

3-YEAR WORKFORCE PLAN (2022-2025)



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Chief Executive Foreword

The past two and a half years have been unprecedented in the scale, complexity and enduring challenges we have faced. Our ways of thinking, responding to and addressing these challenges have changed beyond anything we could have imagined. Both you and our communities should be proud of how you responded and rose rapidly to frequent and new challenges.

I wish to extend my gratitude to all Health and Social Care staff for their unwavering commitment during the Covid-19 pandemic. The pressures, covid and non-covid, faced across all areas of the organisation were, and still are, considerable. Our workforce is at the core of NHS Western Isles and without you we would not have been able to continue delivering the exceptional level of service and care we have maintained.

In the Western Isles we face very unique challenges in terms of steadily declining population, rurality, transport and infrastructure. We therefore need to act in ensuring the workforce we can recruit and retain is equipped, confident and competent to meet service challenges. This will require a change in how we think about delivering services and help shape and support our future workforce in an ever-changing environment.

Effective workforce planning is crucial to ensuring that NHS Western Isles have the right people with the right values, behaviours, skills and experience providing exceptional care to the population of the Western Isles. Workforce planning ensures that any changes we need to make, both now and in the future, take the entire workforce into account. Having a motivated, skilled, experienced and flexible workforce that seeks to support the people of the Western Isles will ensure our organisation continues to respond to the needs of the population in our local communities.

NHS Western Isles is an organisation that cares about its workforce, patients and the wider communities we serve. We will continue to ensure that the Health & Wellbeing of our Workforce is a key priority. The introduction of our dedicated NHS Western Isles Wellbeing Group will support and deliver this, along with an inclusive culture, across the organisation.

In NHS Western Isles, I, along with my colleagues, will ensure that our workforce is involved, engaged, equipped, developed and encouraged to deliver high quality care. To achieve this, we will continue to ensure our current and future leaders and staff are supported and developed to help meet the challenges ahead.

The visible and enduring commitment of the NHS Western Isles workforce cannot be understated. We are a highly skilled dedicated workforce and it's our pledge to continue to invest in that workforce with the commitment to improve health and wellbeing within the Western Isles.

I thank every member of our workforce for their resilience, responsiveness, perseverance and drive in recent years and would like to encourage you all to work with us to continue in delivering on this Workforce Plan. I wish to acknowledge all contributions and involvement in the development of this 3-Year Workforce Plan.

Gordon Jamieson
Chief Executive
NHS Western Isles



1. Introduction

The development of this 3-Year Workforce Plan (2022-2025) seeks to highlight the significant challenges faced in developing and sustaining a current, safe and resilient workforce. The requirements of the workforce are such that they need to be capable of meeting the current and future needs of the population within the Western Isles.

The plan looks at all areas of the workforce to highlight both the challenges and opportunities for the future. The next three years will see the implementation of a number of major Scottish Government Policy Initiatives that are aimed at service recovery, development and meeting the needs of a changing and ageing population. This is expected to be achieved through additional capacity, new service models and service transformation.

Ensuring the growth of a highly trained and educated workforce is not without its challenges. The various training and employability pipelines provide training and education opportunities that range from months in some cases to up to 10 years in some medical specialties, many of which are commissioned at a national level. The planning for recruiting, developing and retaining the workforce takes place in a complex wider environment that includes challenges such as the continued fallout of both the Covid-19 Pandemic and Brexit, the ever increasing cost of living, the impact of changes in pensions and an ageing workforce, whilst other areas of opportunity emerge through the growth of everyday and specialist technologies.

With the significant complexities of the environment within NHS Western Isles we are continuing to focus on positive actions to create a more sustainable and skilled workforce.

This plan seeks to consider each driver and set out clear measureable actions over the next 3 years and the enabling workforce development required to provide support. Ensuring the emergence of a sustainable workforce is an increasing challenge and we will seek to refocus our efforts on improving the training and employment journey.

The NHS Western Isles Workforce Plan (2022-2025) is closely aligned to the NHS Western Isles Annual Delivery Plan 2022. It is crucial that the planning of our workforce effectively is done in partnership. This will help to ensure that we get our workforce right, with the appropriate skills, values, behaviours and knowledge to deliver services and provide quality responsive care to the population of Western Isles.

This plan will lead to the development of a 12 month action plan which will set out the key areas of focus over the next 12 months to ensure progress is maintained.

2. NHS Western Isles – An Overview

The NHS Western Isles Health Board is responsible for providing healthcare throughout the Western Isles adhering to the mission statement - to be 'The Best at What We Do'. and our overall purpose is 'to protect, promote and improve the health and wellbeing of the Western Isles population and to ensure the reliability and delivery of sustainable and safe healthcare and services'.

The Western Isles is located 40 miles off the North West Coast of Scotland, and is 130 miles long from the Butt of Lewis in the North to the Isle of Barra in the South. The population of the Western Isles was last recorded in 2019 and was approximately 26,720, spread over 280

townships. The Health Board employs over 1,000 staff, excluding GPs and Dentists and has a revenue budget of £101.161 million and a capital programme of £1.292 million.

NHS Western Isles works in conjunction with mainland Health Boards and other local organisations, including the local authority and third sector (voluntary) organisations, to provide a wide range of healthcare services to the local population. Where possible, services are provided locally, in the Western Isles, but for specific procedures and more specialist services, we work with mainland partners to provide services in other areas. In the main NHS partners are aligned to the west coast due to transport links and are predominately NHS GG&C, NHS Golden Jubilee and NHS Highland.

There are 3 hospitals across the Western Isles and the largest is the Western Isles Hospital located in Stornoway which provides a range of hospital acute specialities and mental health services. The hospital also includes diagnostic facilities, Ambulatory Care Unit, laboratory, Allied Health Professionals and other support services.

The Uist and Barra Hospital is located in Benbecula and it provides a local service for the population of the Southern Isles. The hospital provides care of older people, GP Acute and Midwifery led maternity service. In normal circumstances other than COVID 19 pandemic, many of the Consultants from the Western Isles Hospital, and some from mainland Health Boards, visit the Uist and Barra Hospital to provide outpatient services and more recently there has been a shift to virtual patient consultations.

The hospital located in Castlebay on the Isle of Barra is St Brendan's Hospital, with 5 beds currently, and is in a shared building with a Local Authority care home facility. It is supported by locum GP practitioners at present to provide care of older people, emergency care and other services within what is normally a 5 bedded hospital pre-Covid.

Additionally, the NHS Western Isles commissions services from strong partnership with other NHS Boards, for example Ear Nose & Throat (ENT) Surgery, Dermatology, Respiratory Medicine, Child Psychiatry, Rheumatology, Ophthalmology, Oral Surgery, Neurology, Oncology and Urology.

To enable a true workforce reflection there have also been the use of staff demographics from National Records Scotland as well as utilisation of e:ESS to help identify any future workforce issues.

3. National & Local Demographics

There is a continuing shift in the demographic of the population within Scotland with the single largest age grouping in 1981 of 16 years old rising to 49 years old in 2041. This profound change is a key driver behind the need to fundamentally review services and the manner in which they are provided. This demographic change and associated change in the demand for services influences future policy and strategy at a national level.

Scotland's population is projected to continue increasing until 2028, and then to fall.

Scotland's population is projected to grow by 0.3% to 2028. Between 2029 and 2045 the projections show a decrease in population of 1.8%. These are the first recent projections to show a decline in population.

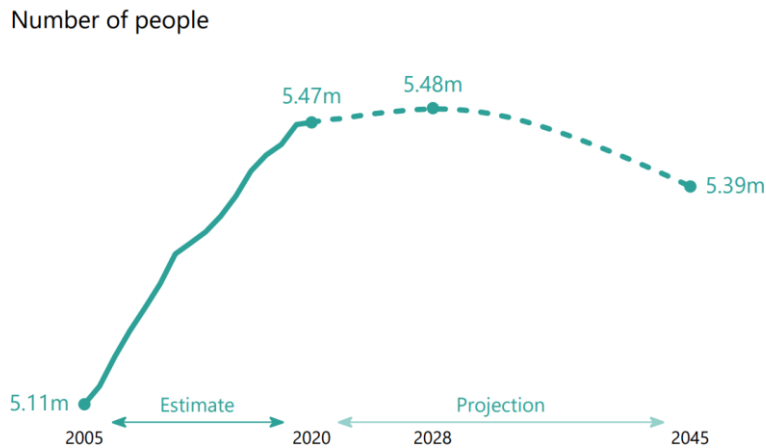


Figure 1: National Records Scotland (Projected Population of Scotland (Interim) 2020-based, Report)

Using updated population prediction (Population Projections (cne-siar.gov.uk)) the islands are expecting to see a 6% drop in population by 2028, one of the biggest population decreases in Scotland. Working age population is set to decrease by 6% by 2028 and in contrast the over 75s, with the greatest levels of co-morbidity, is set to rise by 25%. The population changes will result in a year-on-year reduction in the available workforce to nurse, care and attend to the most vulnerable of people whose numbers are increasing year on year. We must all be ambitious in our efforts to reduce this risk to our ability to care.

