

ANNUAL REPORT

2023 - 2024

**A SUMMARY OF KEY
DEVELOPMENTS, ACTIVITY
& PERFORMANCE**

INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

I took up post as Chief Executive on an interim basis in September 2023 and, while there is no doubt that this has been a very challenging period, a lot of progress has been made over the last 12 months. This includes ongoing work to improve the experience of patients and staff as well as actions to strengthen the governance and leadership arrangements across the organisation. A wide range of service developments and improvements have also been taken forward and a number of these are highlighted in this summary report, along with details of service activity, performance, awards and achievements.

It is important to acknowledge, however, that health and care services across the country continue to face significant pressures and exceptionally high levels of demand. This is placing a huge strain on local services and has unfortunately resulted in some patients experiencing delays in being admitted to or discharged from local hospitals. Efforts continue to support more people in their own homes and ensure that anyone who does need to be admitted to hospital is able to return home as soon as they are well enough, without experiencing delays.

Despite these ongoing pressures, we continue to be one of the top performing NHS Boards in Scotland for the delivery of outpatient care and planned operations which account for the vast majority of local patient activity.

Although NHS Forth Valley managed to deliver a balanced budget for 2023/24, this was only possible due to some additional one-off national funding. Although this was welcomed, similar funding will not be available in future, and we face unprecedented financial pressures in the years ahead with a funding gap of £58m for 2024/25. Delivering savings of this magnitude will be incredibly challenging and will require us to work differently and more collaboratively to maximise value for money, reduce waste and avoid duplication.

However, I have been hugely impressed with the level of expertise and enthusiasm I have witnessed across the organisation over the last year, and I know local staff and partners are committed to making the changes and improvements required to address the many challenges in the months and years ahead.

It has been a pleasure and a privilege to cover the role of Chief Executive over the last year and, as I prepare to pass the baton to the new Chief Executive, I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their support and wish you all the very best for the future.

AMANDA CROFT

INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE
NHS FORTH VALLEY



BOARD MEMBERS

NHS Forth Valley is managed by a Board of Executive and non-Executive Directors who are accountable to the Scottish Government through the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care. The overall purpose of the Board is to provide strategic leadership, direction and governance, focussing on key plans and priorities which:

- Improve and protect the health of local people
- Improve local health services and the experience of those who use them
- Improve health outcomes, working with a wide range of partner organisations

The Board holds meetings every two months at our Board Headquarters in Stirling. Members of the public are welcome to attend and observe the meetings, in person or online. Details of the Board members for 2023/24 are listed below.

Non-Executive Members

Ms Janie McCusker	Chair (until 29 February 2024)
Mr Martin Fairbairn	Non-Executive Director
Mr Gordon Johnston	Non-Executive Director
Mr Stephen McAllister	Non-Executive Director
Dr Michele McClung	Non-Executive Director
Mr Allan Rennie	Non-Executive Director (acting Chair 1 March to 31 March 2024)
Mr John Stuart	Non-Executive Director

Local Authority Members

Cllr Fiona Collie	Non-Executive Director
Cllr Danny Gibson	Non-Executive Director (until 27 June 2023)
Cllr Wendy Hamilton	Non-Executive Director
Cllr Gerry McGarvey	Non-Executive Director (from 29 June 2023)

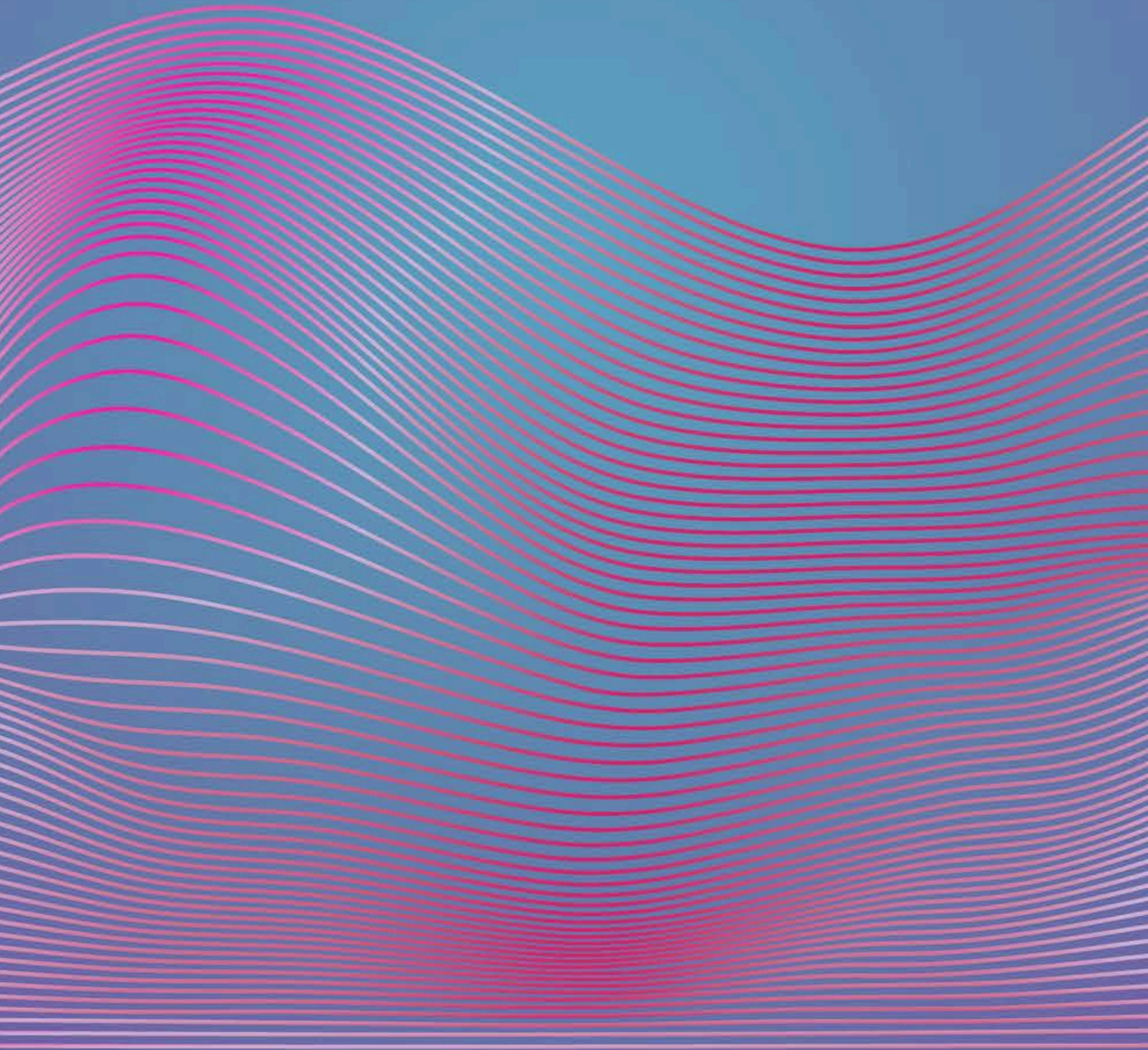
Advisory Committee Chairs / Employee Director

