

Health, Social Care and Sport Committee
Tuesday, 4 June 2024
18th Meeting, 2024 (Session 6)

NHS waiting times - Note by the Clerk

1. As agreed at its meeting on [30 April 2024](#), the Committee will hold an evidence session with stakeholders to discuss NHS waiting times at its meeting today.
2. The session will focus on current challenges with cancer waiting times, and explore areas of development – including using technology and innovation to improve waiting times.
3. Public Health Scotland recently published information on [Inpatient, Day Case and Outpatient Stage of Treatment Waiting Times](#) and [Diagnostic Waiting Times](#).
4. The Scottish Government last published [performance data on the current Local Delivery Plan \(LDP\) Standards](#) in September 2022.
5. On 28 May, the BBC reported that [NHS Scotland waiting lists have hit a record high](#).
6. The Committee will hear from witnesses representing the following organisations:
 - NHS Scotland Centre for Sustainable Delivery
 - The Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS)
 - The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh (RCSEd)
 - Macmillan Cancer Support
7. The NHS Scotland Centre for Sustainable Delivery provided a background briefing paper in advance of the session, which is included at Annexe A.

Clerks to the Committee
May 2024

Annex A: Submission by NHS Scotland's Centre for Sustainable Delivery (CfSD)



Health, Social Care and Sport Committee

Briefing

4 June 2024

Background

NHS Scotland's Centre for Sustainable Delivery (CfSD), launched in 2021, is playing a central role in working with Health Boards to sustainably improve and transform Scotland's health care system through innovation, collaboration and clinical leadership.

Part of NHS Golden Jubilee and commissioned by the Scottish Government, CfSD brings together existing transformation programmes with an innovation team to support the rapid rollout of new techniques, innovations and safe, fast and efficient pathways for Scotland's patients.

The purpose of the Centre for Sustainable Delivery is to:

- Design and drive national redesign and transformation programmes to enable a sustainable health and care system that provides world class excellence in care experience and outcomes.
- Deliver national improvement in care across NHS Scotland through the implementation of optimal care pathways, sustainable improvements in service delivery, and the sharing of best practice.
- Drive redesign and transformation through collaboration and partnership working – developing and maintaining networks of clinicians and senior leaders across specialities and settings.
- Undertake research and publish evidence based learning to establish the CfSD as an internationally recognised unit for supporting system change.
- Assess, monitor and redesign through data analysis, by using national and local data to inform system understanding, prioritisation and programme design to optimally achieve key objectives.

Our Strategic Priorities

Ref.	Strategic Priority	Responsible Team
SP1	Driving transformational and sustainable change to improve planned care patient access and outcomes across NHS Scotland.	Modernising Patient Pathways Programme
SP2	Support the development of a national elective coordination unit, including the transition to an operational model, which will support Boards with planned care access.	National Elective Coordination Unit
SP3	Define best practice in key areas within Unscheduled Care which improve the timeliness and safety of patient care and patient and staff experience. Develop supporting tools and guidance.	Unscheduled Care Programme
SP4	Reduce the proportion of later-stage cancers (stage III and IV) diagnosed over the next 10 years, with a focus on those from areas of deprivation.	Cancer Improvement and Earlier Diagnosis Programme
SP5	Support the ongoing delivery of the Endoscopy and Urology Diagnostic Recovery and Renewal Plan.	National Endoscopy Programme
SP6	Facilitate the rapid assessment of new technologies for potential national adoption through the Accelerated National Innovation Adoption (ANIA) pathway and lead the accelerated implementation of approved technologies across NHS Scotland.	Innovation Programme
SP7	Improve and evidence environmental sustainability within hospital theatres across NHS Scotland and support Health Boards to meet the net zero commitments for NHS Scotland.	National Green Theatres Programme
SP8	Enhance the delivery of planned care, by facilitating initiatives designed to improve demand and capacity balance, promoting greater elective activity and addressing waiting times.	Planned Care Programme

Our national programmes

Programme	Description
Modernising Patient Pathways (MPP) Programme	The MPP team support the delivery of improvements in planned care across NHS Scotland. They support front line clinical teams to develop sustainable improvements in service delivery. The team provide expertise in helping to redesign models of care, sharing best practice, and working to balance capacity with demand for services.
National Elective Coordination Unit (NECU)	The NECU team are developing a national elective coordination unit, which will help to reduce variation, and support improved access to care by providing a consistent approach to national demand and capacity assessment and allocation.
Unscheduled Care Programme	The National Unscheduled Care programme deliver implementation support, develop national tools, and manage system capacity and capability diagnostics in order to help Boards improve unscheduled care delivery.
Cancer Improvement and Earlier Diagnosis Programme	The Cancer Improvement and Earlier Diagnosis team drives NHS Scotland's cancer strategic priorities. They have a focus on developing and delivering best practice and optimising diagnostic pathways across Scotland, and will play an integral role in delivering Scotland's new 10 year cancer strategy.
National Endoscopy Programme	The National Endoscopy Programme helps support Boards in delivering the aims and objectives of the Endoscopy and Urology Diagnostic Recovery and Renewal Plan.
Innovation Programme	The Accelerated National Innovation Adoption (ANIA) Pathway is designed to identify and support national adoption of high-impact innovations at pace.
National Green Theatres Programme	The Green Theatres progress will support Health Boards to meet the net zero commitments for NHS Scotland through reducing the carbon footprint of theatres and deliver more environmentally sustainable surgery.
Planned Care Programme	The Planned Care team have a national remit to monitor planned care performance across NHS Scotland territorial Health Boards. They also lead national programmes of work around Trauma and Orthopaedics, Ophthalmology and Radiology to deliver transformational change and improvement.

