

NHS Grampian Health Inequalities Action Plan 2023/24 (DRAFT v2)

Introduction

Health inequalities are the unjust and avoidable differences in people's health across the population and between specific population groups. Health inequalities go against the principles of social justice because they are avoidable. They do not occur randomly or by chance. They are socially determined by circumstances largely beyond an individual's control. These circumstances disadvantage people and limit their chance to live longer, healthier and fulfilled lives. The existence of health inequalities in Scotland means that the right of everyone to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health is not being enjoyed equally across the population.ⁱ

Action can be taken to tackle health inequalities and improve people's health. Health inequalities are fundamentally caused by an unequal distribution of power, income and wealth due to wider global, political and societal influences; these then impact on the wider environment in which people live, work, grow and play, which then impacts on individuals' experiences which then impacts on their health. Actions are required at all these levels but must be based on needs and strengths, understanding of social opportunities and what is most likely to work. Action needs to focus on undoing the fundamental causes, preventing harmful environmental influences and mitigating negative individual experiences.

Fundamental	causes	Wider environmental influences	Individual experience	Effects
Global economic forces Macro socio-political environment Political priorities and decisions Societal values to equity and fairness	Unequal distribution of income, power and wealth Poverty, marginalisation and discrimination	Economic and work Physical Learning Services Social and cultural	Economic and work Physical Learning Services Social and interpersonal	Inequalities in: Wellbeing Healthy life expectancy Morbidity Mortality
Undo		Prevent	Mitigate	

The MRC/CSO Social and Public Health Sciences Unit of Glasgow University has recently published a Review of Inequalities in Scotland. This highlights that following a period of improving mortality rates and reducing inequalities in the first decade of the 21st century, improvements have stalled, and some inequalities have widened. Between 2000 and 2012, life expectancy was increasing, and avoidable mortality was decreasing. Progress was being made in deaths from cancer and cardiovascular disease, alcohol deaths, and suicides. In line with these improvements, absolute inequalities in mortality outcomes were generally reducing. However, in the decade since we have seen a stagnation in these previous improvements and in some cases a worsening of outcomes and inequalities. Across almost every outcome considered in the report, the least deprived fifth of areas have the best outcomes, with health worsening with each increase in deprivation level. In many cases, we see the most deprived fifth of areas faring particularly badly. That is, the gap between the most and second most deprived fifth of areas (fifths 1 and 2) was equal to or greater than the gap between the second most deprived and the least deprived fifth of areas (fifths 2 and 5). We see this pattern for avoidable mortality, deaths from drugs and alcohol, and outpatient appointments where the patient 'Did Not Attend'. Patterns were similar but less pronounced for low birth weight, child development concerns, antenatal services, and amenable mortality. The recent Health Foundation Report on the state of health and health inequalities in Scotland highlights the 'implementation gap' as a key reason for the lack of progress in reducing inequalities. It is clear progress will require a shared and sustained focus on the factors influencing health across central and local government, business, third sector, local communities and the public.

The situation in Grampian is consistent with the national Scottish context of large and persistent inequalities in health between the most and least deprived neighbourhoods. The upward trends seen for decades in life expectancy have stalled in recent years, due in part to early deaths amongst middle aged people in disadvantaged groups. It is also affected by a slowdown in those deaths which could be prevented using healthcare or public health interventions (such as heart disease and type II diabetes). Over the last 20 years our population has become healthier however an increasing number of people experienced the burden of long-term conditions such as osteoarthritis, depression and diabetes. Cancer replaced ischaemic heart disease as the main cause of death in the 1990's and in recent years, dementia became the second most common cause for females. Living with dementia requires a great deal of formal and informal care – with higher health and social care costs than cancer and chronic heart disease combined.

NHS Grampian's Eighth Decade paper lays out our vision to re-imagine the organisational purpose to reach beyond responding to poor health to one which equally invests in preventing harm, improving health and supporting communities across Grampian to thrive. Treating ill health is not enough on its own, we need a combination of approaches to delay and ultimately reduce demand on healthcare. Spending money on illness prevention and promotion of good health will help reduce the number of new health problems arising, stop existing health problems getting worse and reduce impacts of chronic disease.

