

WORKFORCE STRATEGY

and Plan



2

2022-2025

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Foreword

I am delighted to present the NHS 24 Workforce Strategy for 2022 to 2025. This strategy sets out an ambitious vision for our future and a route map to its achievement, building on the solid foundations of the last 20 years.

It is an important milestone as we recover from COVID 19 and NHS 24 cements its place within the health and social care system in Scotland.

Looking back over the last two years, it is clear that the pandemic has had a significant impact on health and social care in Scotland which is likely to continue for years to come. It has led to government and health and social care priorities changing, and with this, new approaches to the way our communities access care. Added to this, there have been advancements in healthcare innovation, the significant growth of digital health technologies and the potential for increased use of artificial intelligence, machine learning and robotics. This context is challenging, but it has renewed our determination to prioritise our work to reduce health inequalities, to work seamlessly across boundaries, to utilise technology to provide our patients with omni channel access to the latest and most effective digital healthcare. I know that to deliver our ambitions our people are the key driver to success. I would like to thank them for all their hard work, dedication, and commitment over the last two years. Particularly how they have stepped up to

develop new services, took on new roles and responded to the pressures of moving to a 24/7 service.

Looking forward to 2025 it is important that we create an organisation that is flexible and has the agility to respond effectively to new challenges and opportunities. I believe that the publication of our three-year strategy provides a clear path to ensuring our organisation is responsive, our culture is inclusive, our people feel valued and engaged and are equipped with the right skills to deliver the best digitally enabled care in Scotland 24/7.

I look forward to working with our colleagues across NHS 24, our trade unions, and our external partners to deliver this strategy.

With thanks and best wishes.

Chief Executive

OUR PEOPLE ARE OUR

MOST VALUABLE ASSET



Our strategy

Over the last two years NHS 24 has transformed from an out of hours service to becoming truly 24/7, providing access to high quality, clinically safe and effective services to everyone who needs them.

Our service touches the lives of people across Scotland when care and compassion is what matters most. The pandemic placed significant demands on our people and our organisation as we developed new services at pace, introduced new roles, changed skillsets and adopted new ways of working.

We know that as we recover, grow and transform our workforce we will need to do more to ensure a supportive, inclusive and values led culture and to continue to support employee wellbeing. Our people are at the heart of our service and are our most valuable asset.

Look to the future

As we look forward to 2025 and beyond, we know that the health and social care needs and expectations of the people of Scotland will change. With this, so too will our services as we work closer with partners in the public, private and third sectors as well as across the health and social care system in Scotland. During this time, the world of work globally will also change significantly with advances in digital technologies, remote working and artificial intelligence. There will also be an increased demand for key skillsets which means we will need to do more to attract the right talent with the right professional and technical capabilities that ensures we are able to continue to develop and deliver high-quality services.

Our workforce will also change due to increasing numbers of people leaving through retirement, new generations entering the workforce with different expectations from their employment and a growing demand for digital capability to deliver omni channel services. We know that people entering employment now, and in the future, will not have careers for life. Their focus will be on having a better work/life balance with more meaningful work.

To meet these demands, our approach to recruitment will be renewed to ensure we attract new generations - Millennials, Gen Z and Gen Alpha - re-think how we

design and develop roles and provide opportunities for flexible working that are aligned to these aspirations.

Internally, we need to identify our talent and ensure that effective succession planning is in place to create our leaders of the future.

Implementation of the Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019 will continue, with a focus on engagement and wellbeing to encourage opportunities for innovation and creativity.

Our priorities around fair work and diversity, equity, and inclusion, will be taken forward through increasing the entry routes into NHS 24 for apprentices, ethnic minorities, care experienced, veterans and socially disadvantaged groups to ensure that our workforce is truly reflective of the communities we serve.

We will continue to support and develop an environmentally sustainable workforce, in line with the ambition and approach set out in the NHS Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy, and in order to fulfil our public body duties of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. This includes supporting our people so that sustainability becomes everyone's responsibility and helping them to build on the good work that has already been done.

Our leaders and our managers are key to helping us deliver services and for our people to fulfil their ambition and potential. To achieve this, we will need to continue to invest in the development of our frontline managers along with the development of new programmes for our middle and senior managers to increase confidence and capability.

We will also commit to the ongoing training and development of our people to equip them with the skills and competencies to deliver omni channel services. This will mean upskilling and reskilling to keep pace with the introduction of new technology and the impact of wider societal change. As well as ensuring that they have the knowledge, skills and confidence to engage with diverse populations and diverse health agendas, in order to deliver against our, and the wider Scottish Government's agenda to improve population health and reduce health inequalities. Delivery will be conducted in an agile way through modernising our approach to practice education and training and harnessing the benefits of technology and contemporary training practice.