Mrs Kirstin Cassells	Non-Executive Director - Chair Area Clinical Forum
Mr Robert Clark	Non-Executive Director – Employee Director

Executive Members

Mrs Cathie Cowan	Chief Executive (until 10 September 2023)
Ms Amanda Croft	Interim Chief Executive (from 11 September 2023)
Dr Graham Foster	Director of Public Health (until 1 October 2023)
Dr Jennifer Champion	Acting Director of Public Health (from 2 October 2023)
Mrs Frances Dodd	Executive Nurse Director
Mr Andrew Murray	Medical Director
Mr Scott Urquhart	Director of Finance

AT A GLANCE



6,323

Staff

(whole time equivalent)



£631m

Annual Budget



305,110

Population Served



2,756

Babies Born



63,465

Emergency Department Attendances

21,897

Minor Injuries Unit Attendances



650,322

Outpatient Appointments
(new & return)



18,268

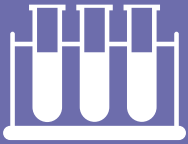
Operations carried out



100 +

Research Projects Underway





10,000

Covid-19 &
Respiratory Virus
Tests Carried Out



311,449

Samples Processed
by our Microbiology
Laboratory



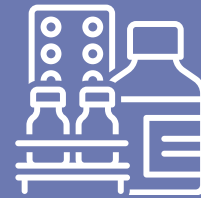
188,552

Radiology
Scans Carried
Out



247,319

Covid-19 and Flu
Vaccinations Delivered



842,996

Pharmacy Prescriptions
Processed for Patients in
FVRH

74,848

Contacts with
our Health
Visiting Teams



13,319

Contacts with our
School Nursing
Teams

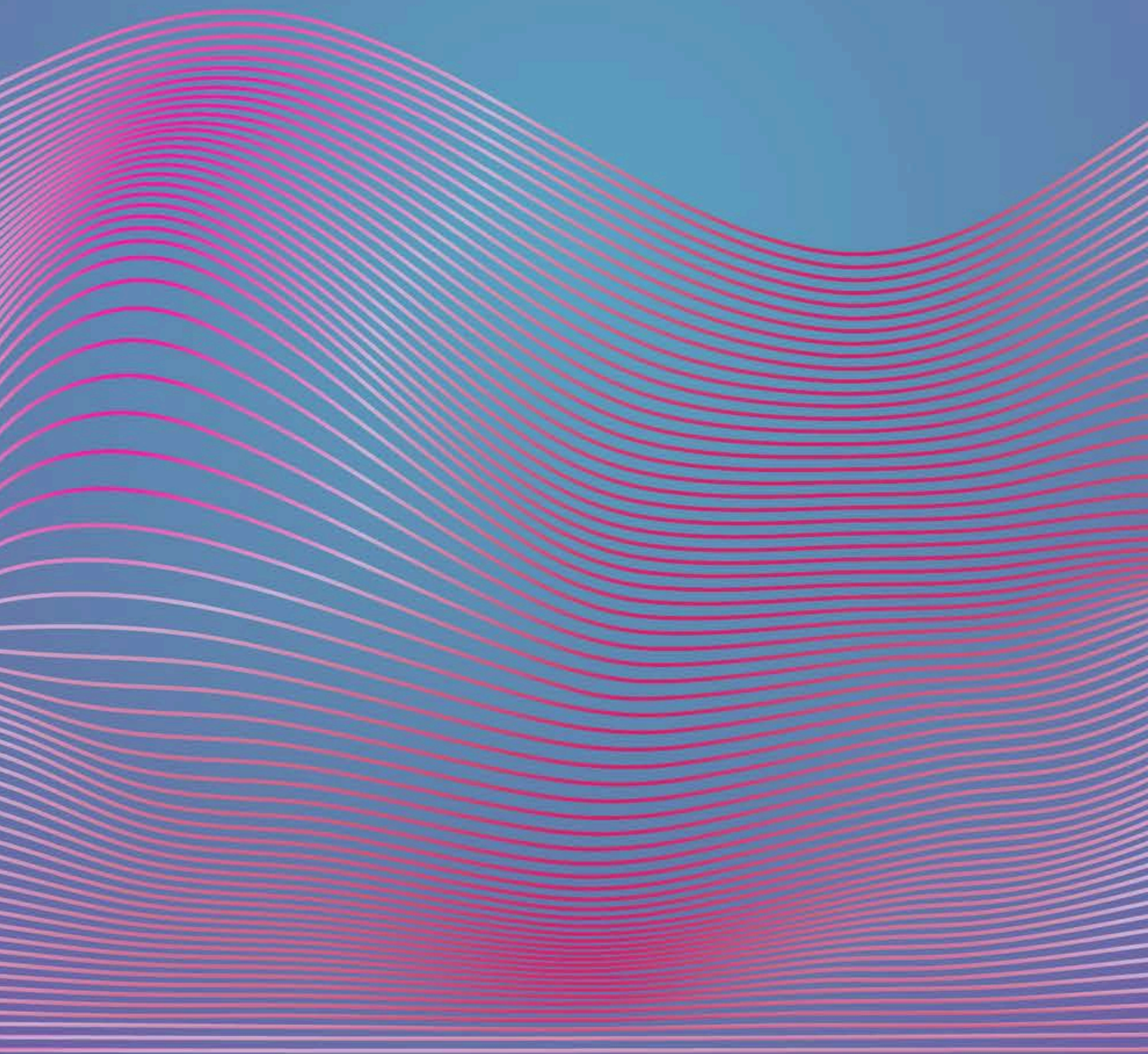


26,038

Contacts with
our AHP
Inpatient Teams



SERVICE DEVELOPMENTS





IMPROVING CARE FOR PEOPLE WITH DIABETES

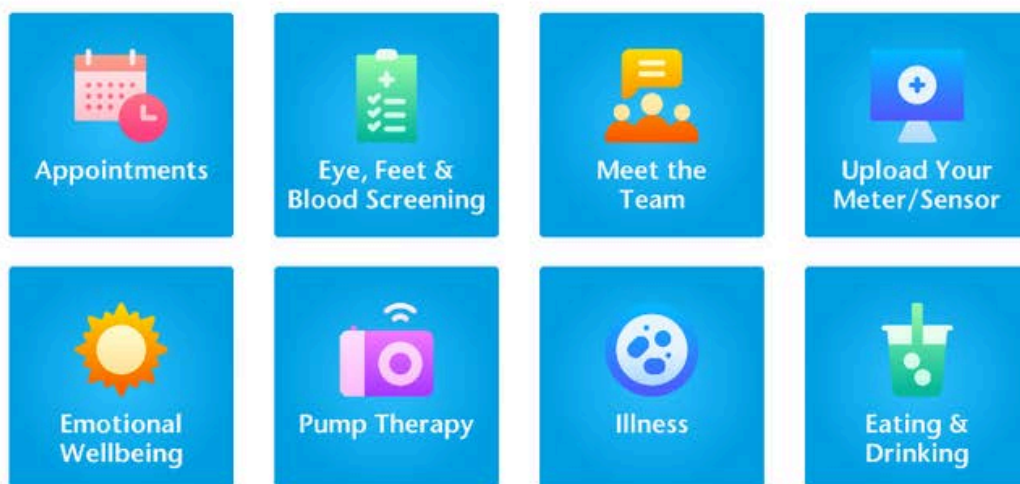
A new Care Hub was opened at Falkirk Community Hospital to support local people with Type 2 diabetes who require insulin or GLP1 injections. Around 4000 people in Forth Valley require these injections and around 2000 people have Type 1 diabetes.

The new Hub provides group education and support in a bright, airy space, away from an acute hospital setting. These include groups for young adults with diabetes, people starting to take insulin and those already on insulin who may require support with using new equipment and technology, such as insulin pumps. Those attending can discuss any issues with a member of the Diabetes Team, receive support and advice and meet others with diabetes to share their experiences. As well as group sessions, people can access face-to-face, video or telephone appointments for advice and support.

The new Care Hub is the latest in a series of developments to support those with diabetes. Specialist services for people with Type 1 diabetes are also provided and a new diabetes section has been created on the NHS Forth Valley website which includes a wide range of information, advice and resources.

People with Diabetes who take insulin are routinely reviewed within the Specialist Diabetes Team based in Forth Valley Royal Hospital. To find out more about the different healthcare professional see our [Meet the Team](#) page.

For the majority of people with type 2 diabetes, your main care provider will be your GP and practice nurse.



SUPPORTING PEOPLE WITH LONG COVID

A new service was launched in January 2024 to help people in Forth Valley affected by the long-term impact of Covid-19.

The long Covid service provides a range of advice and specialist support to help local people manage their symptoms and improve their overall health and wellbeing. It offers a range of one-to-one clinics and group sessions where people can access support from a wide range of healthcare professionals including a physiotherapist, a psychologist, dieticians, speech and language therapists.

The team can also refer people to other specialist services, if required, for further assessment or support, depending on their individual needs. People can be referred to the service by their GP, practice nurse or other healthcare professionals involved in their care. Advice and support on long Covid can also be found on NHS Forth Valley website.



WELCOMING HEALTHCARE STAFF FROM OVERSEAS