Reducing inequalities will also help ease the impact on healthcare. A report on the cost of health inequality to the NHS in Wales showed that emergency attendances and admissions experience the highest proportional costs associated with inequality in terms of social pattern of service use - there is a clear social gradient with a larger inequality gap for A&E attendances, followed by emergency and maternity hospital inpatient admissions. The report also highlighted that emergency inpatient admissions are the largest contributor to the overall cost associated with inequality.

It is vital to act now and drive forward programmes that address structural inequalities in our society including low pay, insecure jobs, unemployment, overcrowded housing, and a lack of green space, as a few examples, because it is changes at the root cause that will reduce health inequalities in the long term. This will require an increase in priority given to activities, partnerships and systems which support and enable preventative approaches and reduce inequalities in health outcomes for local people. People's health and wellbeing is better when they are actively engaged in decisions about their health and care. We recognise that, to put people and communities at the heart of what we do will require our citizens and colleagues to work differently together. NHS Grampian is committed to being an anchor organisation and supporting community led health.

This plan sets out our actions to address health inequalities in Grampian during 2023-2024. We will strive to leave no-one behind and achieve equity for all by ensuring our work addresses the drivers of health inequalities. Our actions are aligned to the headings and priority areas described in our Plan for the Future, and designed to undo, prevent and mitigate the fundamental causes, wider environmental influences and individual experiences leading to health inequalities. Recognising the importance of reducing health inequalities, Executive Director level leadership and oversight is in place for delivering this action plan.

Summary of actions in this plan include:

- Ensure our services are accessible to all
- Deliver against the Fairer Scotland Duty
- Use every opportunity to prevent harm and promote wellbeing
- Empower communities to take action on what matters to them including mental health and wellbeing
- Take a population health approach, striving to create equality of outcomes across the populations we serve
- Adopt community led health approaches and actively engage with our communities to design and deliver services
- Use our position as an anchor organisation to mitigate against inequalities through our employment and procurement practices and the use of our physical assets

- Take a whole system approach to addressing health inequalities developed in conjunction with partners based on placebased approaches for reducing health inequalities
- Commit to effective partnership working to strengthen community engagement and empowerment
- Provide leadership and advocate for reducing inequalities at all levels
- Empower individuals to access care that is right for them
- Deliver on the child poverty action plan
- Empowering and upskilling our people to create an environment where we can bring our whole selves and feel equipped and empowered to tackle discrimination, promote inclusion and reduce inequalities
- Ensure our workforce has the skills and resources to understand the role they can play in helping to reduce health inequalities
- Understand picture of health inequalities across our population in Grampian and share across the system
- Agree indicators measuring the impact of our actions on population outcomes as a part of our Learning Health System

Health Inequalities Action Plan April 2023 - March 2024

Priority area: Access

- Pathways are centred around individuals and systems are joined up.
- It is easy for members of the public to identify how to get the help they need.
- All those who wish to use digital systems can or have an appropriate alternative mechanism that is equitable.

Action	What we need to do to deliver our action during Year 1	Responsibility	Timescales	Measures and Evidence
Ensure our services are accessible to all	Develop and implement a toolkit to enable services and programmes to review and consider how they ensure services are accessible to all and agree an area for testing in year 1.	Elaine McConnachie Public Health Manager	December 2023	Use data to better understand uptake of services and how people access information, including population profile e.g. English as a second language, digital literacy
	Develop and implement plan for delivery of Gender Based Violence training, following completion of review.	Shantini Paranjothy, Deputy Director of Public Health	June 2023	Plan in place and target agreed for uptake of training.
	Roll out training to ensure key staff groups are upskilled to deliver Trauma Informed Care	John Mooney Consultant in Public Health	June 2023	Recruitment underway to increase capacity to deliver training by June.

