



NSS Assist Annual Report 2022/23



**Partnership and
Collaboration**

Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Introduction | 3 |
| NHS National Services Scotland (NSS) – Assist | 3 |
| Our NSS Strategy | 3 |
| Purpose | 4 |
| Background | 4 |
| Integration Authorities | 5 |
| Health and Social Care Workforce Planning | 5 |
| National Organisations (Joint Account Management) | 5 |
| Wider Local Government Engagement | 7 |
| Children, Young People and Adults - Joint Chronologies | |
| Pan Lothian Partnership | 7 |
| Scotland Excel and NSS National Procurement | 7 |
| Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal | 8 |
| SOLACE | 8 |
| COSLA | 9 |
| Emergency Services | 9 |
| Scottish Fire and Rescue Service | 9 |
| Police Scotland | 9 |
| Scottish Ambulance Service | 10 |
| Third and Independent Sector | 11 |
| Other Wider Initiatives | 12 |
| Strategic Networks | 14 |
| Conclusions | 14 |

Introduction

NHS National Services Scotland (NSS) – Assist

NSS is a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB), accountable to Scottish Ministers. NSS was established as the Common Services Agency in 1974 under The National Health Service (Functions of the Common Services Agency) (Scotland) Order 1974, with a mandate to provide national strategic support services and expert advice to Scotland’s health sector whilst maximising health impacts and cost savings.

In 2013, the Public Services Reform (Functions of the Common Services Agency for the Scottish Health Service) (Scotland) Order 2013 extended the remit of NSS enabling the provision of services to other bodies, including local authorities and government departments.

Our NSS Strategy

NSS is integral to Scotland’s health and care service. We set ourselves three priorities to ensure this is maintained.

- 1. Enable health and care transformation with new services**
Harnessing NSS’s wide-ranging skills and expertise to deliver national infrastructure solutions and services.
- 2. Underpin NHS Scotland with excellent services**
Providing national infrastructure solutions integral to the delivery of health and care services in Scotland.
- 3. Assist other organisations involved in health and care**
Connecting a range of partners and stakeholders to ensure our services support the wider health and care system.

Through the NSS Assist strategic priority, we continue to work closely with our partner organisations to explore opportunities for collaboration, to ensure that our services align with the evolving needs of the health and social care system in Scotland.



We are already supporting Health and Social Care Integration Authorities, Public Health Scotland, Local Authorities and Scottish Government Non-departmental Public Bodies and Agencies.

Purpose

To provide an update on NHS National Services Scotland's (NSS) collaboration and partnership working. Such organisations include: integration authorities, local authorities, emergency services, the wider Scottish public and third and independent sectors.

Background

The current NSS Strategy 2019 to 2024 outlined strategic objectives focused around Enable, Underpin and Assist priorities. The strategy highlighted the importance of pan-public collaboration and partnership working, to collectively identify problems and deliver solutions at scale and pace, to support the delivery of better health and social care outcomes.

The main strategic priorities and objectives in the new NSS Strategy, continue to demonstrate how NSS shall support NHS Scotland deliver excellent local front-line services. A key driver for NSS around the strategic priorities and objectives is through working in collaboration with all NHS Boards, wider Health and Social Care organisations and their partners. These ambitions shall deliver on our purpose, our vision and

Our Vision –

“To be integral to Scotland’s health and care service.”



Our Purpose – Reflects why we were established and guides everything we do:

“We provide national solutions to improve the health and wellbeing of the people of Scotland.”

Our Vision – Recognises what we need to achieve over the next 5 years:

“To be integral to a world-leading national health and care service.”

Our Values and Our People – Guides everything we do to fulfil our purpose and makes our vision a reality. Our goal:

“NSS wants to be a great place to work.”

Integration Authorities

Health and Social Care Workforce Planning

Assist is a member of the Health and Social Care Scotland and Chief Officers Reference Group, and provides wider strategic links across other sectors and organisations where NSS Assist is actively engaged.

