

## **Area Partnership Forum Constitution and Term of Reference**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Area Partnership Forum has the key role in ensuring that best practice in the management, development and deployment of our staff is planned, monitored, shared and achieved throughout NHS Western Isles.

### **2. PURPOSE**

- 2.1 The purpose of the Area Partnership Forum is to lead, facilitate and monitor the effectiveness of partnership working between management and staff across NHS Western Isles.
- 2.2 The Forum will ensure a system wide approach and will carry out policy development and approval across the system to support staff governance.
- 2.3 The Forum will also advocate, broker, and monitor Staff Side involvement in all aspects of service planning and strategy development.

### **3. COMPOSITION AND TERM OF OFFICE**

- 3.1 The Joint Chairpersons of the Forum shall be the Chief Executive and the Employee Director.
- 3.2 Membership of the Area Partnership Forum shall comprise
- ▶ Chief Executive
  - ▶ Director of Human Resources and Workforce Development
  - ▶ Director of Finance
  - ▶ Nurse Director / Chief Operating Officer
  - ▶ Medical Director
  - ▶ Director of Public Health
  - ▶ Communications Manager
  - ▶ Associate Chief Operating Officer (Primary Care)
  - ▶ Associate Chief Operating Officer (Secondary Care)
  - ▶ Employee Director
  - ▶ A representative of each of the following organisations

UNISON  
Royal College of Nursing  
Royal College of Midwifery

UNITE  
British Medical Association  
British Dietetic Association  
British Dental Association  
Chartered Society of Physiotherapy  
Society of Chiropractors and Podiatrists  
Society of Radiographers

3.3 In addition, the following may at the discretion of the Forum be invited to attend

- ▶ Chairperson of Staff Governance Committee
- ▶ Representative of Occupational Health
- ▶ Health and Safety Officer
- ▶ Non-Executive Board Members

#### **4. REMIT**

4.1 The Area Partnership Forum will be involved in issues beyond Human Resources and take a proactive approach in embedding partnership working at all levels to assist the process of devolved decision making. The Forum will contribute to local and regional planning arrangements for service and workforce development and delivery and maximise employment security.

#### **5. FUNCTIONS AND OBJECTIVES**

5.1 The Area Partnership Forum's functions and objectives are to

- ▶ Approve and monitor the implementation of all Human Resource policies and report to the Staff Governance Committee as required;
- ▶ Be Partnership Champions for NHS Western Isles in communicating the work of the Area Partnership Forum;
- ▶ Contribute to the development of strategies and action plans to inform the NHS Western Isles Local Delivery Plan and the Local Development Plan;
- ▶ Consider and comment on other policies and strategies referred by the Board;
- ▶ Participate in the improvement and development of sustainable services within budget;

- ▶ Assess the impact of decisions upon staff;
- ▶ Assess and take appropriate action in relation to Partnership Information Network (PIN) guidelines;
- ▶ Link with Committees, Sub-Committees and groups to ensure that partnership values and practices are in place in all parts of NHS Western Isles;
- ▶ Approve and monitor progress against the Annual Workplan of, and receive regular minutes from, the Human Resources Forum;
- ▶ Respond to consultation from the Scottish Partnership Forum and Scottish Workforce Advisory Group;
- ▶ Oversee, monitor and evaluate the processing of Staff Surveys and the SAAT;

5.2 The Forum shall draw up and approve, before the start of each financial year, an Annual Workplan / Calendar of Business / Standing Agenda Items for the Forum's planned work during the forthcoming year. This document shall stipulate the dates of all meetings.

## **6. AUTHORITY**

- 6.1 The Forum is authorised by the Board to investigate any activity within its terms of reference, and in so doing, is authorised to seek any information it requires from any employee.
- 6.2 The Forum has the authority of the Board to develop and approve employment policies through the Partnership process.
- 6.3 In order to fulfil its remit, the Committee may obtain whatever professional advice it requires, and require Directors or other officers of the Board to attend its meetings.
- 6.4 The External Auditor and Internal Auditor shall have the right of direct access to the Joint Chairpersons of the Area Partnership Forum.

## **7. MEETINGS**

- 7.1 The Area Partnership Forum shall meet monthly and each meeting shall last for a maximum of three hours.

- 7.2 Meetings of the Committee will be quorate when at least three management members and three Staff Side members are present, including both joint Chairs.
- 7.3 The Agenda will be agreed by the Joint Chairpersons two weeks prior to the date of the meeting and all papers circulated at least one week in advance of the meeting date.
- 7.4 The Joint Chairpersons will conduct business and maintain proper conduct of meetings. The Joint Chairpersons will also be responsible for ensuring that individual members uphold the partnership principles and standards of behaviour and cooperative spirit of the Forum.
- 7.5 The Area Partnership Forum shall be a place where effective meetings are conducted in an atmosphere of mutual respect, even when individuals are in disagreement over a specific issue. The following standards of behaviour are the ground rules to support this environment and all members are required to adhere to them.
- ▶ There must be openness, honesty and transparency within all communications;
  - ▶ Jargon free language should be used and acronyms should be avoided wherever possible;
  - ▶ Members who do not fully understand issues should ensure that they obtain clarity and understanding before arriving at a decision;
  - ▶ There must be respect for each other as individuals with equal rights. Where disagreement or exploration of an idea takes place, the matter in hand should be discussed without taking issue with or attacking the individual making the point;
  - ▶ The responsibilities that individuals have as representatives of their organisation should be recognised and respected;
  - ▶ Confidentiality is essential within the Forum and parameters should be agreed and maintained. Where an issue is potentially sensitive, there must be agreement on how it will be communicated outwith the Forum and thus to maintain this level of confidentiality;
  - ▶ Individuals have the right to express opinions and not be quoted to others external to the Forum; and
  - ▶ Consensus should be the key goal as far as possible, with adequate time for discussion and debate. Where consensus is not reached and there is disagreement, but a recommendation has to be made, then the disagreeing parties and their reasons must be clearly identified in the minutes.

## **8. WORKING GROUPS**

- 8.1 The Area Partnership Forum Will agree and establish appropriate working groups to deliver agreed plans and targets, e.g. HRF.

## **9. MINUTES AND REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS**

- 9.1 Within seven days of each meeting the Draft Minutes will be issued to the Joint Chairpersons for agreement. The agreed Draft Minutes will be sent to each member with the agenda and papers for the next meeting, for approval. The approved Minutes will be submitted to the next available Staff Governance Committee and NHS Board meeting for information.
- 9.2 Within 24 hours of each meeting an Action List arising from the meeting will be issued to all members.
- 9.3 The Chair will report to the Board, on an exception bases, any significant issues arising in advance of approved minutes being made available.