Ĭ	Develop and implement a plan to improve uptake of population-based screening, vaccination and mmunisations programmes among communities where uptake is low	Board Screening Coordinators and Immunisation Coordinator, Grampian Vaccination and Immunisation Programme Team (This work will be done in partnership with academia and community representatives)	June 2023	NHS Grampian GVIP Blueprint Coldspot Action Plan Screening Equity Action Plan Immunisation and Screening uptake rates by SIMD quintiles and geographical areas.
t	Review NHS Grampian data and digital strategy through the lens of inequalities using impact assessments to identify and develop actions which maximise digital inclusion	Danny Ruta, Consultant in Public Health Medicine, and Neil Gordon , Head of ICT	June 2023	Review complete and recommendations agreed and implemented.
 \ 	Improve access to high quality NHS oral and dental health services through: Working with local dental profession, Scottish Government and NHS Education for Scotland colleagues to increase dental workforce capacity and service availability. Undertaking evidence-led registration campaigns to further improve NHS dental registration and participation rates in Grampian.	Jonathan Iloya, Director of Dentistry and Heather Tennant, Public Health Manager	March 2024	Evidence of improvements in dental registration and participation rates indicating improved access to dental clinical services.

	Implement annual health checks for people with learning disabilities using Scottish Health Check for Adults with Learning Disabilities	Kerry Anderson, Nurse Consultant	March 2024	Checks in place - report to SG
	Seek improvements in the delivery and effectiveness of the oral health improvement and awareness programmes with a focus on improving oral health in deprived and vulnerable populations to promote oral health equity.	Gwen Robertson, Public Health Practitioner – Advanced, Heather Tennant, Public Health Manager, and Jonathan Iloya, Director of Dentistry	March 2024	Publish Grampian NDIP Report on Children's Oral Health Develop an Oral Health Improvement Delivery Plan
Deliver against the Fairer Scotland Duty	Develop and implement a coordinated approach towards implementing inequalities impact assessments to inform decision making system wide, including regular audit processes. During Year 1 this will be implemented on all NHS Grampian Board and Committee papers	Danny Ruta, Consultant in Public Health Medicine, Kim Penman, Programme Manager, Sarah Duncan, Board Secretary, and Nigel Firth, Head of Equalities and Inclusion	December 2023	Agreed approach to incorporating a Fairer Scotland Health Inequalities impact assessment tool and process within the current EQIA process (possibly a new 'level 1A'). To pilot the tool with 1-2 unscheduled care initiatives. Develop and implement a package of support alongside EQIA A trained Equality and Diversity Level Two Impact Assessor to be in place by July 2023 to carry out FULL EQIA's.

Priority area: Empowerment

- People are able to consider what they can do for themselves before accessing services.
- Our systems empower individuals to manage their own conditions in the way that is important to them.
- Mental and physical wellbeing are treated as equals and the impact of one on the other is always considered.
- Our language has been de-medicalised and is focused on what is important to and needed for our population.
- We make every opportunity count to support people to stay well and recover faster.

Action	What we need to do to deliver our action during Year 1?	Responsibility	Timescales	Measures and Evidence
Use every opportunity to prevent harm and promote wellbeing	In conjunction with Realistic Medicine undertake MEOC gap analysis and review against evidence base ¹ .	Linda Duthie Public Health Manager, Danny Ruta Consultant in Public Health Medicine, Amanda Gotch Realistic Medicine Programme Manager	June 2023	Gap analysis complete
Ensure our workforce has the skills and resources to understand the role they can play in	Integrate income maximisation approaches in acute/emergency care and in domestic services.	Sector Leads, Linda Duthie Public Health Manager, Danny Ruta Consultant in Public Health	December 2023	Financial Inclusion pathway developed and implemented

¹ https://stpsupport.nice.org.uk/mecc/index.html#group-The-MECC-approach-Sd0eBNaUnA

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helping to reduce health inequalities	Work with colleagues in acute to identify areas to test preventative approaches	Linda Duthie Public Health Manager, Amanda Gotch Realistic Medicine Programme Manager, Danny Ruta Consultant in Public Health, Yvonne Wright Chief Nurse	Plan for Test of change Sept 2023 Test of Change completed March 2024	Completed test of change
	Work with partners to include oral health in broader health messages, health education and literacy campaigns to raise awareness to empower people for prevention by supported self-care, early detection and management of oral diseases.	Gwen Robertson, Public Health Practitioner – Advanced, Heather Tennant, Public Health Manager, and Jonathan Iloya, Director of Dentistry	March 2024	Implement oral health education and literacy campaigns