Percentage change in projected population, 2018-2028

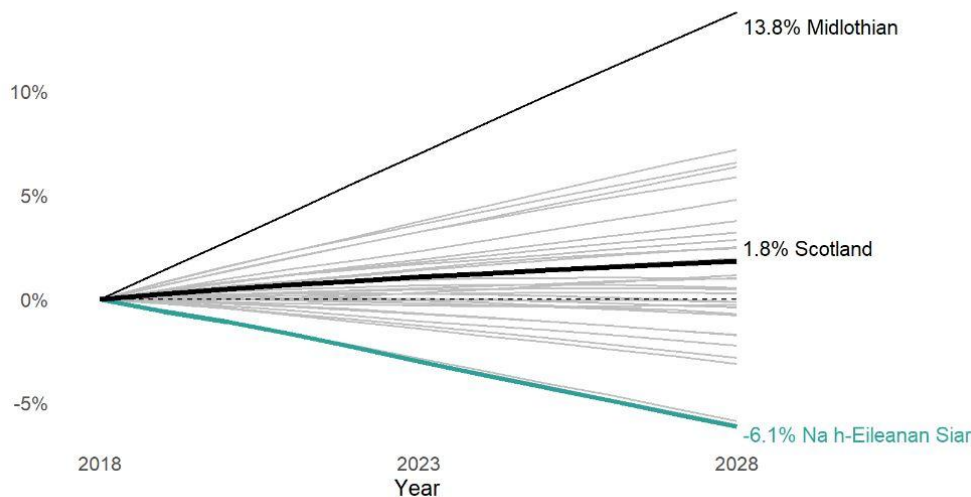


Figure 2: National Records Scotland (Population Estimates)

Between 1998 and 2020, the 25 to 44 age group saw the largest percentage decrease (-26.7%). The 65 to 74 age group saw the largest percentage increase (+38.3%).

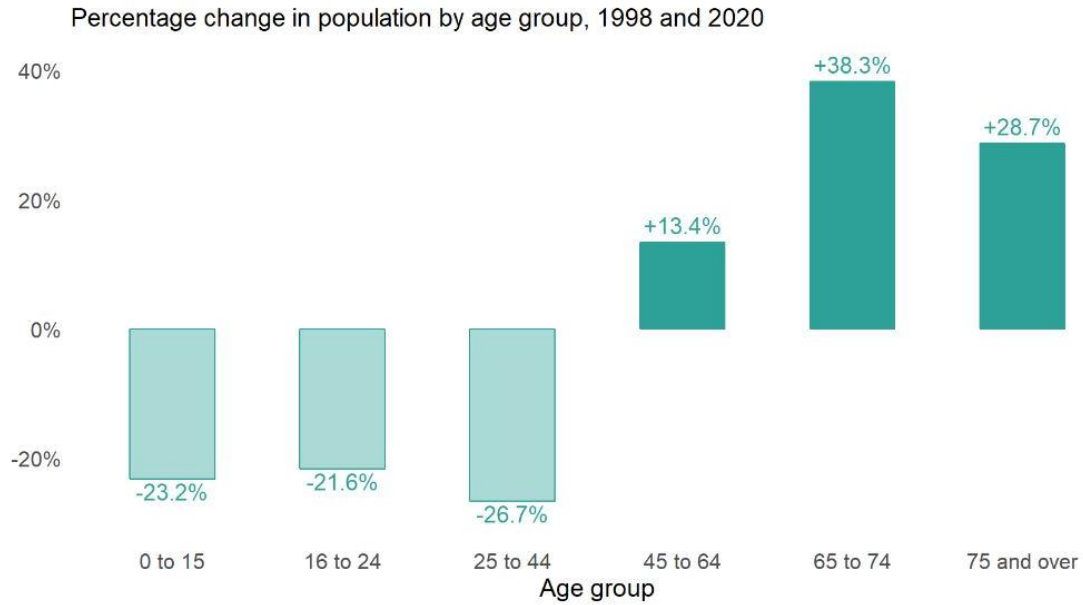


Figure 3: National Records Scotland (Population Estimates)

Between 2018 and 2028, the 45 to 64 age group is projected to see the largest percentage decrease (-14.9%) and the 75 and over age group is projected to see the largest percentage increase (+25.3%). In terms of size, however, 45 to 64 are projected to remain the largest age group.

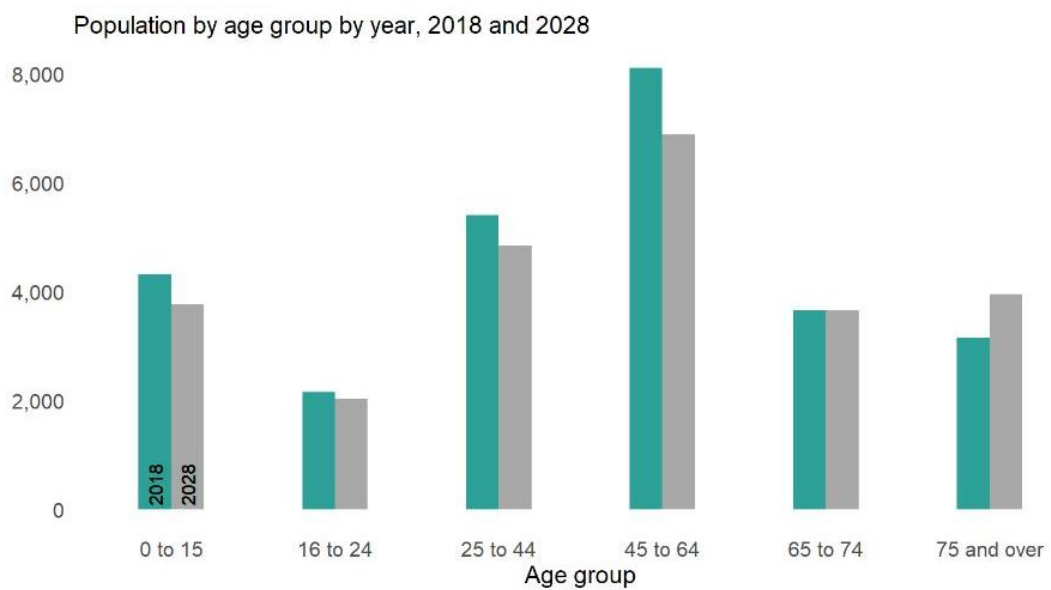


Figure 4: Projected Population Change by Age Group for the Outer Hebrides, 2018 and 2028 (cne-siar.gov.uk)

The average age of the population of Na h-Eileanan Siar is projected to increase as the baby boomer generation ages and more people are expected to live longer.

Projected population profile, 2018 and 2028

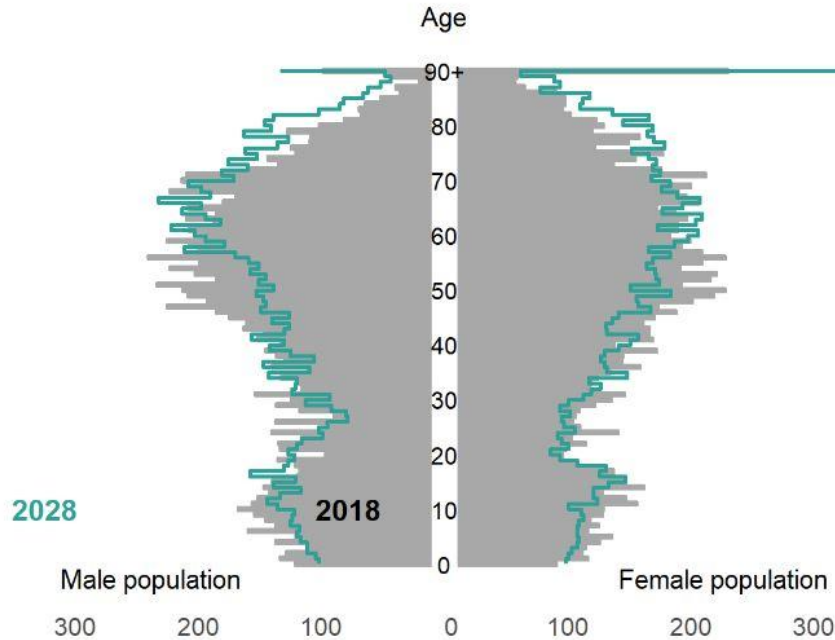


Figure 5: National Records Scotland (Population Estimates for Scotland)

This change will see an increase in the number of people living with a number of co-morbidities, long-term conditions, multiple and complex needs and a greater likelihood of requiring health and social care services. This will inevitably put pressure on services and there is a need to continue investing in prevention and promotion of health improvement. There is also a need to more fully maximise the use of technology.

It is also important to consider the ratio between deaths and births within the Western Isles in comparison with the rest of Scotland. The first four calendar months of 2022 saw a ratio of 1:0.48, meaning for every 2 deaths there is just under 1 birth, compared to a Scottish average for the same period of 1:0.73. The birth rate is starting to increase back to pre-pandemic levels; however, deaths are increasing and must be considered in the context of Workforce Planning within NHS Western Isles.

In light of these demographic statistics, some of the key workforce challenges and actions expected for NHS Western Isles remain unchanged:

- Attracting and retaining staff to NHS Western Isles with suitable skills – in particular into medical and specialist roles.
- Developing and maintaining the skills of the current workforce. Opportunities continue to emerge for remote learning which is of benefit to NHS WI in such a remote location. There remain challenges in accessing specialist off island training.
- Achieving financial balance in the context of greater service pressures and reducing funding
- Availability of rental housing due to competition with the short-term let market for new staff to relocate to Western Isles, especially in the Southern Isles.