The first two physiotherapists from overseas arrived at Forth Valley Royal Hospital in June 2023, bringing with them a wealth of knowledge and experience.

They have been recruited as part of a Scottish Government initiative to increase international recruitment and support the delivery of health services across Scotland.

The physiotherapists, from India and Sri Lanka, have experience working in Abu Dhabi and Kuwait and each has been assigned an NHS Forth Valley physiotherapist who, along with other team members, are supporting them as they learn all about life in Scotland and working in NHS Forth Valley.

They also join a number of nursing colleagues recruited from overseas over the last two years.





NEW SPECIALIST HEART CLINICS FOR WOMEN PILOTED

A new specialist heart clinic is being piloted at Forth Valley Royal Hospital in a bid to improve treatment of a cardiac condition which mainly affects women.

The clinic aims to improve treatment for patients with a condition called Spontaneous Coronary Artery Dissection (SCAD). Patients with SCAD first present with a heart attack, only later finding out that the cause is a bit different compared with many heart attacks.

SCAD most commonly affects women in their 40s and 50s, though it can occur at any age and also affect men. Those affected are often healthy, fit individuals and may not have the common risk factors for heart disease, such as high blood pressure and cholesterol or diabetes. It is estimated that around 50 people a year in Scotland will experience a heart attack caused by SCAD.

The new clinic is being trialled over a two-year period with the support of a number of leading researchers and clinicians. These include Dr Dave Adlam, a cardiologist and leading UK expert on SCAD, who runs a specialist clinic in Leicester which has previously treated a number of patients from Scotland and Professor Lis Neubeck from Edinburgh Napier University's Centre for Cardiovascular Health, whose research helped illustrate the need for a new SCAD clinic in Scotland.

Dr Anne Scott, a Consultant Cardiologist at Forth Valley Royal Hospital, is running the new monthly SCAD clinics with her colleague Dr Claire Murphy and Dr Dave Adlam for the first year of the pilot. In the second year, Dr Scott and Dr Murphy will run the clinics with ongoing virtual support from Dr Adlam. Professor Neubeck is an expert in cardiac rehabilitation. Prof Neubeck will also be working with rehabilitation teams across Scotland to support improvements in rehabilitation services, informed by research carried out with patients who have suffered SCAD.

QUICKER TESTING FOR HEPATITIS C

A one-year pilot was launched in NHS Forth Valley in a bid to speed up the diagnosis and treatment of Hepatitis C.

The initiative, aimed at harder-to-reach groups, provides finger-prick testing with results and medication available, either on the same or next day, to avoid people having to wait longer for diagnosis and treatment. The pilot is unique in Scotland and is the first joint collaboration with pharmaceutical company Gilead Sciences, who have helped with funding. Harm reduction advice and a supply of clean equipment is also provided.

In the past, due to laboratories being extremely busy, dried blood spot results could take up to six to eight weeks to process which could delay opportunities to engage with local services. There are still around 600 people in the Forth Valley area who may have Hepatitis C and, as needle sharing is becoming more common in certain user groups during the Covid-19 pandemic, these numbers are expected to rise.

As part of wider efforts to encourage testing for those at higher risk of contracting Hepatitis C, peer support workers visit a number of premises, including the Salvation Army and local recovery cafes as well as engaging with local people who are homeless.



SPEEDING UP BREAST CANCER DIAGNOSIS

A new scheme, which aims to speed up the diagnosis of breast cancer was launched in October 2023, in partnership with Cancer Research UK.