Priority: Whole System Working

- We have true devolved system leadership across traditional organisational boundaries.
- We work together with partners in Grampian and beyond to 'push' in the same direction, agreeing and committing to delivering on shared actions.
- We recognise and value the role all of our partners play and hold us and them to account.
- Care is being delivered in the right place by the right people for the right purpose.
- We see people as a 'whole person' in the context of where and how they live.
- We support our regional and national colleagues in our role as a tertiary provider

Action	What we need to do to deliver our action during Year 1?	Responsibility	Timescales	Measures and Evidence
We will take a population health approach, striving to create equality of outcomes across the populations we serve	Apply a Population Health Lens (Four Pillar Approach) to service/delivery planning - in Year 1 commence with the Integrated Families Portfolio	Geraldine Fraser Integrated Families Portfolio Executive Lead, Lisa Allerton Lead Public Health Manager	December 2023	Integrated Families Portfolio workplan aligned to population health framework.

Priority area: Communities

- An ongoing dialogue between us and our communities, with work led by the expressed needs of communities.
- Communities are empowered by involvement in engagement work, enabling community-led action.
- Connection with marginalised and seldom-heard communities is continually reinforced.
- Communities are acknowledged as an integral part of our system leading and participating.

Adopt community led health approaches and actively engage with our communities to design and deliver services	Work with Aberdeen Community Planning Partnership to build capacity in staff and communities to support engagement work through delivery of project aim	Phil Mackie, Consultant in Public Health, Lousie Ballantyne Head of Engagement, Elaine McConnachie Public Health Manager	September 2023	Project team established and project charter approved by Aberdeen CPP Board.
	Work with Kings Fund and AH&SCP to test community paradigm approach in New Pitsligo and share learning to influence policy and service design	Gabe Docherty, Consultant in Public Health Elaine McConnachie Public Health Manager, George Howie Acting Health and Wellbeing Lead	March 2024	Output of work in New Pitsligo shared and informs future delivery
	Develop community-led health portfolio approach within Public Health	Gabe Docherty, Consultant in Public Health	March 2024	Portfolio arrangements in place

Empower communities to take action on what matters to them including mental health and wellbeing	Test out a community led mental health and wellbeing project in Moray	Linda Duthie Public Health Manager and Pete Matthews Public Health Practitioner - Advanced, Shantini Paranjothy, Deputy Director of Public Health	March 2024	Test of change scoped by September 2023 Test of change completed by March 2024
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Priority area: Anchor

- To be a desirable employment destination.
- To lead by example with people treated equally across our organisation.
- A workforce that reflects our communities.
- For considering our social responsibility to become normal practice in our decision-making.
- To be a trusted partner who uses our influence responsibly and effectively.

Action	What we need to do to deliver our action in Year 1?	Responsibility	Timescales	Measures and Evidence
Use our position as an anchor organisation to mitigate against	Maximise the use of community benefits to deliver economic, social and environmental wellbeing through our procurement processes.	Jennifer Yeomans Deputy Head of Procurement, Penny Gillies Public Health Practitioner – Advanced-	March 2024	Reporting of community benefits delivered in Annual Procurement Report.
inequalities through our employment and procurement practices and the	Increase spend with suppliers based within the Grampian area in Year 1	Jennifer Yeomans Deputy Head of Procurement	March 2024	Increase in spend with suppliers based in the Grampian area.
use of our physical assets	Maximise the use of Fair Work practices (including payment of Living Wage) through procurement processes.	Jennifer Yeomans Deputy Head of Procurement , Julie Philips, Public Health Practitioner - Advanced	December 2023	Maintain Living Wage Accreditation.

Fairer Scotland duty to be applied to assess all capital and investment decisions and specific assessments evidenced via Inequalities Assessment Checklist for new investments in excess of £5m	Paul Allen, Director of Infrastructure & Sustainability	December 2023	100% of assessments undertaken
Review employability and apprenticeship pathways and associated policies to maximise on our social values and employ inclusively	Gerrie Lawrie Head of Workforce & Development, Douglas Andrew Learning & Development Manager	December 2023	Awaiting national guidance from Scottish Government Number of Modern Apprenticeships framework opportunities in place
Work with our third sector partners to understand current challenges and identify how we can provide support to ensure they continue to be viable	Elaine McConnachie Public Health Manager, Linda Duthie Public Health Manager	December 2023	Test of change in Moray to facilitate a small grants funding and evaluation complete.
Utilise our buildings to support communities to promote health and wellbeing	Gerry Donald, Head of Property and Asset Development	March 2024	Legal template in place and plan in place to promote via services