- NHS Distance Island Allowance competing with other employers where this is paid at a higher level. This is potentially adding pressure to the recruitment and retention of staff.
- Health and Care staff, which are predominately female, are within a labour market where there is competition with early years and education. These posts are attractive due to working hours that allow childcare responsibilities to be balanced.
- A local labour market that is becoming increasingly challenging due to a reduction in the number of people of working age.
- Greater competition in a national and international labour market, particularly for medical and specialist roles.
- We are also in the process of being recognised as a Carer Positive employer.
- Access and support for ongoing personal development.

4. Defining the Workforce Plan

The NHS Western Isles Workforce Plan is reviewed annually ensuring this aligns with local, regional and national plans and policies. In particular this will be developed with the National Workforce Strategy (March 2022) in firm focus. This will seek to support the achievement of the vision to have a **‘sustainable, skilled workforce with attractive career choices and fair work where all are respected and valued for the work they do’**.

In order to make use of NHS Western Isles most important resource, its workforce, we require to redesign both how we deliver our services and equip and utilise the workforce available

It is important to recognise that whilst there are significant drivers within policy, societal and political areas, the impact of environmental factors ought to be factored in. Whilst the desire is to build a sustainable workforce that is capable of meeting the needs of the Western Isles, the environmental impacts on workforce availability cannot be understated. Whilst NHS Western Isles may not have an overarching hand in being able to impact on many of these drivers, it's important in the interest of values around openness, honesty and responsibility, that we fairly consider these drivers and how we can, if at all, address the impact they have.

There are a sizeable number of environmental factors that both act as a driver for increased activity and the requirement for workforce growth whilst other factors impact on existing workforce supply pipelines. Some of these are outlined below:

ENVIRONMENTAL DRIVERS

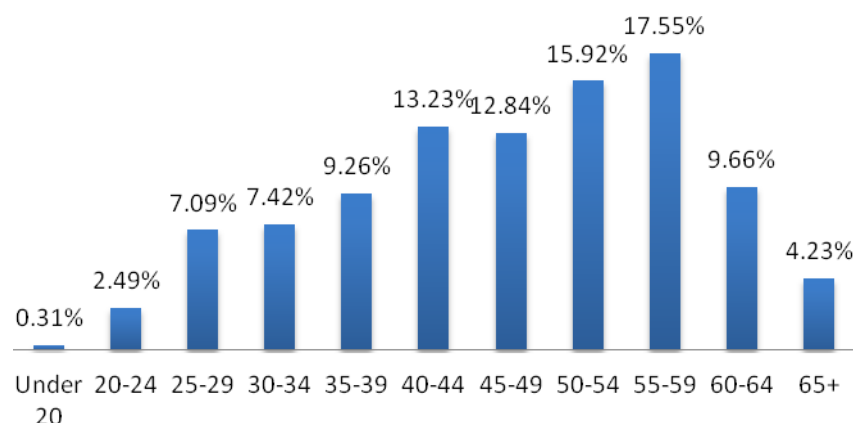


Much of these environmental drivers are impacted at a national and international level which gives little opportunity for NHS Western Isles to influence them. Drivers such as Covid-19 and Brexit (including access to Visas with a £20,480 salary threshold) within both Health and Social Care will likely impact on recruitment and retention of healthcare workers, whilst there are opportunities to grow and progress as an organisation with improvements in technological advancements.

5. Our Workforce

Age Profile

It is important to note that the significant impact of the ageing profile within NHS Western Isles. This not only impacts on the potential for retirements, but also the impact on absence rates as older employees are more susceptible to longer periods of absence. It is therefore vital to support the workforce to retain health at work and to continually promote attendance within the workplace. **47.36%** of the workforce are over 50 which signals a real necessity to focus on attracting a younger candidate to employment within NHS Western Isles.



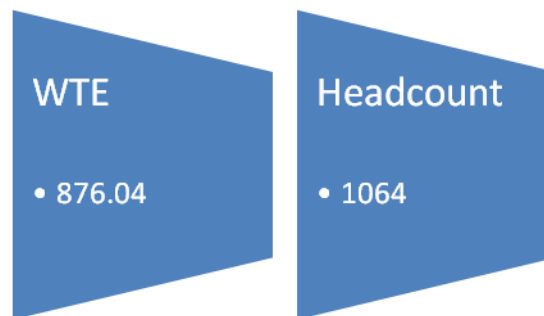
The significant impact of an ageing workforce is further evidenced with the Western Isles Health and social Care Partnership Workforce and Demographic Report as 31 March 2022. The details of this are found below highlighting projected retirements in the coming 10 years. This will inevitably have a knock on effect within the NHS Western Isles workforce as we see significant projected retirements within Home Care & Reablement.

Retirements	RAG	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30	30/31	Total
Allied Health Professionals	L	1	1		1		3	1	1	4	1	13
Dental	L	1		1	1	3			5	1	3	15
Hospital (Acute) Nursing	H	9	2	2	0	1	3	0	1	5	1	24
Community Hospital Nursing	M	3	1	0	2	4	0		2	3	0	15
Community Nursing	M	1		3	2	1	3	4	3	7	2	26
Mental Health	L				1	2	2			3	0	8
Management and PCIP	L	1		1			1	1	1		1	6
Adult Services	M	1	4	0	0	1	1	7	6	1	3	24
Residential Services	H	16	7	4	5	10	8	14	6	7	13	90
Home Care & Reablement	H	8	3	3	5	4	10	6	5	6	8	58
Management inc. Assessment	L	0	0	1	2	1	3	3	1	1	1	13
		41	18	15	19	27	34	36	31	38	33	292

Staff in Post (WTE)

NHS Western Isles workforce headcount as of 31st March 2022 was **1064**.

Over recent years this figure fluctuates around 1000 with little significant shift up or down.



Headcount by gender

The overwhelming majority of staff within NHS Western Isles are female, currently accounting for **83.65%** of the workforce. This is predominantly made up of staff within Nursing & Midwifery job family.

83.65%

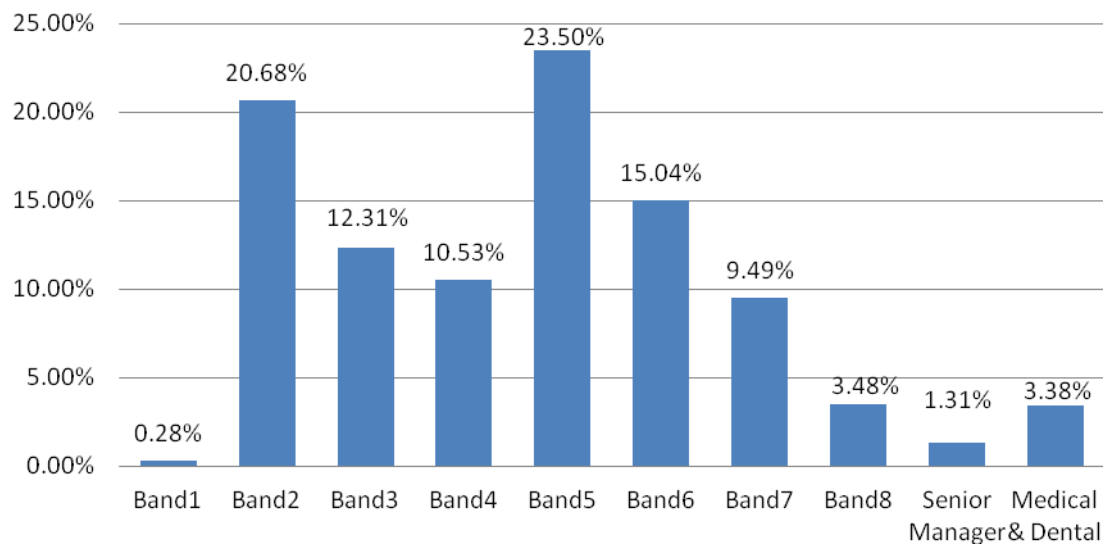


16.35%



Headcount by Grade

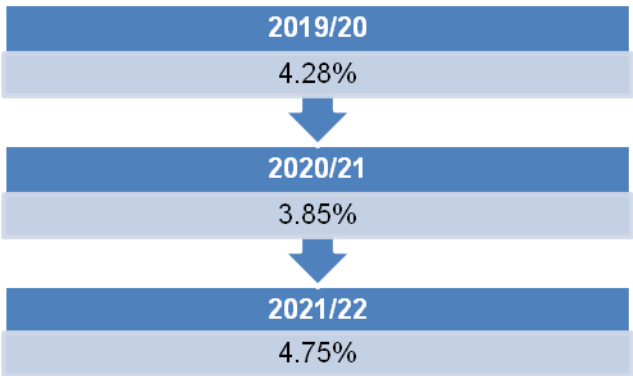
As would be expected, **44.18%** of the workforce within NHS Western Isles are bands 2 or 5. These are predominantly employees within the role of Domestic and Healthcare Assistant at Band 2, and Nursing roles in Acute and Community settings making up the majority of Band 5 roles.



