day Surgery visit, staff showcased the development of the regional anaesthesia Block Room and explained how it has helped improve patient pathways, support same-day treatment and enhance the patient experience.

Board members heard about the service's focus on delivering care in the most appropriate setting, helping to maximise capacity and improve access to planned care.

Discussions highlighted the success of the day-case and short-stay orthopaedic surgery programme, ongoing work to reduce waiting times and the importance of providing a positive patient experience from assessment through to discharge.

Board members also met Fiona Halkett, Theatre Co-ordinator, and Kim Brannan, Senior Charge Nurse, and heard about the contribution they make in supporting patients throughout their care journey.

The visit then moved to the Gynaecology Service, where Martin and Ann were welcomed by Claire Stewart, General Manager for Maternity and Gynaecology, Nikki Harvey, Lead Nurse for Gynaecology, and Shona Brown, Charge Nurse.

Staff outlined how the service has developed into a specialist centre for women's health, delivering a wide range of diagnostic and treatment services through one-stop clinic models designed to improve access to care and reduce appointments.

Board members heard about the significant contribution made by specialist nurses who have helped to expand capacity, reduce waiting times and improve the patient experience. The team also discussed innovative developments in diagnostics and treatment, workforce development and succession planning, and shared examples of how multidisciplinary working is supporting high-quality care for women across Greater Glasgow and Clyde.

Throughout the visit, Board members heard first-hand about the dedication, expertise and innovation that underpin services at Stobhill Hospital. The visit provided an opportunity to learn more about the achievements of teams across Day Surgery and Gynaecology and their ongoing commitment to delivering

safe, effective and person-centred care for patients across NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde.

Safe Space Listening Sessions at GRI – A Confidential Space to Talk



Looking after our wellbeing is just as important as looking after our patients and colleagues. That's why staff across the North Sector are being encouraged to make use of the new Safe Space Listening Sessions pilot.

While the pilot is based at GRI, colleagues from Stobhill and Lightburn are also welcome to attend. All sessions take place in a confidential space within GRI and are designed to provide a safe, supportive environment where staff can talk openly about workplace challenges, concerns or experiences.

The sessions offer an opportunity to be heard without judgement, reflect on issues that may be affecting your wellbeing, and explore sources of support where appropriate.

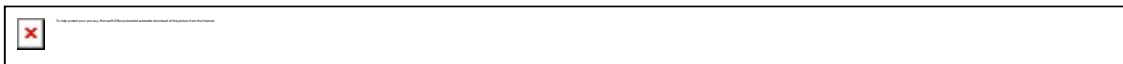
Whether you're experiencing a difficult period at work, feeling under pressure, or simply looking for a space to talk, the service is available for all colleagues.

The sessions are facilitated by Paul Grant, who will provide a confidential and supportive listening environment.

We recognise that healthcare can be demanding, and creating opportunities for colleagues to pause, reflect and seek support is an important part of fostering a healthy and compassionate workplace culture.

For further information on the Safe Space Listening Sessions, including how to access the service, please refer to the accompanying flyer or contact Paul.Grant2@nhs.scot directly.

Services of remembrance and support planned across NHSGGC for Baby Loss Awareness Week



Families who have experienced the loss of a baby are invited to attend a So Briefly Known remembrance service at Sanctuary, GRI, on Sunday 4 October at 7pm, ahead of Baby Loss Awareness Week (9 to 15 October).

The service offers a compassionate space for parents, siblings, grandparents, friends and loved ones to come together in remembrance, support and hope. Attendance is free, no booking is required, and everyone affected by pregnancy or baby loss is welcome.

Read the full article using the button below for more information about the service and support available to families affected by baby loss.

Further information on the support available to those who have experienced baby loss can be found at the following sites:

- <https://www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk>
- <https://www.arc-uk.org>
- <https://www.sands.org.uk>
- <https://ectopic.org.uk>
- <https://www.childbereavementuk.org>
- <https://babylossretreat.org.uk>
- <https://scottishcotdeathtrust.org>

**Click here to view services of remembrance and support planned
across NHSGGC for Baby Loss Awareness Week**

Peer Support Training Dates - only 3 Sessions remaining this year



There are now just three available Peer Support training sessions remaining in 2026 - these are the final opportunities this year to train as a Peer Supporter.

Peer Support is becoming an important part of how we look after each other at work. Colleagues tell us the training is supportive, practical and confidence building, whether they are completely new to Peer Support or looking to build on their existing skills.

We're also incredibly proud of the difference our Peer Supporters are making across NHSGGC and our Health and Social Care Partnerships. In fact, our Peer Supporters have recently been nominated for an NHSGGC Excellence Award – something we're absolutely chuffed to see and a wonderful recognition of the time, care and support they give to colleagues.

The full-day training will help you to:

- Understand the Peer Supporter role and what it involves
- Develop practical listening and communication skills
- Build confidence in supporting colleagues
- Explore how to look after yourself while supporting others
- Connect with colleagues who are passionate about creating a supportive workplace.

No previous experience is needed – just an interest in helping and supporting others.

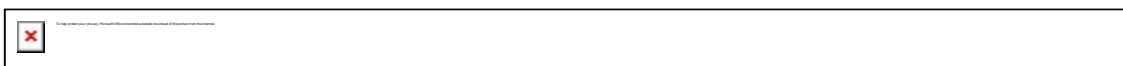
If you've been thinking about becoming a Peer Supporter, now is a great time to get involved. These are our final three training sessions of 2026.

Full day in person Training dates for 2026:

- Thursday 15 October- Stobhill Hospital - [Book Here](#)
- Monday 9 November- Gartnavel General Hospital - [Book Here](#)
- Thursday 3 December- Royal Alexandra Hospital - [Book Here](#)

Want to know more about our Peer Support Network or access Peer Support yourself for support visit [Peer Support Network - NHSGGC](#) or [Peer support in the workplace: putting theory into practice - National Wellbeing Hub](#) or contact the team at ggc.peer.support@nhs.scot.

Five common myths about the flu vaccine debunked by NHSGGC experts



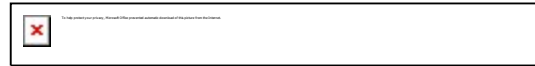
Can the flu vaccine give you flu? Do healthy people really need it? And is handwashing enough to keep you protected?

Ahead of this year's winter vaccination programme, NHSGGC research highlighted a number of common misconceptions about flu vaccination. Our Public Health team has addressed five of the most common myths and explains why vaccination remains the best protection against flu this winter.

Click below to read the full article and learn more about flu vaccination.

[Click here to view five common myths about the flu vaccine debunked by NHSGGC experts](#)

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 or call 0141 531 9127 (GRI) / 0141 355 1527 (Stobhill).

Upcoming Dates

- [1st - 31st October - Stoptober: Quit Smoking](#)
 - [1st - 31st October - Sober October](#)
 - [1st - 31st October - National Cholesterol Month](#)
 - [1st - 31st October - Black History Month](#)
 - [1st - 31st October - Breast Cancer Awareness Month](#)
 - [5th - 9th October - National Work Life Week](#)
 - [10th October - World Mental Health Day](#) [18th October - World Menopause Day](#)
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Your stories and feedback



We want to hear from you!

There are incredible stories happening across the North Sector every day, and we'd love to share them. Whether it's an individual achievement, a team success, an improvement project or an example of great patient care, we want to hear from you.

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](#)

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