National Organisations (Joint Account Management)

NSS is part of the pan-public National Improvement Organisations Huddle, and the Joint Account Management Team. The aims of the Huddle are for NHS Boards and wider National Improvement bodies to seek collaboration opportunities, and improve support for Health and Social Integration.

For the Joint Account Management model, to engage collectively with Health and Social Care Partnerships (HSCPs), to identify areas where more improvement support can be provided. For the first year one report, there were twenty-three HSCPs Chief Officers and senior leaders' meetings, with seventeen follow-on Named Person meetings.

These meetings focused on a range of support activities namely; **Workforce Challenges; Lack of Improvement Capacity; Data Analysis; Development Support for New IJB Members and Service Transformation.**

NSS continues to work with the Improvement Service, to support the Integrated Joint Boards (IJBs) self-assessment engagements.

Local Authorities

Through a Local Government Engagement Plan, NSS continues to explore opportunities around partnership working and collaboration where it is mutually feasible, suitable and acceptable to NSS.

Assistance has been provided to ten local authorities. The key areas include: Data and Intelligence; Digital and Information Technology; and Procurement. In these areas, business opportunities and requirements have been explored, developed, and delivered in partnership. Developing strategic partnerships and engaging with public sector senior leaders and decision makers, has been crucial for success.



The support and assistance provided by NSS has focused success around three areas:



1. Supporting Better Decisions

Through learning and sharing knowledge, practice and processes, where efficient data and intelligence provides the tools to support effective decisions at strategic and operational levels.

2. Improving Performance

Better use of management information approaches using tools including data virtualisation systems, to assist leaders understand where maximum impacts around improving outcomes are being achieved.

3. Delivering Best Value

To ensure that the optimum use of all resources – people; land/assets; financial stewardship; infrastructure capacities, all combined to deliver high quality and value-added services.

Assist helps to join up the conversations with public sector and wider third and independent organisations encouraging joint-working and partnerships, through bringing together the right people, at the right time and at the right place to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for the people of Scotland.



Wider Local Government Engagement

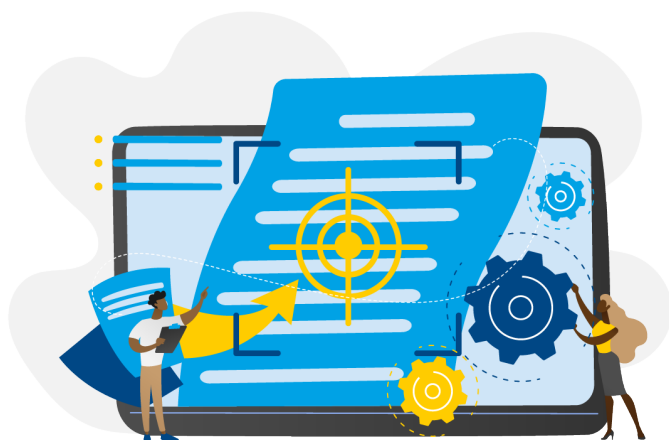
Children, Young People and Adults - Joint Chronologies Pan Lothian Partnership

NSS provides ongoing leadership and support to the Pan-Lothian Partnership. This includes The City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Fife, Midlothian, West Lothian Councils, Police Scotland, NHS Lothian and now includes Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

A common approach across the partnership has been developed, tested and is now being implemented. This should lead to improving the exchange of data and information across multi-agencies, specific to vulnerable children, young people and adults.

As previously highlighted, the Pan Lothian Joint Chronologies Common Approach has been included as a Practice Note within the National Child Protection Guidance. The guidance was published by the Scottish Government on 2 September 2021. Other local authorities have approached the Programme/Partnership/Initiative, to be involved in the implementation and development of a technical solution (most notably the North East Councils National Implementation Group – Chronologies).

Since the previous annual report, Scottish Government National Care Service Division has expressed much interest in the activities of the Chronologies Common Approach, with links to the wider ambitions around a Single Health and Care Record across Scotland. Future meetings are being planned.



Scotland Excel and NSS National Procurement

Scotland Excel (SXL) and NSS National Procurement (NP) are two of the country's leading public sector procurement organisations. They provide a range of services that help its members and service users deliver effective and efficient public services.