The Centre for Sustainable Delivery has 7 key objectives which help guide the development and prioritisation of its work.

Our objectives are:

Maximise Capacity	Building capacity and capability across NHS Scotland. This includes optimising and maximising the overall national capacity to improve patient access.
Reduce Unnecessary Demand	Ensuring that the patient is treated by the right clinician, in the right setting, at the right time. This avoids waste and enables rapid access to treatment to those who need it most. It is based around the principle of ensuring senior clinical decision making at earlier points in the pathway, and the development of effective pathways which make best use of capacity available.
Harness Innovation	Harnessing technological innovations to address some of the most complex health challenges across NHS Scotland to provide a direct and positive approach on patient outcomes. This includes coordinating the Accelerated National Innovation Adoption (ANIA) pathway to identify, test and adopt high-impact innovations across NHS Scotland.
Enhance Staff Capability and Capacity	Identifying and maximising opportunities for staff upskilling. This includes taking into account the demands of the changing health and care environment and new ways of working.
Safe and Effective Patient Care	While all CfSD programmes are aimed at delivering safe and effective patient care, there are a number of programmes which have a specific focus on ensuring this. This includes evaluating the effectiveness and impact of new initiatives and pathways.
Form Strategic Partnerships	Developing partnerships with a range of skilled organisations to deliver transformation across a range of areas and disciplines. This includes working with NHS Scotland Academy and NES to develop future workforce models. It will also include working with primary and secondary care, innovation and digital health to deliver sustainable new models of care.
Conduct research and publish evidence based learning	CfSD aims to become an internationally recognised unit for supporting transformation and system change. To do this, we will publish research and learning that demonstrates and evidences the value, impact and benefits realisation of our programmes.

Earlier Cancer Diagnosis Programme – Areas of Focus

- **Framework for Effective Cancer Management (FECM)**
 - The Framework for Effective Cancer Management was published in 2019 and refreshed December 2021. The Framework provides NHS Cancer Teams with the tools to effectively manage people with a suspicion of cancer, from the point of referral to first treatment through eight elements.
 - CfSD work with Boards' Cancer Management Teams regularly to ensure the FECM is embedded and patients are diagnosed and treated as quickly as possible. Where cancer pathway challenges are identified, innovative solutions are explored and best practice shared from other areas.



- **Detect Cancer Earlier (DCE) Programme**
 - **Diagnostics**
 - CfSD is responsible for commissioning optimal cancer diagnostic pathways to be developed in NHS Scotland. This is a clinically-led process which involves engagement with and input from specialist teams across NHS Scotland.
 - The development of optimal cancer diagnostic pathways will help improve the timeliness and efficiency of the diagnostic pathway, enabling accelerated access to decision to treat for those with a cancer diagnosis, while providing reassurance and reducing anxiety for those who do not.

- The lung cancer diagnostic pathway was published in December 2022 and the head and neck cancer pathway was published in January 2024. Work is now under way to scope an optimal diagnostic pathway for colorectal cancers.
- The development of Scotland's first Rapid Cancer Diagnostic Services (RCDSs) is being led through the Centre for Sustainable Delivery (CfSD). RCDSs have been established within existing NHS infrastructure and are operational in:
 - NHS Ayrshire and Arran,
 - NHS Dumfries and Galloway,
 - NHS Fife,
 - NHS Lanarkshire and
 - NHS Borders.

Rapid Cancer Diagnostic Services are a useful addition to how cancer can be diagnosed in Scotland. They provide primary care with access to a new fast-track diagnostic pathway for people with **non-specific symptoms suspicious of cancer**, such as weight loss and fatigue.

▪ Innovation

- The DCE Programme has funded two innovation test beds in NHS Scotland (NHS Grampian and NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde) to use an artificial intelligence (AI) product to help prioritise Chest X-Ray for those that flag a suspected lung cancer for rapid follow-on CT. This will support delivery of Scotland's optimal lung cancer diagnostic pathway. Working through the NHS Scotland ANIA pathway the CfSD team are working in partnership with CfSD Innovation team to develop a value case to support Scotland wide role out via the IDA.

▪ Primary Care

- The Scottish Referral Guidelines (SRG) for Suspected Cancer have been developed to support primary care clinicians to identify those with symptoms suspicious of cancer and identify those who require urgent assessment by a specialist.
- A clinical refresh of the Scottish Referral Guidelines for Suspected Cancer is underway via CfSD to help ensure the right person is on the right pathway at the right time. This happens regularly to ensure the guidelines are fit for purpose.
- A new primary care cancer education platform – Gateway C – was launched on 30 April in NHS Scotland, supported by NHS Education for Scotland (NES) and CfSD Cancer Improvement and Earlier Diagnosis team. Funded for 2 years initially via SG, Gateway C

provides innovative, and tailored information to support earlier cancer diagnosis efforts and enable effective decision-making. This free online platform is accessible to all primary care clinicians including pharmacists, dentists and optometrists.

▪ **Supporting Endoscopy**

- Access to endoscopy and imaging are key in diagnosing cancer. To specifically support scope based diagnostics the Scottish Government published an [Endoscopy and Urology Diagnostic Recovery and Renewal Plan](#) The plan, delivered via CfSD Endoscopy team, focuses on key areas such as: Balancing Demand and Capacity; Workforce Training and Development; Infrastructure; and Innovation and Redesign.