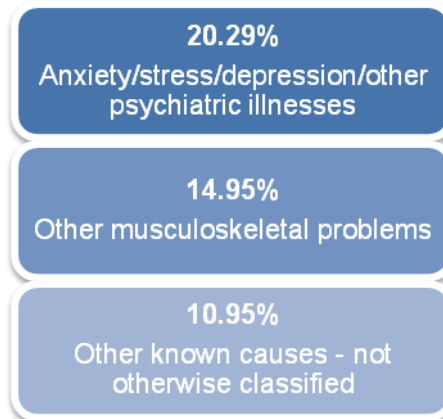
Yearly absence rates

Absence rates within NHS Western Isles remain steady averaging at **4.29%**. Whilst there was a dip to **3.85%** in 2020/21, this was largely due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent shielding and special leave provisions in place.

Over the next 3 years, continued support for better management of attendance will be offered to managers. Support from Occupational Health, Employee Assistance Programme and other resources will continue to be utilised with the goal of seeing absence rates reduce further.



Top 3 reasons of Long-term Absence 2019-2022

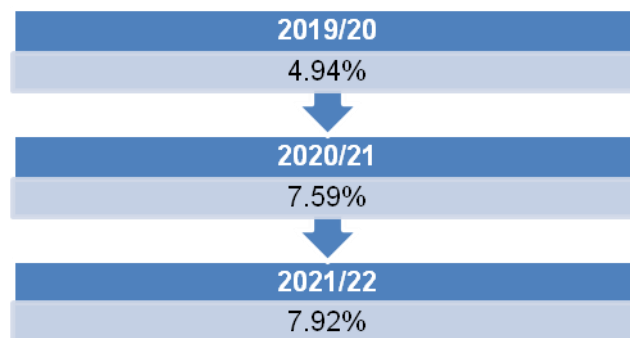


NHS Western Isles is committed to supporting our workforce through periods of sick leave. Long term absence has been identified as an area for improvement and our Employee Relations Team have increased monitoring and support for managers in dealing with long term absence. Support is also provided from Occupational Health to help both managers and employees in seeking to see these absence figures reduced.

Turnover yearly

Turnover has averaged at **6.82%** over the preceding 3 years. There was an increase over 2020/21 and 2021/22 which is largely explained by the increased recruitment activity around Test and Protect, Vaccination Programme and other Covid-19 related pressures.

As many of the workforce begin to approach retirement age, or have the special status to retire early, the focus for NHS Western Isles will be to create a sustainable workforce through various initiatives to attract, develop and nurture employees to mitigate against natural attrition.

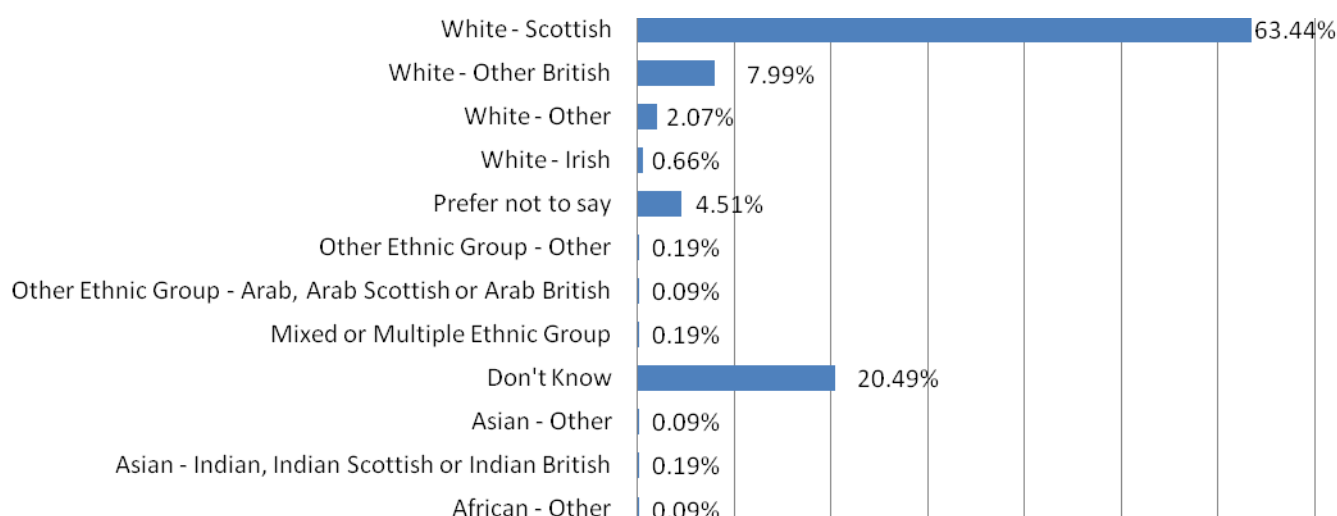


Ethnic Origin

NHS Western Isles' commitment to fairness and diversity for all who come into contact with its services is made in a very transparent way in the organisation's Corporate Values and Objective.

The vast majority of our workforce identify as '**White – Scottish**'. This largely reflects the picture within the local population, however NHS Western Isles will remain intent on

continuing to use inclusive processes and procedures (e.g. recruitment and retention) to support the inclusivity of all ethnic groups within the organisation.

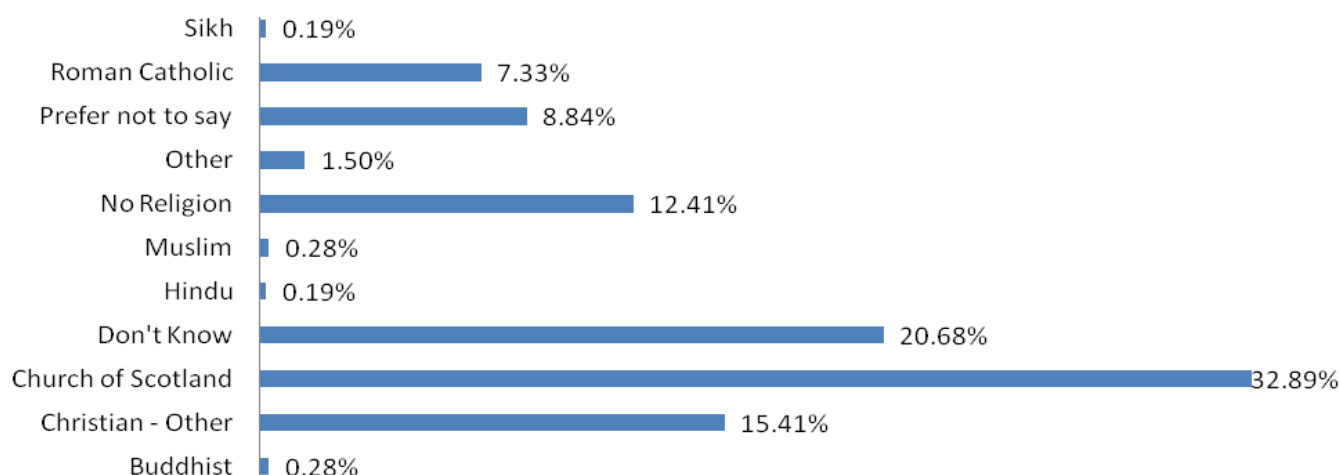


Communication and literary needs of racial groups are increasingly supported through the Health In My Language web resource, for provision of written materials, and via NHS Western Isles Service Level Agreement with Language Line, for simultaneous remote interpreting.

In relation to improving awareness in our community about the discrimination & persecution that people from minority ethnic/religious groups have historically faced, a key catalyst for this has been the work of the Western Isles Diversity and Equality Steering group (e.g. Annual Holocaust Memorial Day seminar).

Religion

As with the Ethnicity of our workforce, NHS Western Isles will continue to support inclusivity across all areas of the organisation. The breakdown of religious identity across the organisation is more spread out than Ethnic group, with **48.3%** identifying as '**Church of Scotland**' or '**Christian – Other**'. **41.93%** would identify as '**Don't Know**', '**No Religion**', or '**Prefer not to say**'.



Openness and responsiveness to all is at the heart of the NHS Western Isles Spiritual Care Policy. The Chaplaincy service at NHS Western Isles consoles those of all faiths or none. This heterogeneous approach is underpinned by the CEL 2008 on Spiritual Care.

6. Building Workforce Sustainability

The challenge of maintaining sustainable services against the backdrop of decreasing budgets will require service transformation. This will involve transformation of the workforce in terms of developing the necessary skills and relevant training. The priorities and challenges in the coming 3 years are noted from the services across the organisation, listed as follows.

Acute Nursing Services

Within Nursing services, the main difficulties in recruiting centre around the specialist areas. Many posts require experience or specialist qualification and whilst up skilling within the existing workforce can address some of these areas (Renal/HDU) there are still areas that require experience and vocational education (Stroke Specialist, SACT & Paediatrics). It is recognised that wider markets, national and ethical international recruitment will need to be explored in the future as our workforce demographic changes.

Some of the nurse led services such as Renal Dialysis, Diabetes and Chemotherapy are all experiencing growth in demand. This requires an increase in the number of staff required to deliver safer services and avoid patient transfer to mainland hospitals.