The initiative, which is part of a new programme called Test, Evidence, Transition, hopes to enable patients to access treatment as quickly as possible – providing the best chance of tackling the disease successfully. The pilot scheme means patients who contact a GP in Forth Valley after finding a lump in their breast, are now referred directly to a breast assessment clinic at Forth Valley Royal Hospital without the need for an initial GP appointment and subsequent wait for a referral.





MINI X-RAY MACHINES SPEED UP SURGERY

Two advanced mini X-ray imaging machines are now being used in theatres at Forth Valley Royal Hospital to help reduce delays and free up radiographers to see more patients.

The machines, known as Mini C-arms, allow surgeons to take their own X-rays and hone in on specific areas of the body during an operation without the need for a radiographer to be present to set up and operate the X-ray equipment. The machines are specifically designed to X-ray smaller joints, such as wrists, ankles and hands during surgery.

Until recently, radiographers have had to leave their department to manoeuvre heavy X-ray equipment to theatres, assemble the different parts and stay throughout surgery to take any images required by the surgeon. This has led to delays and sometimes resulted in theatre lists having to be re-organised. It has also taken radiography staff away from the Radiology Department for periods of time which has reduced capacity and meant other patients sometimes having to wait longer for X-rays and other scans to be carried out.

The mini C-arms are very versatile and mobile pieces of equipment which make it easier for surgical staff to manoeuvre the equipment into any position they wish to help provide a clearer view of the area being operated on. It also reduces the radiation dose patients receive due to the smaller field of view, and smaller distance between the X-ray tube and detector.

In the past, theatres could require up to four radiographers at the same time to deliver the X-ray service required during surgery. This reduced the number of staff available in the radiology department to provide X-ray services for patients attending the Emergency Department and our assessment units as well as meeting the imaging requirements of patients in wards across the hospital.

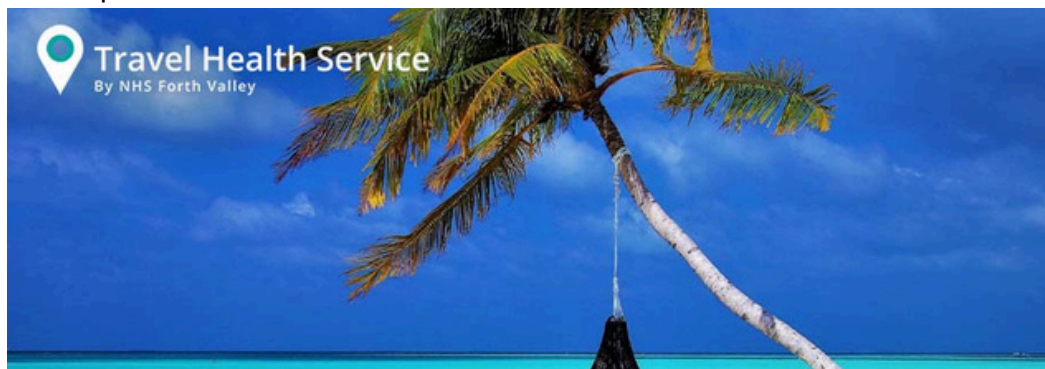
Surgical staff across the hospital have been trained to use the new X-ray equipment which is particularly useful for orthopaedic procedures to review images of the bone and check the positioning of any pins or plates inserted.

NEW TRAVEL HEALTH SERVICE INTRODUCED

A new Travel Health Service has been introduced as part of the Scottish Government's national Vaccine Transformation Programme. This replaces the travel health advice and vaccination service previously provided by local GP Practices. The Service provides a range of free vaccinations as well as certain vaccinations which are available on a private basis.

Based at Falkirk Community Hospital, the new travel health vaccination clinic is run by a team of immunisation nurses with specialist experience in travel health and medicine.

To support the service, a new travel health website has been developed which enables local people to check which vaccinations they require and book a vaccination appointment online. The Service has also been widely promoted via social media and local media to help raise awareness.



SUPPORTING CLINICAL RESEARCH

There was a significant increase in research projects taking place across Forth Valley and the Clinical Research Team is now supporting more than 100 different research trials across a range of areas. These include cancer treatment, cardiology, dementia, neurodegenerative diseases, diabetes, women's health, gastroenterology, mental health, paediatrics and surgery. NHS Forth Valley is the only NHS site in Scotland participating in a UK study to evaluate the use of a urine test which could help detect womb cancer in three hours, reducing the need for more invasive procedures like biopsies.

It was also the first NHS organisation in the UK to recruit participants to a new clinical trial which could help adults with early onset or mild dementia. Using specialist headsets which record EEG brain waves, participants were asked to carry out a variety of tasks and short 'games' to test memory, language, fluency, attention and overall concentration. They also wore a special headband at night to record EEG brain waves and monitor the quality of their sleep over the course of a year.





STATE-OF-THE-ART IMAGING MACHINES INSTALLED

Two new state-of-the-art imaging machines, including one which is the first of its kind in Scotland, were installed at Forth Valley Royal Hospital in February 2024 to help improve the diagnosis and treatment of a wide range of health conditions. The digital machines use the very latest technology to capture and manipulate crystal clear images far quicker than previous imaging equipment. This not only improves the experience for patients, but also increases the number of cases which can be carried out each day. Both machines also deliver lower doses of radiation which is better for patients, especially those who require multiple scans during their treatment.

The new Ultimax-i machine, which has been installed in the fluoroscopy room within the Radiology Department, enables high quality images and videos to be captured using contrast dye. This technology can be used to examine patients experiencing difficulties chewing and swallowing food, which can often happen after a stroke, and assess joints to identify if a patient would benefit from a hip or knee replacement. It can also be used to help position catheters and PICC lines (thin, flexible tubes which can be used to carry fluids in or out of the body, including antibiotics and chemotherapy drugs) and guide needles to inject local anaesthetic into joints. In addition, it can be used to insert stents to treat patients with a range of cancers, including bowel, stomach, gallbladder and liver cancer and supports a wide range of investigation carried out by the Endoscopy Department.

The Interventional Room within the Radiology Department has also been upgraded with the installation of a new Alphenix Sky+ system. This is the first of its kind to be installed in Scotland and has the unique ability to fully rotate from either side of the patient table, capturing images from every angle. The machine is used to carry out a range of complex procedures and scans including inserting small metal coils into veins or arteries to cut off the blood supply to cancerous tumours and place stents which can then be expanded to help clear blockages and maintain blood flow. These minimally invasive techniques can be used to treat a wide range of patients including those with heart, renal and prostate conditions which previously would have required major surgery. It can also be used to carry out investigations for women experiencing fertility issues and treat uterine fibroids, avoiding the need for more invasive procedures or surgery. Both rooms are used by the Cardiology Team to insert cardiac pacemakers and defibrillators on a day case basis which avoids the need for patients to go to theatre.