We cannot deliver our aspirations alone, so we will strengthen our links across the health and social care system adopting a 'Once for Scotland' approach where possible. By increasing our partnership working with colleges and universities in areas such as research and training, and with our public and third sector partners, we can further promote opportunities for employment and training, develop joint programmes and share best practice to support innovation and knowledge transfer.

NHS 24 an employer of choice and to ensure that we have the right people, with the right skills, in the right place, at the right time. We know that to achieve this, we will need to harness the strengths of our people, have an inclusive, values led culture where everyone feels that they belong and where our people are recognised for their contribution to providing access to high quality, clinically safe, digital services, at point of need.

Strategic ambition

Our workforce strategy is ambitious and sets out our priorities for the next three years as we strive to make

Alongside our Vision, Mission and Values, we have set out five strategic priorities, aligned with the five National Workforce Strategy Health & Social Care Pillars to provide transformative direction for our people and the organisation:



Our Context

Responding to new challenges and opportunities

As an integral component of the wider health and social care system in Scotland, it is vital that our people can fully participate in the post-pandemic recovery and service transformation required by Scotland's health and care services.

The decisions we take about the future of our workforce will be pivotal to achieving this. To do this effectively, we need to understand how society, globally and locally, will change, how the world of work will evolve by 2025 and beyond, and how these changes will impact on health and social care in Scotland.

With an increasingly aged population with complex health and care needs, coupled with significant

healthcare inequalities, we know by 2030 the services we deliver will need to be fundamentally different from what they are today.

To compound matters, workforce growth over the past decade has not kept up with increasing demands meaning supply challenges are expected to exacerbate.

While existing models of care and organisational boundaries are being transformed as health and social care services continue to adapt to the changing needs and expectations of the population, it is equally important that this keeps pace with the growth in digital technologies, automation of tasks, remote and hybrid working and new advances based on artificial intelligence.

World of work

The world of work is changing at a pace few ever imagined, accelerated by a global pandemic.

As we teeter on the precipice of a 5th Industrial Revolution, which will foster a more balanced working relationship between smart technologies and humans, our organisation must be actively preparing to respond to this as well as the changing nature of work and people's expectations from their employment.

By 2030, the number of economically active people aged 65 and over is projected to increase by one third.

With the emergence of this five-generational workforce in the UK coupled with ever increasing competition for people due to UK labour market shortages, we can expect to see more complexities within the jobs market because of this.

Ultimately, while smart technologies and improvements in health and social care can support ageing populations, we anticipate a continued demand for a larger workforce.



Priorities for health and social care in Scotland

In 2021/22, Scotland's Programme for Government set out its vision for health and social care, announcing additional annual investment in frontline funding so that it will be at least £2.5 billion higher by 2026-27 (with a focus on infrastructure).

An additional £100 million was also committed for a range of programmes to increase digital capacity and capability while also improving physical and mental wellbeing.

However, its pinnacle will be the single biggest public service reform since the founding of the NHS – the creation of a National Care Service - which will transform the way social care is delivered in Scotland.

Underpinning this is Scottish Government's National Workforce Strategy for Health and Social Care in Scotland, published earlier this year, which sets out a clear vision for the workforce - 'A sustainable, skilled workforce with attractive career choices and fair work where all are respected and valued for what they do'.

This strategy sets out five pillars to achieve these ambitions: Plan, Attract, Train, Employ and Nurture. It is clear from the strategy and the investment by Scottish Government that optimising the workforce will be key to meeting the health and social care challenges both in the short term to recover from the pandemic and in the medium and long term to enable growth, innovation, and transformation.

Current global workforce data insights into multi-generational work:
Fig 1 Data via Purdue University Global

Generation	Born	Communication Preferences	Noteworthy Stats
Traditionalists	1925-1945	Personal touch; handwritten notes over emails	Traditionalists currently comprise 2% of the workforce
Baby Boomers	1946-1964	Efficiency; in person meetings, phone calls, or emails	10,000 baby boomers reach retirement age every day
Generation X	1965-1980	Efficiency; in person meetings, phone calls or emails	Generation X will outnumber baby boomers by 2028
Millennials	1981-2000	Typing; instant messages, texts, or email	By 2025 millennials will make up 75% of the global workforce
Generation Z	2001-2020	Typing; instant messages, texts, or email	84% of Gen Z employees expect formal training provided by their employer



FIVE PILLARS TO

ACHIEVE AMBITIONS

Priorities and challenges for NHS 24

As an organisation we need to prepare to meet these challenges.

We know that there are current pressures which could pose barriers to change as we continue to define NHS 24's position within the wider health and social care system.