Priority area: Environment

- Thinking about the environmental impact becomes a normal part of our decision-making.
- We lead by example and can demonstrate our contribution.
- We are an employer of choice for the young 'environmentally aware' generation because of 'sustainability credentials'.
- As part of our infrastructure developments, we consider 'collapsible'/adaptive options (e.g. Louisa Jordan) that would be more flexible and responsive to changing needs

Action	What we need to do to deliver our action during Year 1?	Responsibility	Timescales	Measures and Evidence
Take whole system approach to addressing health inequalities developed in conjunction with partners based on place-based approaches for reducing health inequalities	Place and wellbeing network to develop as a green health partnership, aligned to 'Our Natural Health Service' (a national initiative connecting people to nature for improved health and wellbeing)	Jillian Evans, Head of Health Intelligence & Learning Health Systems	December 2023	Green Health Partnership agreed and in place
	With partners, we will develop and publish our sustainability strategy that includes actions to tackle pollution, access to greenspace, food and warmth	Paul Allen Director of Infrastructure & Sustainability, Jillian Evans Head of Health Intelligence & Learning Health Systems	June 2023	Strategy published

Priority area: Citizens

- Ongoing active, transparent and two-way engagement, continually creating connections to build trust.
- Those with lived experience, including seldom heard voices, are an integral part of all service developments and improvements, as part of a culture of co-production.
- All individuals are supported to access care, treatment and support in a way that is best for them

Action	What we need to do to deliver our action during Year 1?	Responsibility	Timescales	Measures and Evidence
Commit to effective partnership working to strengthen	Development of a high-level engagement plan and engagement policy for NHS Grampian to ensure services are designed and delivered via community engagement, including the most marginalised groups.	Louise Ballantyne Head of Engagement, Elaine McConnachie Public Health Manager	December 2023	Engagement policy endorsed
community engagement and empowerment	Develop feedback loop to ensure communities voice informs delivery of services	Louise Ballantyne Head of Engagement	March 2024	Feedback Loop
Provide leadership and advocate for reducing inequalities at all levels	Review processes to ensure strategic co- ordination of health inequality actions across system including review of purpose and membership of Health Inequalities Action Group to deliver, plan and agree longer term actions in conjunction with H&SCPs	Elaine McConnachie Public Health Manager	April 2023	HIAG re-formed

	Advocate for action to address Cost of Living crisis and establish subgroup of HIOG to implement agreed actions	Gabe Docherty Consultant in Public Health	April 2023	Cost of Living Action Plan
Provide leadership and advocate for reducing inequalities at all levels	Reduce stigma around inequalities as well as risk behaviours and addiction related illnesses including use of innovative approaches e.g. storytelling with academic partners	Lisa Allerton Lead Public Health Manager, Elaine McConnachie Public Health Manager	December 2023	Approaches tested
	Tackle barriers between substance use / addiction services and mental health services: will reduce initiation of substance use as means of self-medication – especially for young people.	Pete Mathews Public Health Practitioner - Advanced, John Mooney Consultant in Public Health	March 2024	Clearer access pathways and MH no longer a barrier to accessing SU services
	Develop a set of evidence-based recommendations for service interventions to reduce substance use related deaths building on the work of the multi-agency Drug Related Death Review Panel and improved pro-active surveillance of substance use behaviours, trends and new threats.	John Mooney Consultant in Public Health	April 2023	Policy recommendations & 'buy-in' from partner agencies and other stakeholders
	Broaden the reach of alcohol brief interventions to currently underserved but high-risk groups (such as blue-collar males).	John Mooney Consultant in Public Health	April 2023	Increased uptake of ABIs in non- traditional settings e.g. Housing services & criminal justice settings.
Individuals are empowered to	Deliver training within maternity services to upskill staff around shared decision making	Amanda Gotch Realistic Medicine	Training delivered as	Pre and post confidence testing for staff
		Programme Manager	test in maternity Feb	Training evaluation

access care that is	and look for opportunities to test in other	2023 –	CollaboRATE shared decision-making
right for them.	areas	learning to	tool for service users.
		inform furthe	r
		roll out in	
		other areas.	

