NHS WESTERN ISLES

BOARD MEETING

Meeting date: 26th June 2025

Item: 8.7

Title: Email Etiquette Policy Statement

Responsible Executive/Non-Executive: Maggie Jamieson, Head of Communications,

Claims and Patient Information

Report Author: Same as above.

1   Purpose

Please select one item in each section

This is presented to Committee Members for:

Assurance	
Awareness	X
Decision	
Discussion	

This report relates to a:

Annual Operating / Delivery Plan	
Emerging issue	
Government policy/directive	
Legal requirement	
Local policy	X
NHS Board / Integration Joint Board Strategy or Direction	

This aligns to the following NHSScotland quality ambition(s):

Safe	X
Effective	X
Person Centred	

Please select the level of assurance you feel this report provides to the Board / Committee and briefly explain why:

Significant	
Moderate	X
Limited	
None	
Not yet assessed	
Comment	
Specify: Policy Statement designed to ensure emails, as a form of communication, are managed and used appropriately.	

Please indicate which of the Boards Priorities the paper relates to:

Financial Sustainability / Recovery Plan	
Capital	
Hospital Based Services Model – Rural General Hospital / Community	
Workforce Health & Wellbeing	X
Health Inequalities	
Sustainability of Community Health & Social Care Model	
Primary Care Transformation Programme	
Digital Transformation / Digital Health	X
Public Protection Priorities	
Women and Children's Services	
Climate Emergency and Sustainability	
Other – please explain	X
Comments:	

The report is directly linked to a Recovery Driver(s) within the Annual Delivery Plan:

RD01	**Primary & Community Care** - Improved access to primary and community care to enable earlier intervention and more care to be delivered in the community.	
RD02	**Urgent & Unscheduled Care** – Access to urgent and unscheduled care, including scaling of integrated frailty services to reduce admissions to hospital.	
RD03	**Mental Health** - Improve the delivery of mental health support and services, reflecting key priorities set out in the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy.	
RD04	**Planned Care** - Recovering and improving the delivery of planned care.	
RD05	**Cancer Care** - Delivering the National Cancer Action Plan (Spring 2023-2026).	
RD06	**Health Inequalities and Population Health** - Enhance planning and delivery of the approach to tackling health inequalities and improving population health.	
RD07	**Women and Children's Health** - Take forward the actions in the Women's Health Plan and support good child and maternal health, so that all children in Scotland can have the best possible start in life.	
RD08	**Workforce** - Implementation of the Workforce Strategy.	
RD09	**Digital Services Innovation Adoption** - Optimise use of digital & data technologies in the design and delivery of health and care services for improved patient access and fast track the national adoption of proven innovations which could have a transformative impact on efficient and patient outcomes.	
RD10	**Climate** - Climate Emergency and Environment.	
RD11	**Finance & Sustainability** – Approach to achieving financial balance and aligning with S&V financial improvement programme of work.	
RD12	**Value Based Health & Care** – Approach to embracing and adopting Value Based Health and Care.	
RD13	**Integration & population Need** – Boards are asked to set out the key actions to respond to population needs and how you will work in partnership to address and respond to these needs.	
RD14	**Regional & National** – Approach to working regionally and nationally across services through collective and collaborative approaches to planning and delivery, where required.	
	None of the above	X

This aligns to the following NHS Western Isles Corporate Objective(s):

CO1	To provide person-centred care, focusing on the evidence based health needs of our increasingly diverse population, identifying and taking every opportunity to improve out patients' health, experience and outcomes	
CO2	To protect individuals from avoidable harm to continually assessing and managing risk, learning, and improving the reliability and safety in everything we do.	X
CO3	To champion efficiency and effectiveness in our services that delivers minimum possible waiting times.	
CO4	To pro-actively stimulate and intensify our research and application of effective innovation to improve how we care for patients today and into the future.	
CO5	To promote and support people to live longer healthier lives	
CO6	To specifically target early years, health inequalities, vulnerable and underrepresented and more difficult to engage with groups.	
CO7	To continually improve and modernise our integrated healthcare services and assurance systems.	X
CO8	To value, support the wellbeing of, and develop and sustain a compassionate, confident, competent, flexible and responsive workforce.	X
CO9	To deliver our commitment to partnership working to deliver national standards, targets and guarantees.	
CO10	To have a sustained focus on prevention, anticipation, support self-management and care at home.	
CO11	To ensure that all resources are deployed to the best effect, achieving desired outcomes, values for money and progressive approach to sustainability.	

2   Report summary

2.1   Situation

Every email sent by an NHS Western Isles member of staff creates a recorded profile of the sender and the organisation, therefore email correspondence must conform to NHS Western Isles Standards of Behaviour as well as professional Codes of Conduct/Practice.

2.2   Background

The Email Etiquette Policy Statement was developed in September 2013, reviewed in December 2022, and reviewed again in May/June 2025.

The document contains Board policy and expectations on email – from all mail users emails to acceptable use of email/clinical communication.

2.3   Assessment

The content of emails has the potential to be released at any time under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 or as part of a Public Inquiry (e.g. the UK or Scottish COVID Inquiries) so email content should always be professional and appropriate.

Email should be used with care and consideration and, in the first instance, consideration should be given as to whether it is the best way to achieve an objective or communicate (for example a face to face/Teams meeting or discussion is more appropriate in situations where an ongoing conversation is required, although email is helpful when a record of communication is necessary).

Emails should be concise, clear and respectful, with a clear indication included about whether a response or specific action is required from the recipient, and when the response is needed by.

Emails are the same in terms of information as all our communications – i.e. information should be shared on a **'need to know' basis only**. This is particularly important when confidential or sensitive information is being shared.

2.3.3 Financial

None

Name – Director of Finance / Finance Manager	Signature
Comment from the Director of Finance / Finance Manager	

2.3.4 Risk Assessment/Management

N/A

2.3.5 Equality and Diversity, including health inequalities

2.3.6 Climate Emergency and Sustainability Development
State how this report will support or impact on the Scottish Government's policy on Global Climate Emergency and Sustainability Development DL(2021)38, against the 5 themes:

1	Sustainable Buildings & Land	
2	Sustainable Travel	
3	Sustainable Goods and Services	
4	Sustainable Care	
5	Sustainable Communities	
Describe other relevant impacts: N/A		

2.3.7 Other impacts
N/A

2.3.8 Communication, involvement, engagement and consultation
Circulated to Communications Department for comment and review. Shared with Associate Medical Director, Community.

2.3.9 Route to the Meeting
N/A

2.4 Recommendation

- **Awareness**

3 List of appendices

Email Etiquette Policy Statement

END