Budget pressures, technology investment, labour market shortages and year on year savings targets as well as threats from external events such as climate change and potential future pandemics, will provide a challenge to the ongoing transformation that will be required to deliver high quality, digitally enabled services.

Continual investment and growth of our workforce is vital to the delivery of services. However, demand for key skillsets, particularly nurses, remains high but there are wider difficulties outside of this with labour market shortages being reported across a wide range of sectors resulting in a candidate driven market.

For many, balancing their work more easily with other areas of their lives may become as important to individuals as levels of pay, reward and potential for career progression. It means that we need to do more to attract and retain our people, support wellbeing, improve attendance and create a culture where staff feel supported and that they belong.

There is also an increase in non-linear careers rather than 'careers for life'. People are continuing to work later in life. This shift is likely to lead to people having more stages in their career and perhaps making changes to new sectors or having 'portfolio careers', where they work in more than one area simultaneously, furthering the need for increased flexibility in our how we deploy our workforce. This, in turn, may lead to higher expectations of employers to make it easier for people to move in and out of roles, to create more opportunities for non-linear progression and to show that it is still possible to work

in health and social care in the longer term while still enjoying a career that encompasses different roles and areas.

The ongoing development and training of our people will be key to retention and service transformation. People entering our workforce will be 'digital natives' and will expect technology driven learning and more immersive approaches to training. A more agile and responsive approach will be required to keep pace with new innovations and changing expectations and it will need to be delivered in a more flexible way through offering, for example, modular training, apprenticeships or 'earn while you learn' approaches, as well as significantly increasing training in new areas such as digital.

Technology will have an ongoing impact and is likely to reshape job and skills demands. Advances in technology are likely to take over routine, repetitive tasks allowing workers to focus their time on higher-productivity tasks that machines cannot do. This means that many roles will be reconfigured, rather than eliminated, and job roles will be reshaped. Technology will continue to free up opportunities providing greater flexibility for individuals in where and how they work.

Organisations, particularly within the public sector, will be expected to lead the way in tackling injustice and inequalities and demonstrably provide equal opportunities for all. Citizens will also expect greater efforts to address climate change, with employers expected to play their part as well as government and individuals.

Strategy and plan development

To shape our new strategy and plan, we have undertaken a programme of consultation and engagement, meaningfully involving our communities, workforce, partners and our board via Town Hall events, engagement workshops, staff survey and completion of workforce plan questionnaires.

The key findings and insights from these have helped inform this strategy which clearly represents the views and aspirations of our stakeholders ensuring that it is owned by all.

Our workforce strategy and plan 2022-2025

We have set out an ambitious Workforce Strategy & Plan for 2022-25 through understanding the challenges which lie ahead for NHS 24. We believe that the delivery of our plan through the five strategic

priorities: Sustainable Workforce, Inclusive Culture, Enhanced Learning & Development, Effective Leadership & Management and Collaboration & Engagement, will help us have 'the right people, technology, infrastructure and working environment to support staff to deliver excellence'.

Our current workforce

Our current workforce demographics, Annexe 1, shows that we have significant populations of Millennials and Gen X which means that we need to ensure that we take measures to support retention and career development. It also shows high percentages of Boomers which means that we need to plan for retirements and look at how we attract future talent. All of this means that we need to do more to move away from being predominantly reactive, to becoming a proactive, preventative talent recruiter to ensure we have the resources required to meet service performance targets.



Sustainable workforce

We will plan our workforce to meet service requirements through attracting and retaining people from the communities we serve

Sustainable workforce

A high performing and inclusive culture relies on the strength of our people. Identifying, attracting, and retaining the absolute best talent is central to the success of NHS 24. Many of the operational challenges faced across health and social care stem from a mismatch in the supply of, and the demand for, high quality individuals to deliver the best for those they care for.

Recruitment and retention

We will address these challenges through understanding the drivers for turnover so that we can minimise vacancies and reliance on temporary staff, develop an excellent employer brand and adopt innovative approaches for 'hard to fill' posts. By actively profiling the diversity of our applicants, this will ensure we continue to be an inclusive employer and our workforce is reflective of our communities. Through this we will strengthen our position as an 'Anchor Institution'. It is also a key responsibility as a public sector organisation, in line with an 'Anchor Institutions' and 'Community Wealth Building' approach, that we

ensure that public money is invested in ways, including through employment, that benefits local communities. Recognising and sponsoring high-potential individuals from under-represented backgrounds will provide opportunities for talented people to develop their skills, move up, or just as importantly, across functions and teams to enhance employee performance and improve business results.

