



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Christine McLaughlin
Co-Director of Population Health
Scottish Government

Public Audit Committee
Room T3.60
The Scottish Parliament
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9 May 2024

Dear Ms McLaughlin,

The 2022/23 audit of NHS Forth Valley

As you may be aware, the Public Audit Committee has been considering the Auditor General for Scotland's (AGS) section 22 report, [The 2022/23 audit of NHS Forth Valley](#) as part of its current work programme.

The report confirms that NHS Forth Valley was escalated to stage 4 of the NHS Scotland Performance Escalation Framework in November 2022 due to concerns relating to governance, leadership and culture. The report also highlights that Healthcare Improvement Scotland and the National Planning and Performance Oversight Group have raised concerns in relation to a number of performance-related issues and that NHS Education for Scotland have reported clinical supervision concerns.

To inform its consideration of the section 22 report, the Committee heard oral evidence from the AGS on the report at its meeting on [25 January 2024](#) and from NHS Forth Valley on [29 February 2024](#).

The Committee considered [follow-up written evidence](#) from NHS Forth Valley at its meeting on 2 May 2024. This evidence provided more recent access and waiting time performance information and an update on the status of the recommendations

resulting from its Corporate Governance Review. The Committee also considered the findings of the [follow-up inspection of Forth Valley Royal Hospital](#), published in April 2024 by Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS) which reported that—

“...significant progress has been made by NHS Forth Valley in all of the areas highlighted during our previous inspections”.

The Committee notes that stage 4 escalation brings direct formal oversight and coordinated engagement from the Scottish Government through an Assurance Board which is chaired by you, as the Co-Director of Population Health. The AGS’s report highlights that the Assurance Board has previously expressed frustration at NHS Forth Valley’s pace in improving performance, implementing agreed actions, and demonstrating improvement.

In light of the recent follow-up written evidence provided by NHS Forth Valley, in addition to the findings of the recent HIS follow-up inspection of Forth Valley Royal Hospital, the Committee seeks views from NHS Forth Valley Assurance Board on the progress that NHS Forth Valley is making in response to the concerns raised by a range of review bodies.

The Committee would be grateful for a response by **6 June 2024**.

Yours sincerely

Richard Leonard MSP
Convener