Julie Welsh, Chief Executive of Scotland Excel and Gordon Beattie, Director of National Procurement, and Tom McHugh, Strategic Partnerships Lead, NSS meet regularly. These meetings build on an established strategic relationship. This enables joint procurement opportunities underpinned by shared learning and knowledge transfer. This has been even

more crucial during the challenges of the global pandemic.

Both organisations have committed to formalising this working relationship through a Strategic Collaboration Agreement, approved by both organisations on 22 February 2023.

Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal

The Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal (ESESCR) is a £1.3billion partnership. It comprises six local authorities. East Lothian, The City of Edinburgh, Fife, Midlothian, Scottish Borders and West Lothian councils.

It's estimated that an additional £3.2bn worth of private sector investment could be leveraged. The deal was finally approved by both the Scottish and UK Governments on 7 August 2018.

There are five key themes; Research, Development, and Innovation; Integrated Regional Employability and Skills; Transport; Culture and Housing.

NSS has a range of expertise and knowledge which supports the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal. NSS is already providing data and information to help enable delivery around health outcome indicators, research and reporting. These activities support national and local health deliverables and place Scotland as a global leader in health informatics research.

NSS / NHS Scotland is still represented on the ESESCR Labour Market Analysis and Evaluation Theme Group, and the Health and Social Care (HSC) Skills Gateway Delivery Board. NSS was a panel evaluator for a commissioned research project around the impacts of the Covid global pandemic, on workforce digital skills gaps.

NSS continues to be an important contributor to the development of the ESESCR Benefits Realisation Reporting Framework, which includes measures around improving wellbeing outcomes.

SOLACE

NSS continues its links with SOLACE as a key strategic stakeholder group, with six memberships covering the executive and established leader levels.

This has been a mature working relationship with SOLACE which has supported implementation of the Local Government Engagement Plan. NSS has re-enforced the strategic links between local authorities and Health and Social Care Partnerships, which has resulted in more opportunities to support improving health and care outcomes, which are being explored and developed with respective NSS Directorates.



Our five memberships within SOLACE cover the executive and established leader levels.

COSLA

Another key strategic partner for NSS, is the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA).

There are synergies across COSLA and NSS around the health and social care agenda with opportunities to link up at a strategic level. A series of meetings have taken place with COSLA to explore areas of mutual interest. The common objectives are focused on national initiatives such as Public Health Reform, Climate Change and Post Covid Recovery. The newly appointed COSLA Chief Executive, is fully aware of NSS, its services and engagements across local authorities, the wider pan-public and health and social care sectors.



Emergency Services

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between NSS and SFRS, agreed on 5 August 2021, NSS has been working with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS), across a range of activities which includes a pilot to develop a shared vulnerability groups index. This has involved building an understanding of risks across vulnerable communities, and how that can be reflected in the data analysis sharing processes.

The Holistic Risk Assessment Profiling for Targeted Vulnerable Groups brings together data from all the emergency services bodies. Partners examine the shared patterns of demand facing the services. They look at the vulnerabilities that generate demand patterns from individuals and households.

The project will build evidence to inform the development of more efficient and effective service redesign. This will aim to manage the demand while seeking to achieve better outcomes for the most vulnerable people in our society.



Police Scotland

Police Scotland has implemented the 2023/24 Annual Police Plan which has five Strategic Outcomes:

1. Threats to public safety and wellbeing are resolved by a proactive and responsive police service
2. The needs of the local communities are addressed through effective service delivery
3. Public, communities and partners are engaged, involved and have confidence in policing
4. Our people are supported through a positive working environment enabling them to serve
5. Police Scotland is sustainable, adaptable and prepared for future challenges

There are clear links to wider health and care outcomes in the plan, most notably a commitment to:

‘Design services jointly to tackle complex public safety and wellbeing challenges’

Police Scotland and NSS have met on many occasions, and there is an appetite to collaborate around a range of areas including Data & Intelligence, Digital and IT, Research and Business Intelligence. NSS has helped Police Scotland to better understand data and intelligence, specifically around Custody Healthcare and Interventions.