All possible resourcing routes, not simply like-for-like replacement or external recruitment will be scrutinised. While resourcing decisions will be driven by business needs, our overarching strategic aim will be, where possible and appropriate, to flexibly deploy our employees and provide our future, aspiring talent with the opportunity to develop their skills and experiences. Our commitment to mobilising a multi-professional workforce will further our aim of enhancing these internal mobility aspirations.

Bringing new people on board quickly, will not only reduce the length of time posts are vacant but will minimise the pressure on those covering the gaps, reinforcing workforce wellbeing and retention.

We will strive to create a culture where talented people are recognised and promoted. Like many, we have transformed from an office-based organisation to one that enables our corporate staff to work remotely. We want to harness the benefits from this new way of working and will explore how we could extend this to our frontline staff without losing the advantages of working collectively as a team which will help develop our reputation as an employer of choice (sustainability).

Workforce planning

We will continue to drive effective workforce planning and ensure that workforce analytics will be readily available, and provided in a timely and accessible manner, to support planning, decision making and delivery of our strategic objectives. Maximising opportunities through digitisation helps to remove unnecessary processes and a paperless environment, supporting us to work more effectively and efficiently.

The need for expanded workforce reporting and analytical capabilities has never been as urgent. Workforce issues, such as recruiting and retaining talent across health and social care, are only likely to be impacted further by uncertainties faced across the wider system in the coming years. We must therefore place ourselves in a position where we are able to use robust workforce analytics to understand our challenges and how we can overcome them to deliver safe patient care.

Our priorities for a sustainable workforce

- We will plan our future resourcing requirements through effective workforce planning
- We will develop and apply high quality workforce analytics and insights
- We will develop a modern and streamlined model for recruitment and attraction
- We will retain the workforce we have worked hard to recruit
- We will explore the development of new job roles and multidisciplinary skillsets
- We will develop programmes for care experienced, veterans, minority ethnic groups and others

Amira's journey in 2025

Amira was in her final year of college having studied for a Modern Apprenticeship in Healthcare Support when she began her search for a job.

On one of her regular social media sites, she came across an advert for a Digital Healthcare Support Advisor (DHSA) with NHS 24. She clicked the link and was taken to a video which showed her what a day in the life of a DHSA looked like. She was also able to read a blog created by a current DHSA, see photographs and video tour of the workplace sites, what the benefits of the role were and the types of contracts that were available.

Amira very much liked the look of a hybrid job role she had seen, where she could spend 70% of her time on her DHSA role and 30% of her time working within the Project Management Office as a Portfolio Support Officer. Amira was excited by the variety this role was offering and clicked the 'I am interested' button.

She was taken to a professional microsite which allowed her to complete a job simulation exercise, giving her some further insight into the role. She was also able to complete a short self-assessment which confirmed that she was a good fit for this job. She clicked the apply button. The job portal asked her not only for her current skills, experience, and qualifications but if she had any interest in developing skills in other areas of the organisation. She was invited to interview 2 weeks after applying and started her new role as a hybrid DHSA/ Portfolio Support Officer 4 weeks later.

Ensure we continue to be an inclusive employer and our workforce is reflective of our communities.



Inclusive culture



We will develop a culture of inclusion that supports our people's health and wellbeing

Inclusive culture

Our people are our most important asset, and it is through them that we can deliver high quality, clinically safe services across Scotland. We know that one of the keys to developing a high performing workforce is through an inclusive and values led culture as this helps people to perform at their best.

We will continue to cultivate our values-led culture by setting out the behaviours that define our way of working through a competency and values framework. This will also ensure that our leaders and managers champion and role model our values and behaviours, enabling everyone to live these and to take responsibility for challenging those who do not.

By fostering an enabling, engaging, and inclusive culture our organisation unites on a common purpose, increasing opportunities for collaboration and innovation and leverages change to enhance capability at individual, team, and system level.

Diversity, equity and inclusion

Our workforce profile shows that we have made strides in building our staff pipelines of the future and diversifying our multi-generational workforce with increases to the number of people under the age of 30. However, our gender pay gap shows that we still have work to do to attract more women at a senior level, and through our workforce data, people from minority ethnic groups, care experienced, veterans and socially disadvantaged groups at all levels of our organisation. We know that having a diverse workforce has many benefits as it brings diversity of thought, fosters innovation and creativity, brings experience of other cultures and importantly, can improve the overall experience of those using our services. It is also a key responsibility as a public sector organisation, in line with an 'Anchor Institutions' and 'Community Wealth Building' approach, that we ensure that public money is invested in ways, including through employment, that benefits local communities.