It was anticipated that following this sustained period of inactivity due to Covid-19, waiting lists would be adversely impacted. However, over the coming 3 years, a continued focus will be in place to mitigate the impact of these in:

- Outpatients
- Endoscopy
- Theatre
- Ophthalmology
- General Surgery
- Orthopaedics
- Gynaecology & Obstetrics
- Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery
- Cancer
- Radiology
- Specialist Services (Diabetes, Haemodialysis, Chemotherapy & Infusion, Rheumatology
- Neurology

One area within Nursing & Midwifery that needs to be considered in the coming 3 years is the number of staff in the **50-60+** age groups. This sees the possibility of some staff retiring at any point in the coming years and requires a number of initiatives to redress this balance. For example, earlier recruitment of newly qualified nurses and Return to Practice programmes.

To support the 3-Year Workforce Plan, an opportunity for 4 Newly Qualified Nurses (NQN) to undergo a 23 month NQN staff nurse development programme was developed in 2022. This will provide the NQN with 2 placements within Acute services to ensure a rounded

introduction to the Staff Nurse role. This programme would allow postholders time to partake in the flying start programme and are expected to undertake a quality improvement project, supported by the practice development and quality improvement team.

It is the intention that this opportunity will be made available each year, thus seeing NHS Western Isles actively addressing the ageing workforce, particularly within Nursing & Midwifery.

Urgent & Unscheduled Care

NHS Western Isles is committed to designing and implementing a 24/7 unplanned care health care model for all our residents.

Due to difficulties in sustaining the involvement of GPs for OOHs - Continued investment and training to develop Advance Nurse Practitioners is required to maintain a service for the future.

The change in the GP contract (MoU) is also a driver for Urgent Care provision being predominately ANP lead, however we need a flexible workforce that can work across primary and secondary care due to the remote geography and lower activity areas to ensure efficient use of resources.

Maternity Service

Have successfully trained a further two members of staff as Maternity Care Assistants (MCA) via University of West of Scotland. This will ensure that instead of a generalist Healthcare Assistant post, the requirements will be fulfilled by a role specific to the Maternity service. In addition this will see an increase in job satisfaction as the role sees them progress to working in the community.

NHS Western Isles currently has two midwifery staff members training as Sonographers via Glasgow Caledonian University. They will likely complete their respective training in early 2022. There is continued difficulty in recruiting to Midwife posts which will remain a focus for the organisation in the coming years.

Community Nursing

Community Nursing has continued to provide all necessary services and have been central to the mass vaccination programme, delivering vaccines in community halls, care homes and domiciliary visits.

Community Treatment and Care (CTaC) has continued to be implemented across the islands though there is still work to be completed to achieve the required capacity and create a permanent home for the team based in Stornoway. CTAC clinics are in operation and 100% of community treatment room services are offered to practices within the allocation resource made available by the Primary Care improvement Plan (PCIP). This service is available to all 9 GP practices and operating at full capacity.

Review of community nurse staffing via national workload tools is currently underway and will help to inform current and future Workforce Plans.

A strategy will be produced for Community Nursing that will cover not just the coming year but up to 2025; drawing on the ambition to transform nursing roles as set out in The CNOD paper “*District Nursing Role in Integrated Community Nursing Teams*”.

Hospital at home

The Hospital at Home Service has continued to expand over the past 12 months, providing acute care in the patient’s home environment. Patients can now be admitted to the Service directly from ED or by GP referral, therefore at times avoiding hospital admission altogether. The numbers of patients cared for has continued to increase, and although nominally capacity is 6 patients the caseload can often be 10 or 12 patients. Hospital at Home has also expanded into non-traditional activity to meet the needs of the Western Isles population, for e.g., Hospital at Home also has oversight of all OPAT patients receiving antibiotic therapy at home and also has responsibility for assessment and delivery of Covid-19 antiviral treatments in all community patients.

Current staffing is 1 WTE Co-ordinator, 1 WTE Nurse Practitioner, and 1 WTE Trainee Nurse Practitioner. The next steps for Hospital at Home include expansion to provide a service to the population in the Uists. The Service has been funded over the past 12 months by Health Improvement Scotland, and work is ongoing to secure funding for the continuation and expansion of this Service.

Uist and Barra

Across Uist and Barra there is an increased difficulty in recruiting to both specialist as well as more routine posts. This is due to a variety of factors linked to the rurality of the area including transport, housing and availability of peer and professional support.

Building on the collaborative working and learning, the intention during 2022 is to provide a substantive, sustainable medical presence based at St Brendan’s Community Hospital with both health teams (hospital and Medical Practice) working together to deliver high quality, joined up patient care. During 2022 leading on from the above will be further discussions and delivery of joint working between health and social care to meet the Workforce needs in the next 3-years.

Public Health

With the ending of the acute phase of the Covid-19 pandemic, the majority of staff who were deployed into health protection, contact tracing or Covid-19 testing roles have been able to return to their original employment. This includes the staff in health promotion that have been setting out their plans for 2022-24, recognising that the pandemic has changed thinking around the content and modes of delivery of their work. The public health intelligence and information team has undergone further personnel changes and is still seeking to recruit to vacant positions.

The remobilisation recognises that the need for robust and responsive health protection has not diminished. We have recruited an additional health protection clinical specialist to the small health protection team and are prepared for appointing to additional posts to manage variations and mutations (VAMs) of the Covid-19 virus as and when central resources are released for this.

Healthcare public health has been maintained to some degree during the acute phase of the pandemic but, with a reduction in intensity of health protection work, a stronger presence for areas such as mental health, child health, sexual health and cancer is now possible. Unfortunately, we have been unsuccessful despite repeated efforts to appoint to the vacant consultant in public health post which leaves a shortfall in our ability to take up leadership of some areas of healthcare planning and child public health.

Allied Health Professionals (AHP)

Recent service changes have been implemented in line with the response, recovery and remobilisation of services as a result of Covid-19. The introduction for some, and the expansion for others, of virtual clinical care within a range of the AHP services has opened up new opportunities for triaging, access to specialist clinicians and workforce deployment regardless of physical location of services. Similarly the sustaining of virtual therapy has generated efficiencies to enable caseload management to be extended due to the reduction in travel time. Such services enhance and complement in person patient care. The contribution of remote and rural engagement with students has also been actively pursued and demonstrated as an effective component to the education experience.

The development of workload management tools aligned to the Safe Staffing legislation is evolving and an update has been shared by the National Allied Health Professions Workforce Lead in May 2022. It is intended to apply the Professional Judgement Tool and Safety Huddle template for a fixed period of 2 weeks in September 2022 across all services. Initially this will be actioned with regard to current caseload but it is intended to address waiting lists and any data available in terms of assisting in the projection of demand. This may be in regard to alternative models of care, in development, expansion of services or aspirational to enable the Partnership and NHS Western Isles to consider the impact this will have on the workforce, its profile and patient care. Re-directing of resources or seizing the opportunity to re-set the system and focus on universal and targeting services is in keeping with the core AHP principles and engagement in mapping interventions associated with the Life Curve analysis, as well as the broader recognition of the AHP roles in public health activity. A refresh and updating of a Health Needs Assessment will assist in the projection of demand and the associated supply requirements in terms of an agile and skilled workforce.

Medical Staff

NHS Western Isles, in keeping with national challenges, find it difficult to appoint permanent Medical Staff to the health board and rely on Locum Fixed-Term Contracts and Agency appointments for various posts and specialities. The Brexit legacy and its implications will continue to impact the labour market for recruiting into these posts. Efforts have been made to address the current situation including SLA type agreements with medical agencies, exploring enhanced recruitment opportunities and developing system changes to service delivery. From a substantive consultant staff baseline of 19 we carry 5 long term vacancies. Currently the Emergency Department at Western Isles Hospital is covered 24/7 by a mix of substantive and locum medical staff. The out of hours GP service, along with the required 24/7 cover for our 2 community hospitals is a challenge but also part of the Western Isles system change approach to Urgent and Unscheduled Care. Currently these posts are reliant on locum cover, the majority being of an oilrig or rotational model, with the intention to develop a sustainable medical staff cohort.

Due to national shortages of medical staff availability, the availability and market value of locum cover is increasingly challenging. This has resulted in higher staffing costs, pressure on medical staffing and service provision.

Dental Services

Most dental services on the Western Isles are provided by the Health Board, with one independent General Dental Practitioner (GDP) in Stornoway. The essential works to introduce a new dental hub/ practice facilities at the Uist and Barra hospital in Benbecula have been reinvigorated after a stoppage enforced by the Covid-19 pandemic. This work is essential to ensure the dental estate is appropriate to the current service needs and various regulatory requirements. Centralising the dental service at the Uist and Barra Hospital will enhance efficiency and effectiveness and minimise waste in staff rosters and partial access. The replacement of Dental Practice facilities on Barra are tied to the larger schemes involving the re-provision of St Brendan's Community Hospital and the associated Barra and Vatersay Community Campus project. The role of Dental Director was advertised in May 2022 with interviews scheduled for July 2022. The recruitment of a new Dental Director will support the long-term planning and delivery across Dental Services for NHS Western Isles.

Laboratory

Difficulties in recruitment reflect national challenges in many cases but local initiatives will support recruitment retention. Staffing the lab has been a major challenge with vacancies and a high turnaround of locum staff. Notwithstanding staffing and resource challenges, the Laboratory staff have provided a responsive and flexible, high quality service throughout the Covid-19 pandemic; showing unwavering commitment and professionalism in delivering patient care and services. Point of Care testing options are being explored, supporting the requirements of clinical teams.

Vacancies and a reliance on locum staff remain challenges we encounter.