IMPROVING OUTCOMES AFTER A STROKE

A new service, which aims to further improve outcomes for certain stroke patients who have experienced a blood clot in their brain, has been introduced in NHS Forth Valley.

The thrombectomy service, which is being delivered in partnership with stroke specialists at Edinburgh Royal Infirmary (ERI), involves using a specially designed clot retrieving device, to help restore blood flow to the brain. The device can remove blood clots that may be too big to be broken down by clot-busting drugs and can also be used in patients who are unable to take these drugs.

Prior to the development of the new thrombectomy service, clot busting drugs were the only treatment available for patients who had experienced a stroke. However, thrombectomy is a major clinical development which has the potential to save lives and significantly improve outcomes.

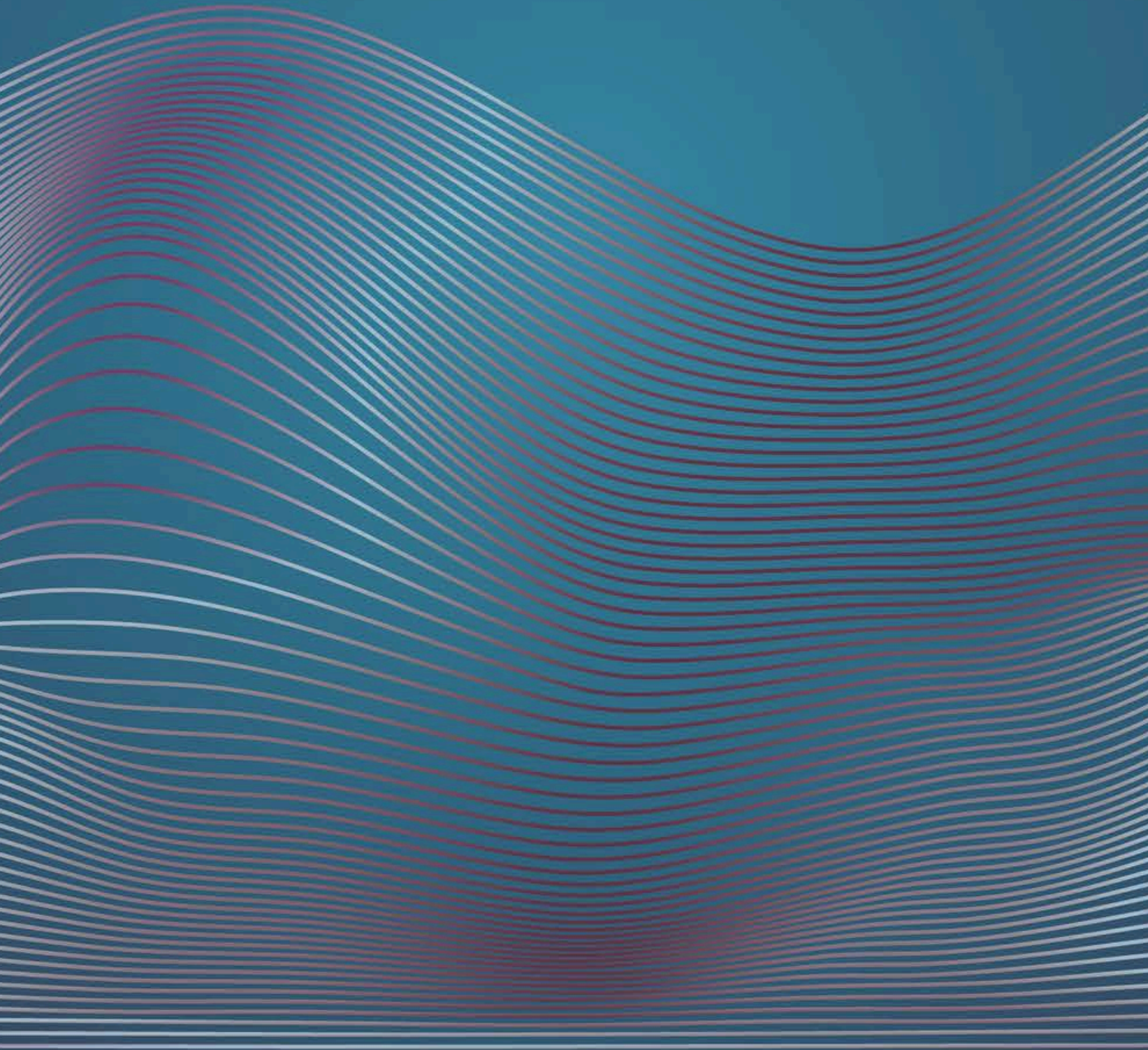
Because of the highly specialist nature of the procedure, the service operates as a hub and spoke model and Forth Valley Royal Hospital is the first spoke hospital outside of the Lothian area to offer the procedure.

Under the new arrangements, patients who have experienced a stroke will now undergo a CT scan to see if there is evidence of a significant blood clot in their head or neck which is blocking blood flow to parts of their brain (also known as an ischaemic stroke). If this is identified, and they are suitable for the procedure, they are then transferred to Edinburgh to undergo a thrombectomy in the hospital's specialist cath lab.

After treatment, patients are either transferred back to Forth Valley Royal Hospital for ongoing care or rehabilitation, if required, or directly discharged home from Edinburgh Royal Infirmary.

It is estimated that around 30 – 40 patients from the Forth Valley area may be suitable for this procedure, which is most effective when performed within six hours after stroke symptoms begin. This number is also expected to rise over the coming years.

GOING GREEN



TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE

The Scottish Government's Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy for NHS Scotland (2022-2026) sets out the actions needed for NHS Scotland to be a net-zero health service by 2040 with a focus on sustainable buildings and land, travel, goods and services, care and communities.

Although this is a challenging target, good progress is being made locally with a 36% reduction in carbon emissions compared with the 2014/15 baseline.

A wide range of work is underway across the organisation to help create more sustainable health services, reduce energy use and prevent waste. Achieving these goals will require changes to the way healthcare services and facilities are designed and delivered. However, there is a real commitment to build on the great work that has already been done, scale up activity and harness the energy and enthusiasm of local staff, patients and visitors to help deliver the changes required.

It's also important to recognise that many of the actions needed to respond to the climate emergency also have positive impacts on health. For example, cutting emissions and restoring biodiversity improves air quality and can reduce the incidence of asthma, heart attacks and stroke. NHS Forth Valley has developed a Sustainability Strategy and is providing annual updates on progress against key national targets.