To support this work, we will engage with specialist community groups, employability partnerships and others to develop links and routes into NHS 24. We will restart our specialist reference groups for disabled people, minority ethnics and LGBT+ which were

stood down due to the pandemic. These will provide an opportunity for our people to inform and shape our future actions and help mainstream diversity, equity and inclusion. We will also engage the next generation so that NHS 24 is on young people's radar as a valuable public sector organisation and potential future employer. As part of our commitment to our public sector equality duty, we will also ensure that we carry out impact assessments to ensure we are meeting our obligations. As an organisation, we are committed to making NHS 24 a place where everyone feels welcome, supporting a culture of belonging and trust, and to understand, encourage and celebrate diversity in all its forms.

Health and wellbeing

We know that the last two years have had a significant impact on our people's health and wellbeing due to the demands of the pandemic. As we continue our journey of recovery, we will strengthen our focus on supporting our people through a range of helpful information, by providing access to our Employee Assistance Programme, and with our new Wellbeing App 'Thrive'.

Through meaningful conversations, we will support those in need to feel confident and safe as they identify barriers, either in the workplace or at home, that are impacting on their physical and/or mental

health and wellbeing and to help them to address any issues. We will also continue to promote the importance of good nutrition and physical activity through our Healthy Working Lives and other internal campaigns.

Work is a fundamental part of our lives and can impact both positively and negatively on how we feel. From experience we know that it can aid recovery from periods of ill health, if managed appropriately and sensitively. Similarly, social contact through work can be an appropriate support for mental health recovery when managed well. Conversely, not actively promoting recovery and supporting return to work can result in longer periods of absence, which can be detrimental to the individual and can impact on the organisation. To support our people, we will continue to enable attendance at work and lever support from occupational health and others for those impacted by long COVID and other conditions.

We recognise that we have a diverse workforce and this includes people living with long term conditions and disabilities. As a Disability Confident Employer, we will proactively support individuals who may find accessing employment opportunities difficult due to their disability. Furthermore, we will introduce and promote, in partnership with The Business Disability Forum, our new Reasonable Adjustment Policy to ensure access to support that can help overcome barriers to productive working.



Our people are our most important asset, and it is through them that we can deliver high quality, clinically safe services across Scotland.



Flexible working practices

To become a modern and model employer, we will build on the flexible working changes that emerged through COVID-19 which included hybrid working. This is crucial for retaining our talent across NHS 24. We need to commit to offering more flexible, varied roles and opportunities for remote and hybrid working. It is not easy to accommodate individual work preferences due to the balance of our service being delivered out of hours, however, we know that we need to strive to do more which may become possible as we develop omni channel services. However, any decision on flexible working must always be based on business need.

HR service transformation

To support our ambitions to transform our ways of working, we will develop a new digital workflow system to simplify and modernise our approach. The introduction of a new three tier HR Advisory Model will drive efficiency and effectiveness to ensure support and advice is provided where it is needed most. This is explored further in the 'Delivering our strategy' section.

Our priorities for a sustainable workforce

- **We will** deliver a safe working environment
- **We will** implement our Workforce Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Action Plan
- **We will** ensure Attendance Management support and advice is available for all
- **We will** provide ongoing Case Management support for leaders and managers
- **We will** ensure our Workforce Policies comply with employment legislation
- **We will** create a digitally enabled HR Advisory Model for our core workforce processes
- **We will** enable a values led culture informed by our people
- **We will** ensure all learning and development meets public equality duties
- **We will** develop programmes for care experienced, veterans, minority ethnic groups and others



Brodie's journey in 2025

Brodie is 22 years old and is a Digital Healthcare Support Advisor (DHSA) with NHS 24.

When Brodie had been looking for a new job two years ago, it was important that the new organisation took their corporate responsibilities seriously when it came to issues such as flexible working, social justice, the environment and diversity, equity and inclusion.

Brodie works from home on a digital telehealthcare platform with digitally enabled remote supervision. Brodie is part of a team who all work together on a shift pattern that suits the service and their work/life balance requirements. From a mobile device, Brodie can request shift changes, annual leave, and other leave, which is digitally processed, and the outcome fed back to them automatically.

The team engage virtually and meet in a location on a regular basis to ensure that team-working and social interactions are maintained.

Within NHS 24 staff engage in regular health and wellbeing activities and can link into initiatives through their personal and wearable devices to help them track their activity and overall improvements to their health and wellbeing.

Brodie enjoys being able to interact in this way with their colleagues, competing in fitness and mindfulness challenges while working remotely. It makes them feel connected.

There are a range of engagement forums and engagement groups that Brodie is a member of, and they attend these as part of their ongoing personal development and customised engagement plan that they agreed with their line manager at their last appraisal.

Brodie feels their contribution at work is valued, has a good relationship with the team, has access to flexible working options that balance well with other homelife responsibilities.