Priority area: Children

- Young people enter adulthood with the capabilities and support to maximise mental health and wellbeing.
- All children facing adverse childhood events (ACEs) in their lives are supported by a joined up multi-agency approach from us and our partners.
- The inequalities gap between Care Experienced and non-Care Experienced young people is reduced.
- The outcomes for those children living in areas of deprivation are similar to those living in areas of affluence (beyond clinical outcomes).
- Families living in poverty are supported to thrive.
- Tackle intergenerational propagation of substance use and related illnesses (such as FASD very underdiagnosed)

Action	What we need to do to deliver our action in Year 1?	Responsibility	Timescales	Measures and Evidence
Deliver on the	Deliver against year 1 actions within the Child Poverty Action Plan	Action Leads	March 2024 (See specific timescales to actions within linked report)	Child Poverty Action Plan
child poverty plan	Complete evaluation of income maximisation work in children services and use learning to upscale in other areas	Tracy Davis Child Health Commissioner	March 2023	Evaluation complete
	Develop clear actions for expansion of early years financial inclusion pathway based on recommendations from local research.	Tracy Davis Child Health Commissioner	March 2023	Action plan agreed

Priority area: Colleagues & Culture

- A workforce able to do today's work today and innovate for tomorrow.
- We have work and roles that support people's health, safety and wellbeing.
- Colleagues are included, supported and empowered to make their best contribution.

Action	What we need to do to deliver our action in Year 1?	Responsibility	Timescales	Measures and Evidence
Empowering and	Set the foundations to embed a culture of	Liz Howarth	March 2024	NHS Grampian Staff Equalities
upskilling our	inclusivity and positive allyship through the	Engagement and Inclusion Manager		Network
people to create	activities of the NHSG Staff Equalities Network,	inclusion Manager		NHSG AR Plan 2023
an environment	associated Staff Groups and through the			
where we can	delivery of actions identified in NHS Grampian			
bring our whole	Antiracism Plan 2023			
selves and feel	Publish Anti-racism policy and promote			
equipped and	Allyship in the workplace as a means of			
empowered to	tackling inequalities linked to protected			
tackle	characteristics			
discrimination,				
promote	Identify barriers to accessing enhanced	Emma Hepburn We Care	March 2024	Pulse survey
inclusion and	wellbeing support resources due to health or	Programme Lead		
reduce	social inequality and what is required to			
inequalities	overcome these barriers			

t	Continue work in support of widening access to health and social care careers for those from areas of economic deprivation	June Brown Executive Nurse Director, Gerry Lawrie Head of Workforce Development	March 2024	Evidence of a range of programmes on offer including apprenticeships and long term unemployed programme. Outputs of review of local and national offer as gap analysis to highlight opportunities for development.
1	'Time for Wellbeing' initiative to address work related drivers of health inequalities for Facilities and Estates staff	Chantal Wood Deputy General Manager Facilities, Emma Hepburn We Care Programme Lead	March 2024	Measures to be agreed in 1 st quarter
	Continue to provide access to wellbeing support for all staff in respect of specific areas linked to health inequalities: domestic violence, menopause and cost of living	Emma Hepburn We Care Programme Lead, Julie Phillips Public Health Practitioner - Advanced	March 2024	Measures to be agreed in 1 st quarter
	Complete re-grading of eligible Band 2 clinical HCSW roles to Band 3, improving average income levels for this lower banded group	Philip Shipman Acting Head of People and Change, Ashley Catto HR Manager	March 2024	Re-gradings completed

Enablers				
	Understand picture of health inequalities across our population in Grampian and share across system	Corri Black Consultant in Public Health Medicine, Jillian Evans Head of Health Intelligence & Learning Health Systems	March 2024	Population Health profile accessible to all and evidence this is influencing decision-making across the system
	Agree indicators measuring the impact of our actions on population outcomes as a part of our Learning Health System	Shantini Paranjothy Deputy Director of Public Health and Danny Ruta Consultant in Public Health Medicine	March 2024	Population Health outcome indicators agreed and incorporated into livery and performance assurance frameworks