Other successes include:

- Securing £2m of funding from the Green Public Sector Estate De-Carbonisation Scheme to improve the energy efficiency of 13 GP Practice premises across Forth Valley. This is being used to install more thermally efficient glazing, solar roof panels, insulation, LED lighting and electric boilers as well as digitally controlled heating and cooling systems. These improvements will not only reduce emissions, but will also deliver financial savings and generate income from the solar panels.

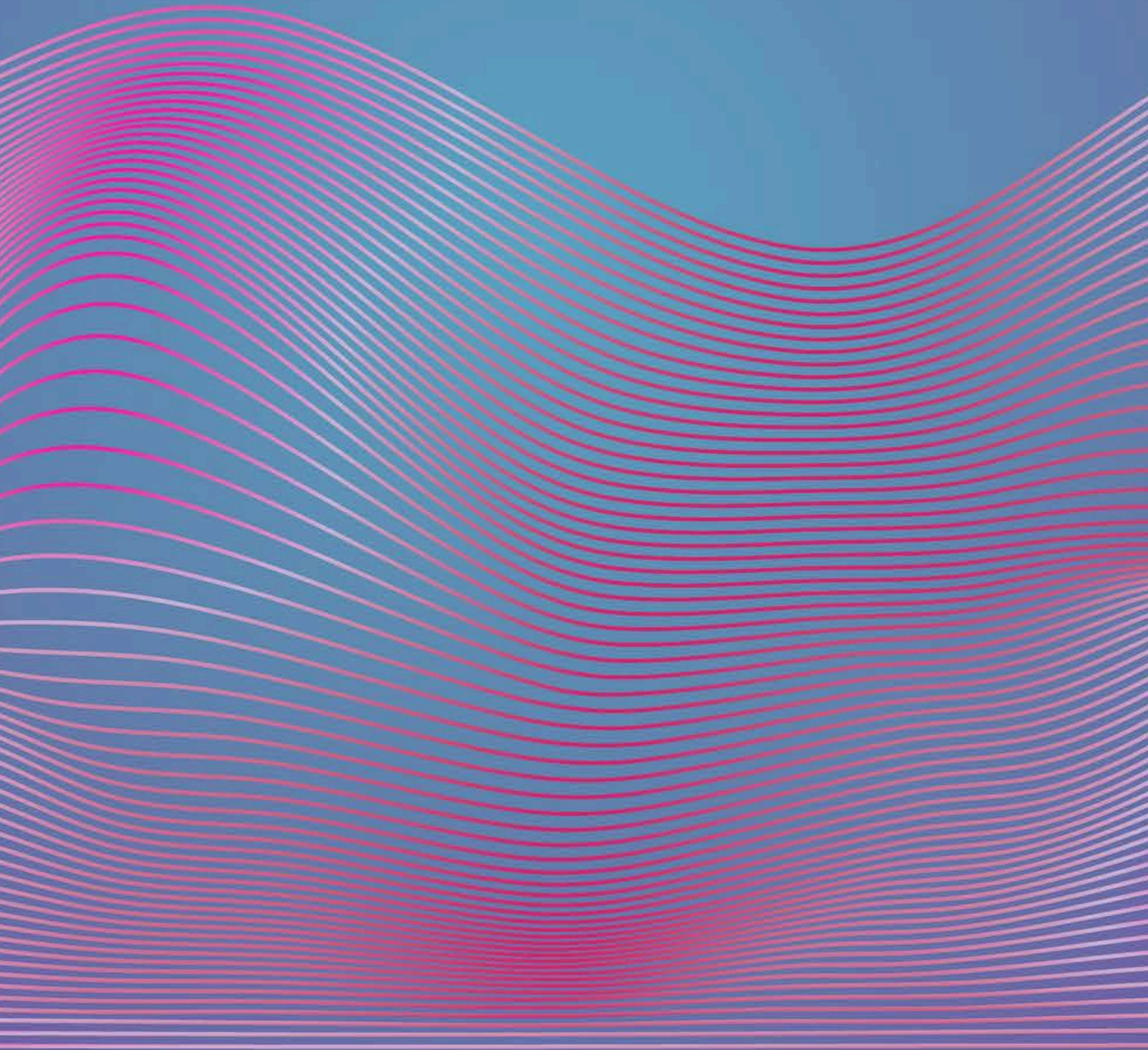




- Progress continues to switch to electric vehicles and remove all petrol and diesel fuelled cars from our fleet by 2025. The majority of the NHS Forth Valley fleet is now 100% electric and the remaining fleet vehicles will be replaced with electric alternatives when they reach their replacement dates.
- Electric charging points have been installed in local hospital and health centre car parks for staff, patients and visitors and support is available to help staff switch to more sustainable ways of travelling including access to electric bikes and bike maintenance schemes.
- The Green Theatres Project, led by theatre staff at Forth Valley Royal Hospital, has resulted in changes to how surgery is carried out and reduced environmental impacts. Work has also been undertaken by the team to reduce use of anaesthetic gases and inhaler propellants that contribute to the carbon footprint.
- More green space is being introduced around local hospitals and healthcare centres to help increase biodiversity, cut emissions and improve health and wellbeing. This includes a number of initiatives at Stirling Health and Care Village and Forth Valley Royal Hospital to create more green spaces and areas for staff, patients and visitors to spend time in the fresh air.
- Packaging waste is being reduced along with efforts to increase the use of reusable equipment, reduce food waste from patient meals and reduce single-use products.



CELEBRATING SUCCESS





The six winners of the 2023 NHS Forth Valley's Staff Awards were unveiled at an awards ceremony which took place at Stirling Court Hotel on the evening of Wednesday 15th November 2023.

The Awards highlight the hard work, care and commitment of local staff across the organisation and provide an opportunity for colleagues, patients and members of the public to say thanks and show their appreciation.

Eighteen finalists were selected from more than 800 nominations put forward by local staff, patients and their families along with a Chair's Award which is presented to an individual who has demonstrated NHS Forth Valley's values in their day-to-day work over the last year.

In addition, as 2023 marked the 75th anniversary of NHS Scotland, two additional special awards were made to individuals or teams who demonstrated outstanding care and commitment in the delivery of NHS care. These were presented to Susan McRobbie, a district nurse in Callander, for her kindness and compassion in caring for a patient who had lived his life outdoors in a makeshift home and wanted to spend his last days there when he became terminally ill.

The other NHS 75th Anniversary Award went to Ward A31 at Forth Valley Royal Hospital, which also received multiple nominations from local patients and their families. Staff were praised, not only for their outstanding care, but also for the support they provided to local families to help keep their spirits up at a difficult time.