Enhanced learning & development



We will deliver practice education and training through leveraging technology, modernising, and extending opportunities for continuous professional development

Enhanced learning & development

Over the last 2 years we had to put many training and development programmes on hold so that our people could be redeployed, or their skillsets diversified to focus on the immediate priority of supporting our service users. It is critically important that we begin to create space for the training and development of our people, with a renewed emphasis on the importance of flexible skills and building future fluent capabilities.

Practice education and training

We have delivered a significant level of initial training to our call operators, call handlers and our clinical staff during the pandemic. To meet the demands of a growing and changed service, we have had to redevelop and deliver in new ways. While we will build on learning, we will also take time to consider how best to train and develop our people as we move forward with our plans for an omni channel service delivery model.

To inform this, we will carry out a full review of all practice education, training and development across NHS 24. This will provide an opportunity to realign

our approach to high impact, high return learning activities, for both individuals and the organisation, while not losing sight of our obligation to provide training deemed as mandatory or statutory.

We will also look to modernise and refresh our approach through the adoption of contemporary training practices and technology.

Traditionally, learning has been designed in a 'static' and 'one-size-fits-all' approach. Over time, this will shift towards enabling organic learning where the work happens, providing experiences which augment outcomes real time.

In addition, a variety of modes will be provided for training and professional development, where learners can choose themselves the method which suits their learning style best – from virtual classroom and self-serviced e-learning to on site, experiential or customised micro learning.

As we continue to transform, learning and development in NHS 24 will become consultancy based. Internal expertise will work across the organisation, with teams and individuals to assess,

identify and support solutions and interventions which enhance capability, support our values led culture or meet strategic priorities.

Digital capability

We must embrace and harness the benefits of new technology to keep pace with the transformation of our services for our patients and other users.

Our people have never been as digitally active as they are today, using cutting edge technologies in their everyday life, with most having access to a smart phone and unprecedented amounts of instant data.

To maximise the opportunities that this brings, we will work in partnership with our ICT Directorate and their Connect technology programme, to ensure the organisation has future focused systems and a digitally 'savvy' workforce.

Working closely with NES Digital, we will bring these capabilities into the workplace, expanding, strengthening and aligning them with our learning philosophy.

Developing this culture of continuous learning embedded within the flow of work will become vital. By reducing costs and unearthing savings, we have the potential to invest in new experiential modes of learning such as gamification and user driven artificial intelligence curation.

Our priorities for enhanced learning & development

- **We will** conduct an organisational review of training and digital skills
- **We will** develop a Quality Assurance Framework for learning and development
- **We will** introduce an internal consultancy process
- **We will** scope, design, and build career frameworks

Career development

It is also important to us that our people attain the recognition for the valuable and important work they do, as well as understanding routes of progression through the organisation which participative learning and development will support.

We will professionalise our approach to career pathways, aligning them to established career frameworks, supported by partners in the education sector.

By working with these partners, we can seek accreditation for our internal programmes of learning, where relevant.

Victoria's journey in 2025

Victoria has worked as a Senior Charge Nurse in NHS 24 for 9 years. At her recent appraisal, she highlighted her desire to develop more strategic skills, in preparation for taking on a more accountable role in the future.

Through her customised learning app on her mobile device, she was able to curate a playlist of learning which she thought would help kickstart that journey and her manager agreed these micro courses were good choices.

She also met with an internal leadership and learning consultant who was able to assess Victoria's current competence level and bespoke a training programme to help her 'get ready' for her next role.

Together they agreed that a strategic leadership & management programme being offered by NHS 24's partner college was an ideal solution to her learning need. The programme was perfect for Victoria as she is an experiential learner, and the programme uses simulation and gamification as the predominant teaching method. She has also identified in the NHS 24 Training Prospectus accredited CPD masterclasses which she feels will supplement her college course. This is being delivered in person within her local centre giving her the opportunity to meet up with colleagues, build her network and share experiences. Victoria now has her next 12 months development mapped out and is looking forward to the new challenges, bringing her new knowledge and skills back to her team to continue their growth as a high performing department.

▶▶ Effective leadership & management

We will support our leaders and managers to role model values and behaviours which enable an inclusive and supportive environment and strengthens their capacity and confidence to engage, develop and challenge staff to deliver excellence

Effective leadership & management

A global pandemic coupled with the increasing pace of societal change in Scotland and beyond is well documented. This has led to a widely held observation that the external environment is one which is characterised by four key features – Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity (VUCA). Everything is happening more quickly. The traditional concept of a top-down ‘five-year plan’ delivered through one leader does not fit with this as organisations are having to be more agile to meet ever changing needs along with a drive for further efficiency and effectiveness.