Priorities in the coming 3-years:

- The advanced roles for the Laboratory Assistant have progressed to job banding; with funding acquired for an extra position at B4 level. The advantages of advanced practice at unregistered roles are widely recognised; and will support the service provision currently met by our skilled biomedical scientists.
- Assessment of impact of advanced practice at lab assistant will inform other lab staffing requirements.
- The expansion of point of care capabilities is vital to providing 24/7 availability of diagnostics for the clinical teams throughout the Island chain. Ongoing clinician engagement and the delivery options are expected during the next 6-12 months. POC is now available for Covid testing at St Brendans and Uist and Barra Hospital

Review of laboratory estate and equipment will occur during the next 12 months. Covid-19 has highlighted negative issues regarding the Laboratory layout; advances in technology are supporting service delivery in light of staffing difficulties; NHS Western Isles Laboratory Services are now part of the national Lab Information Management System workstream.

Radiology

Nationally there are significant difficulties in recruiting into Radiology. At present in NHS Western Isles vacancies are currently filled with agency, so throughput has not been an issue. There will be a key focus on the future needs of the service: stabilising, developing and succession planning within specific modalities and the overall service.

A business case was submitted to Scottish Government in late 2021 for approval of local MRI service. There are currently no MRI facilities available in the Western Isles and circa 800-900 scans per annum are taking place at mainland hospitals with added awareness of unknown journeys. A locally based MRI service would be a significant improvement to the patient pathway and new services.

If this project is approved this would require attracting new Specialist Radiographers to our service and significant training for staff.

Mental Health

We have established a Strategic Oversight Group for Mental Health, chaired by our DPH/Strategic Lead for Mental Health with a remit to provide leadership, oversight and partnership working to improve mental health and well-being service delivery across the Western Isles in line with national and agreed local strategy and policy. We are about to restart this work on the Mental Health strategy implementation having had quite a long hiatus due in part to Covid-19 and in part to the requirement to have an agreement with a mainland provider for acute psychiatric beds. We are employing a programme manager to progress the work and they will have access to project support focusing on the expansion of digital health initiatives to support mental health and wellbeing.

Within the wider Mental Health service there are difficulties in recruiting to posts, keeping skills up to date and most recently due to the Covid-19 outbreak, there will be more complex requirements of the service in the coming months that will require continued workforce planning to ensure this meets the needs of Western Isles population.

Pharmacy

There have been a number of significant challenges over the past year that has increased pressure on the pharmacy department as a whole, with pharmacy resilience still being tested due to COVID related absence. As a result of increasing the amount of work each pharmacy technician has to undertake, the present whole time equivalent (WTE) substantive numbers are not sufficient to sustain the current WIH service. The lack of pharmacy technician resource impacts the general pharmacy technician role resulting in procurement, stock control and dispensing pressures and errors. While there has been a new pharmacist post developed in the WIH, it has yet to be filled due to response to recruitment activity over the last 6 months. NHS Western Isles continue to find it difficult to recruit and retain Pharmacists and continue to receive Recruitment and Retention Premia, applied for through STAC.

Systemic Anti-Cancer Therapy (SACT) - The increase in growth across the Systemic Anti-Cancer Therapy (SACT) services has a corresponding impact on the Pharmacy Department. Western Isles Hospital pharmacy provides a specialist dispensing service for adult chemotherapy necessary for oncology, haematology and rheumatology patients, supplying

all sites in the Western Isles. In early 2022 pharmacy successfully secured funding for a pharmacist to contribute to the clinical side of the service; however there is still a significant need to increase pharmacy technician resource to complete the safe dispensing and distribution of chemotherapy. The main role of the pharmacy technician is to liaise with doctors, nurses and patients to establish requirements for the dispensing of chemotherapy and also prepare and check worksheets, labels and associated documentations for various treatments. Management of chemotherapy and biologic products is also a major challenge due to the short dated and cold chain nature of the products, with climbing patient numbers resulting in a significant increase in complex stock control.

Pre-Registration Pharmacy Technician (PTPT) scheme - Due to the lack of locally qualified personnel and difficulty in recruiting pharmacy technicians the pharmacy department has taken on two new trainees, funded by the NHS Education for Scotland (NES), via the Pre-Registration Pharmacy Technician (PTPT) scheme. The PTPT programme is a two-year funded scheme that allows people to gain the qualification required to become a registered Pharmacy Technician, studying remotely, whilst gaining experience working in both Hospital Pharmacy and Primary Care Pharmacy/or Community Pharmacy. To be able to support this scheme, our Senior Pharmacy Technician has enrolled in a training course to be able to guide the PTPT's through their work-based training, to enable them to be qualified as and invigilator for their exams and making sure they cover the necessary learning points and have a wide range of experience.

Hospital at Home - Hospital at Home continues to develop and add to the treatment options for the secondary care service. Pharmacy has been a key component in the development of the service, with the ongoing commitment balanced with current hospital obligations. There is an increase in pharmacy work required per patient in the Hospital at Home service compared to regular inpatients setting (additional dispensing and use of TTO pack), with no additional technician resourcing. Additional pharmacy technician resource would vastly improve the current turn around in discharges and with the no extra pharmacy technician would enable a more complete and sustained hospital at home service;

Vaccination services - There has been a significant increase in the development of the vaccination services offered through the hospital Pharmacy department as the hub, which has led to new supply systems and procedures being put in place. The covid-19 vaccination service has increased workload exponentially, with no additional resourcing. This is despite a huge increase in stock management responsibility, temperature monitoring, operational planning meeting attendance for specialist advice and, resolving all logistical issues of delivering refrigerated and frozen drugs to an island community. The vaccination service requires an additional lead to oversee the development of an efficient vaccine supply system: a specialist technician who can focus their efforts on identifying any deficiencies, KPIs, SOPs, Health and Safety requirements to be able to deliver a high-quality service for the Western Isles' population's needs.

HEPMA - The North of Scotland Hospital Electronic Prescribing and Medicines Administration (NoS HEPMA) project being rolled out to all WIH clinical ward areas in 2023, with further OUAB and St Brendan's implication also expected. Implementation in other Health Boards is being facilitated with a dedicated additional pharmacist and technician posts. Pharmacy will be responsible for maintaining the current JAC system as well as leading and managing electronic prescribing across NHSWI hospital sites. Pharmacist and pharmacy technician's time will be required to develop local protocols and guidelines, ensuring compliance with regional standards at all times. This project has added to the

current pharmacy workload and will require additional resources. Western Isles Hospital previously provided a remote clinical pharmacist service to Uist and Barra Hospital (OUAB) and St Brendan's but are now unable to dedicate time to this service, due mainly to staffing constraints. The introduction of HEPMA should facilitate part of this process; however, additional pharmacist and technician resources are still required to be able to maintain full clinical overview of external sites.

Primary Care Pharmacy - The past year has seen continued impacts of COVID related absence increasing pressure on the team and impacting service delivery. The team is now fully recruited based on the current budget, growing from 2 FTE to 6.4 FTE over the last 18 months, the process of recruitment and induction/training of a high proportion of the team has placed pressures on the service, this should be reduced moving forward as the team is now established and continues to develop. There is a current Maternity cover vacancy (B7 Pharmacist) which has been recruited and is due to start next month. There is also another Maternity cover (B7 Pharmacist) out to advert to start in October. In addition to this, the Lead Pharmacy Technician (B5) role is currently advertised. If these roles are not filled, this will impact provision of service delivery. While the primary care pharmacy team have filled all their positions, they are still unable to complete all required pharmacotherapy services and as such further investment in pharmacist band 7 posts is required.

Pharmacotherapy Service - Level 1 of the Pharmacotherapy service is now implemented in practices where there is provision of IT systems to permit remote access. Level 1 service delivery is led by the Pharmacy Technicians and Pharmacy Assistant, allowing the Pharmacists to focus on implementation of level 2 and 3 aspects of the contract whilst overseeing Level 1. Implementation of Level 2/3 of the service will support retention of Pharmacists allowing the team to use their knowledge and skills and further develop. Provision of an IT system allowing remote access to GP practices (including EMIS and Docman) is essential for service delivery. Daily issues with access; failure of Emis via terminal server, lack of access to Docman via terminal server and/or restricted access to remote systems from remote locations is currently the biggest pressure on the service and team, wasting time which reduces the output in relation to workload and causing unnecessary stress for the team. If this is not resolved this will impact on retention of the team.

With increasing GP workload and pressures on the NHS it is apparent through a gap analysis conducted by the team alongside Shetland and Orkney that to enable full delivery of all aspects of the service we would require additional pharmacist resource to expand the team.

Training - In partnership with the Hospital Pharmacy team the Primary Care Pharmacy team has taken on two new trainees, funded by the NHS Education for Scotland (NES). To be able to support this scheme, our B4 Pharmacy Technician has enrolled in a training course to be able to guide the PTPT's through their work-based training, to enable them to be qualified as and invigilator for their exams and making sure they cover the necessary learning points and have a wide range of experience. Training technicians on the island will increase resilience of the Pharmacy team, which will support in contingency planning. The Pharmacists recruited into the team have all completed their Independent Prescriber qualifications, two of the Pharmacists have been supported through this training over the last 12 months (funded by NES). This expands the scope of what can be delivered as a team. The lead Pharmacist and Lead Technician have completed the NES Advanced Leadership course which has supported in implementation of the service and development of the team.