There are already mature links with Police Scotland, through the support provided by NSS National Services Division (NSD) to the national Police Care Network.

NSS has also provided ‘critical friend’ advice to Police Scotland in support of delivering their Annual Police Plan 2023/24 including a focus around mental health and wellbeing.

The final stage around a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Police Scotland and NSS for Collaborative Working, is completed and was approved on 26 October 2023.



Scottish Ambulance Service

There is a history of joint working between the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) and NSS. We’ve worked together to support operational requirements, to meet emergency and contingency planning.

Positive work was undertaken across national Test and Protect activities which included the management of COVID-19 Testing Sites across Scotland. Many innovations developed during the pandemic are being shared with NSS and other sectors / organisations, to raise awareness and assess the potential to scale up across other service delivery partners.

Much has been learned and shared between both organisations throughout the pandemic, and it's evident that there are synergies in how NSS and SAS can support health and social care. These opportunities are now being explored through the National Services Scotland and Scottish Ambulance Service Strategic Collaboration Agreement. Which was approved on 31 May 2022.



Third and Independent Sector

The Scottish Third and Independent sector encompasses around 45,000 voluntary organisations. Around half of these organisations are charities such as:

- small sports groups
- pre-school day care centres
- self-help groups
- health and well-being services
- housing and major social care providers.

There are over 46,500 voluntary organisations active in Scotland ▪ This includes 23,800 Scottish charities and over 1,000 UK-wide charities operating in Scotland. ▪ The figure also includes over 20,000 community groups not registered as charities.

For every 10 registered charities there are a further 8 community groups. • 89% of voluntary organisations are local 80% of Scottish charities and 98% of community groups are local. • 35% of voluntary organisations are based in rural or remote areas.

Charities and community groups play a particularly important role in rural areas, with more charities and community groups per head of population than urban areas.

- Scottish charity income in 2020/21 was £8.5 billion comprising:
 - Scottish charities £7.2 billion
 - UK-wide charities' Scottish activities £1.3 billion
 - Scottish Credit Unions £41 million
 - Scottish charity expenditure in 2020/21 was £7.9 billion
 - Despite the pandemic impacting negatively on so many organisations the charity sector saw a small 2% (£148m) rise in income between 2020 and 2021

Source SCVO [Sector stats - SCVO](#)

NSS Assist has met with several Chief Executives and senior leaders for the following organisations:

- The Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE)
- The Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO)
- Voluntary Health Scotland (VHS)
- Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland
- Scottish Care
- The Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland

A range of collaborative opportunities have been identified with follow on meetings arranged.

Key areas include:

- Data and Intelligence;
- Digital and Information Technology;
- Innovation
- Mental health practices.

A formal Memorandum of Understanding around Collaboration Working between NSS and the ALLIANCE was agreed on 7 March 2022.

A recent example of support provided to the ALLIANCE was NSS Assist through Tom McHugh, Strategic Partnerships Lead, was invited to be a member of the grant evaluation panel for the Self-Management Fund for Scotland 2023.

The Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE) administers the Self-Management Fund on behalf of the Scottish Government to third sector and community based organisations across Scotland, to develop self management activities. Since 2009, The ALLIANCE has granted over £24 million and has funded 398 projects across Scotland. For 2023 the fund available totals sum £2million.

In respect to Voluntary Health Scotland (VHS), a draft Collaboration Agreement is being considered by VHS and NSS.



Other Wider Initiatives

Innovation

NSS through engagements and agreements with the Emergency Services, arranged several meetings around sharing what had been achieved, with the creation and adoption of innovation products during the global pandemic.

Mr Tom Steele, Chair of Board – Scottish Ambulance Service, encouraged this sharing to be extended to other public service organisations, and their partners.

Through Assist, an Innovation Exchange Collaboration Group was established which became a platform for wider shared learning across other sectors. From an initial membership of four organisations, there are now 19 organisations regularly attending meetings.