Leading for the future

Health and social care leaders of the future will need multi-dimensional skillsets for not only themselves but for the teams that surround them. Individuals who master skills in technology, leadership excellence, community leadership and political adeptness will soon find themselves in demand as ‘Hybrid Leaders’. These leaders can work collaboratively across the private, public and not-for-profit sectors and use business solutions to tackle the world’s social and environmental problems. They surround themselves with teams who are diverse and inclusive and help them understand their own and their organisation’s role in broader society.

To meet these shifting needs, leaders will require to think differently and adopt system thinking and distributed leadership approaches. They need to reinforce functional leadership competencies alongside values and environmental, social and corporate governance policies and processes. Our current and future leaders will require to act as change agents and disruptors to lead NHS 24 from recovery post pandemic, through organisational growth and maturity culminating in full digital transformation. They will need to do this in a patient centric and compassionate way.

One of our key principles underpinning our strategic priorities is compassionate leadership and what we mean by this is that we want our leaders to: prioritise people over processes, embrace a growth mindset, create transparency, ask - don’t tell, safeguard confidentiality and contextualise employee mindset. Our Leadership Development Framework will set out the skills and knowledge required to perform effectively throughout the organisation and to support implementation of this we will provide them with the right tools. We will support our staff to develop leadership competencies through a combination of experience and training, in line with our commitment to provide wider career development opportunities.

This will be linked to our commitment to appraisal and the alignment of individual objectives with our strategic intent and the setting of clear developmental goals. All of this will enable our leaders and managers to be ambitious, creative and business-focused, able to lead and motivate the teams they manage with inspirational leadership, resulting in individuals achieving their full potential.

Talent and succession planning

We know that across health and social care there is a drive to improve the talent pipeline to ensure that there are leaders ready to take up key roles. We know we need to identify and develop our talent so we can ‘grow our own’. We will do this through aligning our Talent Identification and Management process to our Leadership Development Framework, (encompassing our Coaching and Mentoring Framework), which will help inform our Succession Planning. Together they will help us identify, support, develop and plan our potential leaders and managers to move into senior, significant or hard-to-fill positions.

Intrapreneurship and innovation

Current thinking around leadership development posts that ‘Intrapreneurship’ type programmes and ‘Internal Marketplace’ removes learning from the classroom and enables organic learning in the flow of work, taking learning to where the work happens.

‘Intrapreneurship’ programmes invite employees to propose ideas for new products and services for the benefit of the organisation. While they continue to

work on their day jobs, employees attend coaching workshops to develop their pitch. They ultimately get the opportunity to pitch their ideas to senior leaders with successful ideas receiving funding and resources.

‘Internal Marketplace’ treats the ‘Intrapreneurship’ projects like jobs and “hire” people from within the organisation. A major multinational consumer goods company has been experimenting with this approach using a technology platform to connect people and projects. Their platform lets people post jobs and projects, find jobs and projects, apply for jobs and projects and it recommends jobs and projects based on skills. Leadership development isn’t just about the how. It also involves who you pair your aspiring leaders with operationally and strategically at a mentor and executive sponsor level.

Patrick’s journey in 2025

Patrick is a senior leader in NHS 24 and works in the Finance Directorate.

At his recent appraisal he was talent assessed and identified as ‘Ready Soon’ and as a potential successor to the Deputy Director of Finance role. He still had some development requirements for him to move to ‘Top Talent’.

He required to strengthen his breadth and depth across the organisation in areas such as leading strategic change, project management, political acuity, and critical thinking.

He agreed with his manager that he would be sponsored to attend the NHS Scotland National Systems Leadership Development Programme. To supplement and consolidate his learning it was important he put his learning into practice, so he logged into the NHS 24 ‘Internal Marketplace’. He input his skills and learning requirements and was matched to projects which had been approved through the ‘Intrapreneurship’ programme. He found a programme of work which required a senior level leader to manage it from start up to completion. Patrick put his name forward for the programme online and within 1 week had been approved to lead the new programme of work. He set about building as diverse a team as possible to deliver the key outcomes of the programme.

Our priorities for effective leadership & management

- We will develop and deliver leadership and management programmes at all levels
- We will design and implement a Talent Management & Succession Planning approach
- We will scope, design, build and implement a Coaching & Mentoring Framework
- We will reinvigorate and drive improvements in Appraisal



▶ Collaboration & engagement



We will work in collaboration with our trade unions and across health and social care, with further and higher education, public, private and other third sector bodies to share best practice and deliver 'Once for Scotland' approaches

Collaboration & engagement

Strategic collaborations and partnerships, cultivated through and supported by meaningful engagement across health and social care in Scotland will continue to be increasingly important due to the ongoing pressures being felt across the wider system along with a move to a more 'Once for Scotland' approach. Partnership working and collaboration is not new, however recovery from the pandemic will require further efficiencies to be created along with new ways of delivering care and more collaborative and integrated service delivery.