Primary Care

VTP is 100% delivered by NHSWI including Covid vaccinations. First Contact Practitioner (FCP) Physio is fully operational and available to all practices. Successful pilot of FCP OT which has been extended with recruitment planned for the service. Urgent care is operational 24/7 in Lewis and Harris, focus on developing the service in the Uist locality to increase the offering to the practices in the Uists/Benbecula. Development of the Primary Care Mental Health service is underway, focusing on workforce, service provision and access.

Works and Estates

Within the Works & Estates function the use of Recruitment and Retention Premia (RRP) has proven successful in the retention of key roles. Across the Western Isles there are a number of construction businesses that offer rolling apprenticeship schemes meaning there are fewer potential candidates available to NHS Western Isles.

Over the coming 3 years, it will be our intention to target this corner of the labour market in order to introduce new candidates to roles within NHS Western Isles. This will not only help to promote the organisation within the community, however will also provide an opportunity to address potential workforce issues due to retirement of existing members of staff. Other on and off-shore technology based industries are a significant challenge when competing favourably for the skills available.

Support Services

Within Domestic Services, Catering and the Laundry, recruitment as well as high sickness absence remain significant challenges.

Key to the delivery of support services is the effective development of staff to ensure that they are equipped with the necessary skills to comply with all standards and mandatory legislation to meet the demands of the service. At present the Domestic Services department does not have the capacity to support the number of staff on a 1 to 1 over a sustained period

The Laundry provides a laundering service for both the Western Isles and Uist and Barra Hospitals as well as a service for staff and various external companies. There will be issues relating to this workforce during the next 3 year period whereby 36% trained and experienced staff will be of retirement age.

We also aim to provide additional training for the Laundry Supervisor to develop the skills required to operate an effective and efficient service taking cognisance of legislation governing infection control, health and safety and operating procedures. To train a deputy to undertake the supervisor's role during periods of sick and annual leave to maintain continuity of service. The department continues to increase throughput of articles by external marketing to ensure a cost effective service across NHS Western Isles.

Due to the limited number of supervisory staff within the Hotel Services Department, difficulties have been identified associated with the delivery of mandatory training owing to a large workforce spread across the whole of NHS Western Isles. One to one training which would be relevant to the individuals work area is essential to motivate staff, allow for

succession planning and would be beneficial to the organisation. Financial constraints have limited the number of Hotel Services Staff being offered training placements.

Catering will be employing a new Modern Apprentice Catering Assistant undertaking their qualification towards level 5 professional cookery award. This will hopefully lead to a more diverse and younger candidate being encouraged to work with Catering in our main hospital in Stornoway, thus ensuring the workforce is more sustainable, and sees little impact on patients and staff with reduced services available.

I.T

The development of a new Digital Strategy will help to define the requirements of the IT function in supporting these ambitions. One key aspect of this will be the recruitment of a new Head of IT to drive forward these ambitious aims.

Work has begun in the development of a Digital Strategy for NHS Western Isles. The key ambitions for this strategy will seek to ensure:

- Modernising patient delivery (reshaping and transforming services)
- Joined up care
- Information and informatics (electronic records and better use of information)
- Technical infrastructure and governance
- Workforce and business systems

7. Initiatives & Priorities

Wellbeing

The importance of our Workforce health, safety and wellbeing has been brought into even sharper focus as we continue to deliver our services through difficult times. It is the commitment of NHS Western Isles that we seek to embed a culture within NHS Western Isles that will support staff to flourish, to be well, engaged and happy as we work towards the organisation's aims. Working together to support one another with the values of compassion, kindness and understanding is critical to both our organisational and personal recovery and ongoing resilience.

NHS Western Isles values and cares for employees and recognises that the delivery of high quality services is dependent upon a high quality, productive workforce. This can only be achieved by creating an environment which actively promotes wellbeing, benefitting both employees and the organisation.

To support the 3-Year Workforce Plan, the development of an NHS Western Isles Health and Wellbeing Strategy will deliver a holistic approach to employee wellbeing. The strategy will set out objectives that must be integrated throughout the organisation and cannot be stand alone. Principles are designed to be embedded in its **culture, leadership and people management**.

It has been recognised within NHS Western Isles that:

Wellbeing at work is strongly influenced by:

- Leaders who help employees see where they fit into the bigger organisational picture.

- Effective line managers, who respect, develop and reward their staff.
- Consultation that values the voice of employees and listens to their views and concerns.
- Relationships based on trust and shared values.

Healthy workplaces are built on:

- Effective policies for managing people issues such as communication, absence, grievances and occupational health
- High levels of trust between employees and managers. Trust is often nurtured by involving employees in decision-making and developing an open style of communication.

To continue the commitment for better Wellbeing of staff within NHS Western Isles, the introduction of an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) in 2022 was agreed. This offering will create a space for NHS Western Isles workforce, and their spouses and dependants, to become active participants in managing their own wellbeing on a wide range of areas in their lives. The EAP launched in May 2022 and will be continually reviewed to ensure this is being utilised by the wider workforce.

Our EAP service provides a complete support network that offers expert advice and compassionate guidance 24/7, covering a wide range of issues. We strongly believe in providing an EAP service that offers not only reactive support when someone needs it but also proactive and preventative support to deliver the best possible outcomes.

To measure the impact of this, valuable reporting data will be provided directly to us ensuring we can identify areas that require further development within the Wellbeing Group, as well as pinpointing staff groups that require more bespoke support. As the EAP is available for NHS Western Isles staff and their immediate family members, we are ensuring that the Wellbeing benefits are far reaching given we are the second largest employer in the islands. The benefits to the wider population cannot be underestimated

NHS Western Isles will also seek to be recognised as a Carer Positive employer, recognising the increased likelihood that an ageing population will see more employees becoming carers.

With a predominately female workforce menopause and women's health support will be incorporated into the wellbeing strategy. It is important that this support for the workforce affected is established in addition to supporting the promoting of attendance.

Staff Experience & Engagement

Staff experience and engagement is a critical workforce enabler. NHS Western Isles needs to strive towards being an inspiring, supportive and attractive employer within the Western Isles. This will in turn allow for more dynamic candidates to be attracted to work within NHS Western Isles. The extent of our workforce challenge means that considerate and inclusive leadership will be pivotal in creating the conditions required to sustain service delivery.

NHS Western Isles will continue to support and drive improvement through the use of iMatter questionnaire. This will include driving engagement from managers and their respective teams. The ongoing support from Senior Management will be relied upon to help support the continued encouragement to staff to have their voices heard. In 2022 NHS Western Isles

received its highest response rate of 62% since 2015 which we hope to continue to strive for further engagement across the workforce.

Leadership & Management Development

NHS Western Isles recognises that the leadership and management of the workforce vital in creating a positive and healthy culture. As noted already it is the case that where poor management exists, likely poor Staff Wellbeing is prevalent, alongside ineffective Workforce planning practices. With that in mind, a renewed focus on Leadership & Management Development will be at the forefront of seeking to see our Workforce equipped to carry out their respective roles.

A structured programme will be developed that seeks to provide managers with both the theoretical and practical skills to succeed as managers. This will include training on the softer skills of being a manager, the systems required, policies & procedures as well as providing a safe place for all managers to obtain peer support and networking opportunities.

To support the wider Workforce, the importance of all employees being in receipt of effective and up to date Turas Appraisals is key. Training is being provided to managers and employees on the process and benefits involved, along with continued encouragement to all employees to engage. Rates of appraisal will be monitored.

Capable Workforce

To support the development of a skilled, adaptable and compassionate workforce NHS Western Isles will continue to provide an increasing range of resources. This will include the transition away from LearnPro to Turas Learn. A Project Team will be identified to progress this important piece of work. This will improve the accessibility from any device, any time. Support for the delivery of this project will be provided by NHS National Education for Scotland.

Ensuring the NHS Western Isles Workforce are digitally enabled will be fundamental to improving health and wellbeing of the workforce.

Staff Governance

NHS Western Isles remains fully committed to delivering against the Staff Governance Standards. Our Staff Governance Committee will continue to meet on a quarterly basis to ensure appropriate governance of these standards. This Workforce Plan will align to the NHS Scotland Staff Governance Standards which set out what each NHS Scotland employer must achieve in order to continuously improve in relation to the fair and effective management of staff.

The Standard requires all NHS Boards to demonstrate that staff are:

- well informed;
- appropriately trained and developed;
- involved in decisions;
- treated fairly and consistently, with dignity and respect, in an environment where diversity is valued; and
- provided with a continuously improving and safe working environment, promoting the health and wellbeing of staff, patients and the wider community.

The Standard also requires all staff to:

- keep themselves up to date with developments relevant to their job within the organisation;
- commit to continuous personal and professional development;
- adhere to the standards set by their regulatory bodies;
- actively participate in discussions on issues that affect them either directly or via their trade union/professional organisation;
- treat all staff and patients with dignity and respect while valuing diversity; and
- ensure that their actions maintain and promote the health, safety and wellbeing of all staff, patients and carers

These standards will continue to be embedded across all areas of NHS Western Isles.

Regional Working

Whilst this plan focuses on NHS Western Isles specifically, there are a number of areas where NHS Western Isles work in collaboration with other Health Boards. Regional working is a vital component in delivering against the vision of the National Workforce Strategy (March 2022).