TOP TEAMS

Ward 4 at Forth Valley Royal Hospital was named the winner of the Top Team Award at the 2023 Scottish Health Awards.

The Team was praised for their work with dementia patients who require high levels of care as this requires exceptional levels of complexity and skills to manage both physical and mental health conditions.

Staff strive to improve patients' quality of life and are working to achieve even bigger goals by transforming the ward to further improve the experience of local patients.



NHS Forth Valley's Audiology Team also won the British Academy of Audiology (BAA) Audiology Team of the Year Award. This prestigious prize is awarded to a team that has worked together to improve the quality of audiology services in their area, showing innovative and original ideas.

In NHS Forth Valley, a wide range of work has been taken forward across audiology services to reduce waiting times, improve communication and support local patients and their families. This has included the development of advanced practice roles to help reduce waiting times, the introduction of dedicated professional development sessions and additional training for staff to enable them to take on new roles and responsibilities.

Several members of the team are also undertaking additional advanced professional qualifications and leadership programmes to further enhance their skills and experience.



ROYAL RECOGNITION

A nurse from Larbert was among a group of 24 community nurses and midwives to receive the prestigious title of Queen's Nurse.

Chloe Richardson, a Community Learning Disability Charge Nurse, was selected to take part in a nine-month development programme run by the Queen's Nursing Institute Scotland (QNIS).

After completing the programme successfully, Chloe was awarded the Queen's Nurse title along with 23 other community nurses and midwives at a ceremony in Edinburgh on 24th November 2024.



Queen's Nursing in Scotland dates back to the late 19th century, when nurses completed specific training which allowed them to work as district nurses. They provided healthcare services and support to people in their own homes and became well respected figures within their community.

RISK MANAGEMENT ACHIEVEMENT

Vicky Webb, a Risk Management Advisor, won the Newcomer of the Year Award at the Continuity Assurance and Risk (CIR) Management Awards.

These awards celebrate excellence in the field of risk management and aim to recognise the best people, products, programmes and achievements across the sector.



DIGITAL SUCCESS

Nicola Riddell, NHS Forth Valley's eRoster Manager was shortlisted in the Digital Leader of the Year category in the HSJ Digital Awards for 2023 for her work to develop and implement a new digital eRostering system.

This is designed to move away from the previous manual allocation of shifts and make it easier for managers to ensure the right members of staff are working in the right place at the right time, bringing benefits to patient care and increasing patient safety.



SCIENTIFIC STAR

A trainee Biomedical Scientist at Forth Valley Royal Hospital was awarded the Rising Star Award in the Scottish Government's Chief Scientific Officer National Awards for 2024.

The Rising Star Award aims to recognise individuals who are in their early career and who have shown initiative, skill and commitment.

Laura Green works in the Pathology Department at Forth Valley Royal Hospital, where she was initially employed as a Medical Laboratory Assistant before progressing to an Associate Practitioner and then to a Trainee Biomedical Scientist.

During this time, she completed two degrees, one in Material Science and then another in Biomedical Science in which she achieved first-class honours. Laura also undertook top up modules to enable her to become a HCPC registered Biomedical Scientist, all whilst working full time in the Pathology Department.



TALENTED TECHNICIANS

Three trainee technicians in our Area Services Decontamination Unit (ASDU) received their Technical Certificates after completing a programme run by the Institution of Decontamination Sciences - the professional body for decontamination services.

The programme is designed to introduce trainee technicians to best practice in decontamination services, in line with national policy and guidance.

Achieving this certificate is part of a rigorous training programme, combined with competency training and continuous professional development opportunities.

The three trainees are now working towards finishing their inhouse training and becoming fully trained technicians.



AMAZING NURSES

Nursing staff from across NHS Forth Valley were recognised for their incredible care, leadership, support and innovation at the inaugural RCN Scotland Nurse of the Year Awards 2023 – scooping two overall winners and five runners up awards.

Laura McCann, Community Learning Disability Nurse and Senior Charge Nurse, who works with the Falkirk Learning Disability Team, won the Learning Disability Nursing Award.

Janet Wilson, a Nursing Assistant, who works at Loch View in Larbert, won the Nursing Support Worker of the Year Award and Alison O'Neill, a Support Worker and Nursing Assistant with the Infant, Child and Adolescent Mental Health team at Stirling Health and Care Village received the runner up award in this category.

Unit 5 at Falkirk Community Hospital was also the runner up in the Nursing Team of the Year Award for their efforts to support and increase the range of activities for patients with dementia and prolonged delirium.



UNIVERSITY HONOURS

Three senior healthcare staff were recognised by the University of Stirling for their contribution to the development of new training programmes, research and innovation.

NHS Forth Valley's Director of Allied Health Professions, Pauline Beirne was appointed as an Honorary Professor for her work to develop new training programmes for Allied Health Professionals at the University.

Juliette Murray, a Breast Surgeon and Deputy Medical Director for Acute Services, was also appointed as an Honorary Professor for her contribution to the University's Faculty of Health and Sport. Juliette is currently working on a range of projects with the University including a new initiative, funded by Cancer Research UK, which aims to speed up the diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer. She is also closely involved in the development of a number of Advanced Practice training courses for healthcare staff at the University, including a new course for Surgical Care Practitioners.

Susan Bishop, Head of Efficiency, Improvement and Innovation, was appointed as an Associate Professor for her work to develop the new Forth Valley University College NHS Partnership. This unique partnership between NHS Forth Valley, the University of Stirling and Forth Valley College aims to deliver new learning and development opportunities for students and staff, drive forward world-class research and innovation and improve patient care and treatment.



OUTSTANDING CARE FOR WOMEN & CHILDREN

A number of staff from across our Women and Children's Unit received awards in recognition of their outstanding care, commitment and expertise. These included Healthcare Support Worker of the Year, Staff Nurse of the Year and the Gillian McMillan Inspirational Midwife of the Year Award.

The number of nominations for these awards increased again in 2023 which is testament to the hard work and expertise of local staff.



POSITIVE FEEDBACK FROM TRAINEE DOCTORS

NHS Forth Valley has emerged as one of the best places to be in Scotland for trainee doctors, with the following six departments in the top 2% – anaesthetics, clinical radiology, general surgery, obstetrics and gynaecology, ophthalmology and paediatrics.

The details were revealed in the Scotland Deanery Director of Medical Education Report following a national trainee survey. The survey is anonymously submitted by trainee doctors to rate training posts and is produced every year to highlight the trainee doctors' perception of the quality of their training. Feedback was sought on a range of areas including the supportive environment, teamwork, educational governance, handovers and overall satisfaction.