The membership includes Health, Local Government, Emergency Services, HSCPs, Improvement Service, Scottish Government, Third Sector, NESTA, Scottish Federation of Housing Associations, Revenue Scotland, Public Health Scotland and the Care Inspectorate.

Given the resources and activities around health innovations via the Accelerated National Innovation Adoption Pathway (ANIA), it has been agreed that Ruth Campbell, Associate Director Health & Care Innovation, shall now take the lead role for the Innovation Exchange Collaboration Group.



NSS an Anchor Organisation

Anchor institutions are large and locally rooted organisations like Hospitals, Health Centres, Local Authorities, Universities / Colleges, and big global businesses with local headquarters. They employ many people, spend substantial funds, own and manage land and assets, and often deliver crucial services, and they have a weighty impact on local communities and economies.

NSS as a large organisation, has already developed and implemented a range of national policies, and practices associated with an anchor institution around : Procurement; Human Resources; Facilities and Assets. NSS has also linked with other Anchor Organisations, to explore strategic and operational collaborative opportunities.

A short life working group was established with representation across NSS to conduct a baseline self-assessment, and understand what gaps are identified for improvements. Papers and presentation have been made to the Executive Management Team and the Finance Planning and Procurement Committee.

There are also links with the national Care and Wellbeing Portfolio Board around Anchors and Community Wealth Building, and how these contribute to national outcomes. All NHS Boards have been requested by Scottish Government to submit an Anchors Strategic Plan covering three years.

National Care Service

Legislation passed on 21 June 2022, enacted the framework for the establishment of a National Care Service (NCS). NSS has responded to Scottish Government consultations, and presented papers to the Executive Management Team.

The next stage of further consultation has been extended to the 31 January 2024. Also, an NCS Boards Chairs and Chief Executives Sub Group has been established and NSS has membership, to understand the potential strategic and operational impacts from the implementation of the NCS.

A Senior Health and Social Care Integration Lead has also been appointed, to ensure that strategic connections are established and continue to engage with key stakeholders and influencers around the NCS.

NSS Assist continues to support developments around the NCS, and ensure ongoing strategic links with other sectors and key stakeholders are maintained.



Strategic Networks

NSS has a well-established network of key strategic groups. These span Scottish Government, health, local government, non-departmental public bodies and executive agencies. Since the implementation of The Public Services Reform (Functions of the Common Services Agency for the Scottish Health Service) (Scotland) Order 2013, and the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland Act) 2014, these networks are even more strategically important.

Through Assist, NSS is a key player and contributor to the following groups:

Scottish Government 'Once for Scotland Group' Chair Peter Tolland, Director of Digital Programmes

Big Move 9 – Anchor Institutions Network

NHS Scotland and Scottish Prisons Service MOU Short Life Working Group

Scottish Government Monthly Data Showcase Sessions

Conclusions

1. Our ongoing strategic engagements, partnerships, and collaborations between NSS and other organisations (as determined within the Assist Action Plan), has confirmed that NSS plays an important role in supporting and assisting organisations deliver on their strategic objectives around improving wider health and social care outcomes.
2. New networks and working relationships have been established and continue to develop across sectors and organisations.
3. The awareness and profile of NSS has increased exponentially across integration authorities, local authorities, emergency services, and the wider Scottish public / third and independent sectors organisations. This has a positive impact on our reputational standing and validates NSS as a 'partner of choice and trust'.
4. NSS is supporting senior leadership in developing and building strategic partnerships across sectors. Engaging with senior leaders and influencers supports NSS's strategic objectives around 'Assisting other organisations involved in health and care' as well as promoting a 'Once for Scotland' approach.

If you require an alternative format please contact
NSS.EqualityDiversity@nhs.scot

Telephone 0131 275 6000

BSL ContactScotlandBSL [Contact Scotland \(contactscotland-bsl.org\)](http://contactscotland-bsl.org)

For further information on this report please contact Tom McHugh, Shared Services
Manager at tom.mchugh@nhs.scot

Mobile 07779974036