The North of Scotland Regional Workforce Planning Network meet quarterly to discuss Workforce Planning at a regional level, ensuring the collaborative approach to Workforce Planning is maintained. This not only provides a platform for North of Scotland colleagues to meet, but also serves to influence national workforce planning ensuring this reflects the needs of both boards and the region as a whole. The group also leads on developing regional workforce solutions.

8. Successful Planning within NHS Western Isles

The success of NHS Western Isles Workforce Planning will be determined by the experience of the workforce within their respective roles, the leadership support provided and development of employees. We therefore must have the knowledge, skills and experience to continually deliver a high quality provision to the local population.

We strive to enhance our commitment to values and effective leadership in an ever changing landscape. Our priorities over the coming 3 years will consist of a continual desire to equip our leaders and develop future leaders to be ready to develop and implement new, dynamic and agile ways of working across the organisation.

We will seek to maintain a supportive culture where development, flexible working, learning, engagement and continuous improvement are encouraged. We will enhance our training provision with the introduction of an NHS Western Isles learning site hosted on Turas Learn.

We continue with our commitment to our workforce health & wellbeing through the introduction of an Employee Assistance Programme and continued signposting to the multitude of resources available to employees to support their own physical, mental and social wellbeing.

9. Recruitment and Retention

Vacancy level for NHS Western Isles is relatively low, but acute; with a small number of vacancies being advertised on numerous occasions with no appoint being made.

All employees who leave NHS Western Isles have the option of a confidential exit interview/discussion with the CEO and Employee Director.

Band 4 Healthcare Assistant

Coupled with the introduction of an NQN development programme, NHS Western Isles is also creating career progression opportunities for Band 3 Healthcare Assistants. This will consist of the development of Band 4 Job Descriptions as well as identifying training options through local education provider the University of the Highlands and Islands.

Return to Practice

NHS Western Isles will, each year, support those looking to undertake their Return to Practice. We will seek to attract former nurses within the Western Isles and beyond by providing support with return to practice training and re-registration.

Youth Employment

We have made good progress in establishing Youth Employment as a key workforce enabler over the past 9 months. The development of an Apprenticeship Programme within NHS Western Isles was developed. The first cohort will be advertised and recruited within 2022 to attract younger people into the workforce, providing them with career development and the opportunity to gain work experience whilst undertaking a qualification.

The initial Modern Apprentices being advertised will be within Business Administration, Catering and Healthcare Support Workers. Over the next 3 years the Apprenticeship programme will steadily grow to include other areas within the organisation (e.g. Health Promotion, Communications, IT, Pharmacy etc.).

A key strand to our youth employment activity is school engagement across the Western Isles. This work is essential in positioning NHS Western Isles as an employer of choice for the future workforce within the community. We will continue to develop and enhance our school's engagement approaches including the development of a careers road show across all our islands and enhanced placement opportunities.

Ethical International Recruitment

North of Scotland HRD's have approved initial proposals for NHS Grampian to scope out the possibility of pooling resources and NHS Grampian hosting an International Recruitment Service for the North of Scotland.

Much of the focus by Boards to date has been on recruiting nurses. Scottish Government provided a target, to be met by March 2022, where the recruitment of 200 international nurses would take place. The focus is now beginning to shift to other areas, particularly AHP's and Medics. The Scottish Government has established the Centre for Workforce Supply as a national centre to support UK wide and international recruitment.

Anyone moving from overseas to the Western Isles would need to be made aware of the unique location, challenges and advantages of living here. It might be attractive to those wishing an outdoor lifestyle or those with young families looking for a safe environment with good education provision.

Housing remains a challenge. A level of income to buy a property in the longer term is more likely to make a move sustainable in the long term, i.e. Band 6 or above.

A 'knee jerk' reaction to recruitment difficulties through large scale international recruitment is not recommended but a gradual targeted introduction where markets could be tested could be considered.

International recruitment is not an immediate solution to recruitment shortages, with candidates recruited often requiring a long lead in time before taking up post, often between 6 and 18 months. However this will complement existing approaches where training pipelines are much longer. International recruitment provides opportunities to recruit new staff in shorter time, and at a reduced cost.

Vacancies identified for international recruitment would only be those where local and national recruitment markets have been exhausted.

As recruitment markets continue to become more challenging and Scottish Government retains international recruitment as a key component of future workforce planning, NHS Western Isles needs to consider how to incorporate into its local context. Factors to take into consideration include support that can be given in an extremely remote and rural environment and identification of vacancies where national markets have been tested without success.

Nurses would require a significant level of support and a Band 5 salary would make it more challenging for them to establish themselves within the community, for example to afford housing. AHP's and Medics on Band 6 and above are more likely to become independent within a number of months as salary would facilitate this.

Large scale international recruitment is not recommended at this stage but options for specific, hard to recruit posts, will be explored.

Large scale international recruitment is not recommended at this stage but options for specific, hard to recruit posts, will be explored.

Increased Marketing of NHS Western Isles as a place to work and live

We will increase our efforts to continue in promoting NHS Western Isles as an employer of choice alongside unique rural, island environment and culture. This will see the continued use of social media in respect of specific recruitment campaigns, for example return to practice, Newly Qualified Nurses and Apprenticeships.

A new recruitment pack was launched for the Apprenticeship programme which will seek to target the appropriate candidates encouraging them to apply for these exciting roles for their career development.

Housing Partnership

Given the pressures on housing within the Western Isles, and increase risk of losing potential candidates through being unable to access housing, NHS Western Isles will continue the key partnership with Hebridean Housing Partnership (HHP) that was established in May 2020. This ensures staff members with key worker status would receive

additional points for houses to be allocated. This will help with access to housing however the limited properties available remain a concern, particularly in the Southern Isles

10. Summary of the Five Pillars of the Workforce Journey

Plan - NHS Western Isles are committed to continuing to work collaboratively on the development each year of an effective Workforce Plan. This will include the

Attract – We are committed to continuing to recruit using systems and methods that ensure access is truly for all. This will be achieved by targeting our youth in the Western Isles via Career Road shows, Modern Apprenticeship expansion. We also aim to support Newly Qualified Nurses into employment as well as encouraging nurses back into employment through the Return to Practice support.

As recruitment markets continue to become more challenging and Scottish Government retains international recruitment as a key component of future workforce planning, NHS Western Isles needs to consider how to incorporate into its local context. Factors to take into consideration include support that can be given in an extremely remote and rural environment and identification of vacancies where national markets have been tested without success.

Train – Through the introduction of Turas Learn we will seek to provide a far more dynamic offering to the workforce for all training modules. This will equip staff with the tools needed to effectively carry out their respective roles to deliver the best care possible to the people of the Western Isles.

Managers will have a renewed focus on their support in providing practical skills to allow them to succeed as Leaders and Managers that will motivate and inspire the workforce. .

Employ – In recognising that NHS Western Isles are the second largest employer within the Outer Hebrides, it is our objective to ensure that we are the employer of choice. Utilising social media and other advertising avenues we aim to not only say, but show, potential candidates that NHS Western Isles, and the islands themselves are a place where you will feel valued and know that you are making a difference to the local population.

By actively reaching out the schools we seek to promote and allow them to sample what it feels like to be part of this great workforce. Enhancing the Work Experience and Placements on offer we will sow seeds of inspiration to the next generation.

Nurture – The aims of NHS Western Isles Health & Wellbeing Group are: *‘To promote and support the Wellbeing of all NHS Western Isles workforce across Lewis, Harris, North and South Uist and Barra’*. This will primarily be achieved by ensuring the Wellbeing Group work collaboratively alongside local and national colleagues in supporting the wellbeing of the NHS Western Isles workforce through times of significant pressure and change, promoting positive physical, psychological and social wellbeing.

The development of a Wellbeing Strategy will be integrated throughout the organisation by creating a workplace environment where wellbeing of staff is at the forefront. To support the embedding of this throughout the organisation, the renewed focus on Leadership & Management Development will ensure managers are equipped to support their respective teams to deliver the best care possible, and continue to be **‘The Best at What We Do’**.

11. Measurement and Actions

These actions will set out the measures we will use to track our progress towards the implementation of this 3-Year Workforce Plan. The success of each action will be determined by the results of each action being measured against specific Key Performance Indicators.

Action 1: To increase the diversity of applicants to vacant posts via apprenticeship, NQN posts as well as enhanced promotion of NHS Western Isles as an employer of choice:

Success:

- Increase in the percentage of applicants within the 16-30 age bands.
- Exploration undertaken around International Recruitment where appropriate.

Action 2: Improvement through effective leadership and management, teamwork, and cross-boundary collaboration.

Success:

- iMatter EEI score compared with NHS Scotland average.
- Eligible staff have meaningful Turas Appraisals in place.
- Continued cohort of managers completing the Leadership & Management Development Programme.

Action 3: Provide an effective range of development opportunities that ensure a capable workforce exists with clear career progression pathways.

Success:

- Migration to Turas earn with the development of an NHS Western Isles Learning & Development strategy.

Action 4: Development of strategic action plan that seeks to address priorities highlighted in this 3-Year Workforce Plan.

Success:

- Plan developed, implemented and monitored in partnership with key stakeholders to drive the changes required.

These measurements will test the success of NHS Western Isles intent to create a sustainable workforce that is capable of meeting the current and future needs of the population within the Western Isles.