A large number of clinical staff across NHS Forth Valley contributed to this success, demonstrating that quality training can be delivered within busy services. There were also high markings for trainees in several local GP practices including Polmont Park Medical Group and Forth View Practice in Bo'ness.

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Scotland Deanery

We are the Scotland Deanery, working in partnership with Health Boards and GP Surgeries to train doctors and dentists to be the senior clinicians we need to treat Scotland's people in the future. Our job is to ensure that these doctors and dentists in training are given the right opportunities and experience to equip them to be highly effective and capable practitioners delivering the best care possible.

[Find out more](#)



More than 250 staff with a total of 6730 years of service between them have received Long Service Awards from NHS Forth Valley. They include NHS Forth Valley pharmacy technician Helen McCabe, who notched up an incredible half a century of NHS service.

Helen witnessed many changes and innovations during her 50 year career - from filling pharmacy boxes and pre-packing tablets and liquids to the creation of a new pharmacy department, electronic prescribing and robotic dispensing at Forth Valley Royal Hospital.

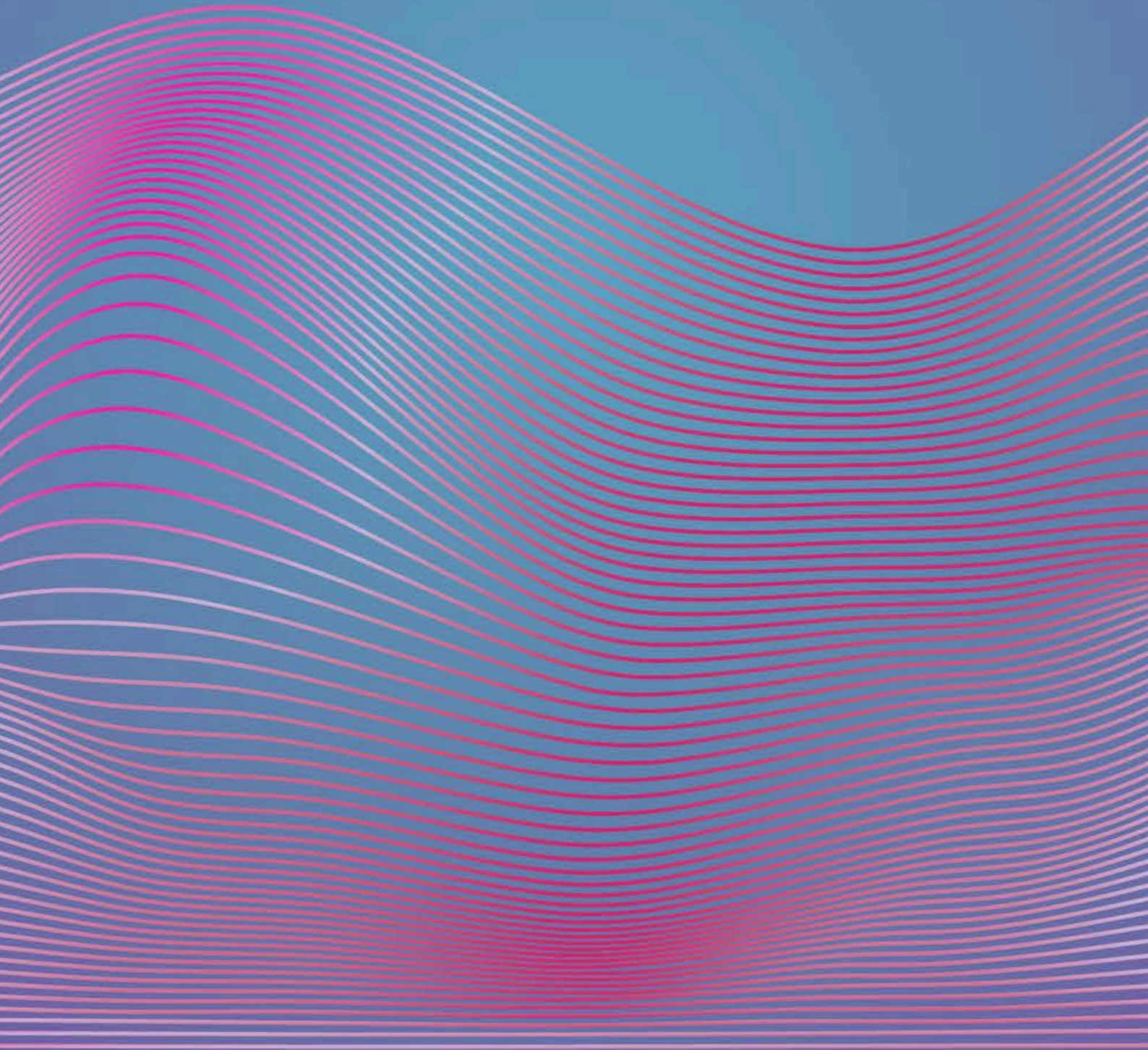
Helen joined the Pharmacy Department at the former Stirling Royal Infirmary in 1972 and gained a number of qualifications and promotions during her long service. She described working in the NHS as a vocation and was delighted to be able to reach the half century milestone.

Two special award ceremonies were held at Forth Valley Royal Hospital in May 2023 to present staff with a specially designed pin badge and award certificate.

The NHS Forth Valley long service awards were last presented in January 2020 and were paused during the Covid-19 pandemic. This meant that this year staff who had achieved 20, 30, 40 or 50 years' service during the previous three years were eligible to receive an award.

Of those receiving awards, 118 celebrated 20 years' service, 104 had served 30 years, 30 had achieved 40 years' service and one member of staff received an award for 50 years service. The majority of recipients had a nursing or midwifery background however staff from all areas were recognised for their long service, including medical, administration, support services and allied health professionals.

PERFORMANCE



61%

of patients waited less than 12 weeks from referral to a first outpatient appointment

(Scotland 40%)

March 2024

72%

of patients waited less than six weeks for one or more of the eight key diagnostic tests

(Scotland 48%)

March 2024

73%

of patients started treatment within 18 weeks of being referred for psychological therapy

(Target 90%)

March 2024

78%

of patients waited less than 62 days from urgent suspicion of cancer referral to first cancer treatment

(Target 95% - Scotland 70%)

Quarter ending March 2024

97%

of patients waited less than 31 days from decision to treat to first cancer treatment

(Target 95% - Scotland 94%)

Quarter ending March 2024

95%

of Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) patients started treatment within 18 weeks of referral

(Target 90%)

82%

of people referred for drug or alcohol problems waited no longer than three weeks for specialist treatment

(Target 90%)

66%

of people invited to take part in the Scottish Bowel Screening Programme returned a test kit

(Target 60%)



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