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Mary Morgan
Chief Executive
NHS National Services Scotland

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18th June, 2024

Dear Mary

NHS NATIONAL SERVICES SCOTLAND DELIVERY PLAN 2024-25

Thank you for submitting your NHS National Services Scotland Delivery Plan for 2024-25 and may I take this opportunity to thank you and your team for all the hard work that has gone into the preparation of this plan.

Whilst great progress has been made, NHS Scotland continues to face significant challenges as we recover from the impacts of the Covid pandemic, coupled with a significant financial challenge. We welcome the approach taken by your Board to develop your service delivery and financial planning in an integrated way.

We also fully recognise the significant challenge of preparing a plan within a landscape of uncertainty and risk as well as the requirement to deliver savings as set out in your Financial Plan. Delivery Plans have therefore been reviewed to take these factors into account and ensure sufficient assurance is provided in alignment with NHS Scotland and the Scottish Government priorities.

Following our review, we are satisfied your Plan reflects the main areas to support the delivery of key Scottish Government priorities, and we are therefore content for you to proceed to seek final approval from your Board.

We would note the approval of the plan is contingent upon the understanding that your Board will continue to work closely with the Scottish Government to ensure delivery against key commitments. Most critically, we expect these plans and the approach to remain dynamic, with the ability for NSS to adapt and respond in line with nationally agreed areas of focus coming through the NHS Scotland Planning and Delivery Board.

Over the quarterly reporting cycle we would like to see, and will work with you, to ensure plans capture all the important services NSS provide on a business-as-usual basis in addition to the key programmes and areas of focus outlined already. This will include planning and delivery of National Programmes such as Microsoft 365, GP IT Systems, Business Systems and deliverables in relation to NSS's role as commissioner of specialist services through NSD. Most of which I appreciate are already earmarked as future deliverables in your plan.

Forward Look

We will be looking to provide greater clarity and consistency by setting out the future strategic level planning approach for NHS Scotland within a Scottish Government Director's Letter (DL), which will be issued in the coming weeks. We are keen to introduce a refreshed approach to planning across NHS Scotland, with the aim of securing the best outcomes for patients and support our health services through planning and service design. The DL will incorporate a new approach as to how we in the Scottish Government start to commission work from all the National Boards, and will set out expectations around commissioning of acute services, whilst working closely with colleagues in National Services Division in developing it.

We also welcome the work being undertaken by all the National Boards to identify opportunities to release efficiency through further collaboration. The Scottish Government Health Planning Team and Sponsorship Teams will engage with you over the summer to discuss how we can build on this work to ensure that future planning guidance is more appropriately tailored for National Boards to support a greater shared understanding of core National Board planning responsibilities, areas of collaboration and cross-cutting work.

Once again, I wish to thank to you and all your colleagues for your continued efforted and engagement. If you have any questions about this letter, please do not hesitate to get in touch with either myself or Paula Speirs, Deputy Chief Operating Officer for Health Planning (dcoohealthplanning@gov.scot).

Yours sincerely



Richard McCallum
Director of Health and Social Care Finance, Digital and Governance