Once for Scotland

Whilst 'Once for Scotland' approaches emerged prior to COVID-19, it was paused due to the pressures of the pandemic. It has now been picked up again and will be further developed over the next three years. Key workstreams have already started which include developing policies surrounding 'Supporting the Work-Life Balance' a key strand of the National Improving Workforce Cultures and Wellbeing Strategy, new interventions to support workforce development, such as the consultations around a National Leadership Development Programme framework and associated Talent Identification and Management process at Chief Executive level. We are committed to this approach and will continue to work with national boards to share best practice and with territorial boards to look at how we can create opportunities around resourcing models, such as shared and rotational posts to further our collaborative actions.

External collaboration and partnerships

We will also look outside of the NHS and social care to create collaborations and partnerships. We will partner with key educational institutions and employability and equality partners, such as Colleges and Universities, Skills Development Scotland, Scottish Government and specialist groups to support diversity, equity and inclusion and the development of practice education, training and continuous professional development.

We will explore current and future research to better understand the skills and competencies our clinical and corporate staff will require in the future. Working with Sector Skills Councils we will professionally underpin our recruitment and training with national occupational standards, competency frameworks and evidence-based research, and seek best practice through benchmarking with organisations like ours including public and private sector call centres and other UK 111 services.

We will reach out to create collaborations with other public sector partners, such as Scottish Ambulance Service, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Police Scotland and the Scottish Prison Service, as many have moved their services into the virtual space as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This presents a unique opportunity to leverage benefits around the sharing of intellectual and physical resources and offerings in leadership development, coaching and mentoring and continuous professional development. We know that through the development of joint propositions, integrated solutions, the sharing of services or simply where knowledge is shared, we will produce better outcomes for our people and patients. We will see other direct benefits including increased creativity and flexibility, the extension of our networks and communities of practice and it will also support delivery of 'Once for Scotland' approaches.

We know that engaging with our people is vital to get insight into our culture and ways of working within the organisation.

Internal engagement

There is growing evidence that creating and maintaining a workplace where staff enjoy their work, feel engaged, valued and contribute to the delivery of high-quality patient care, as well as caring for their own health and wellbeing, are more productive. This was borne out in Scottish Government's Fair Work Convention which showed the importance of staff having an effective voice, fair opportunities, access to fulfilling work, security of employment and a culture of respect. We are committed to delivering on both our fair work commitments and workforce priorities in partnership with our trade union colleagues. We will do so through strengthening our partnership working, improving joint understanding on the implementation of policies, and further supporting our people's health and wellbeing.

We know that engaging with our people is vital to get insight into our culture and ways of working within the organisation. We will further develop our approach to internal engagement through creating an internal engagement strategy and plan. Working in partnership with our communications team, we will increase leadership visibility and re-establish our staff reference groups. We will also carry out a culture audit and deliver the iMatter survey, with the outcomes of these used to inform and strengthen our reputation as a values-led employer that promotes and embeds the principles of fair work.

Our priorities for collaborations & engagements

- We will continue to build and consolidate our relationship with trade unions
- We will develop and implement an internal engagement strategy and plan
- We will build strong and effective external collaborations and partnerships

Delivering our Strategy

Workforce Directorate

Our strategy and plan will be delivered by the three HR & Workforce Directorate Teams: Organisational Development, Leadership and Learning, Resourcing and Planning and People Services.

Organisational Development, Leadership and Learning provide:

- Leadership and Management Development
- Coaching and Mentoring
- Learning and Professional Development
- Organisational Development and Design
- Internal Consultancy

Resourcing and Planning provide:

- Recruitment and Retention
- Workforce Planning
- Data and Analytics
- Workforce systems and process digitisation
- Health and Safety

People Services provide:

- HR Case Management
- Attendance Management Support
- Employee Engagement
- HR Policy

Our services

Over the next three years, Workforce Directorate will transform the way we deliver our services to the organisation, line managers, staff and trade union colleagues.

These services will be split into three areas:

- Specialist Support
- Business Partnering/Advisory
- Operations

We will be a strategic business partner, pro-actively advising and empowering managers to be great people leaders. Employment policies, procedures and interventions will be simple, clear and business-focused to enable our customers to deliver operational and strategic outcomes.

Through our Specialist Support we will provide expert services in:

- Workforce planning and recruitment
- Leadership and management development
- Training and development
- Strategy and organisational development
- Diversity, equity and inclusion
- Talent management and succession
- Performance management
- Reward, Pay, Benefits and Recognition
- Policies relating to specialist functions

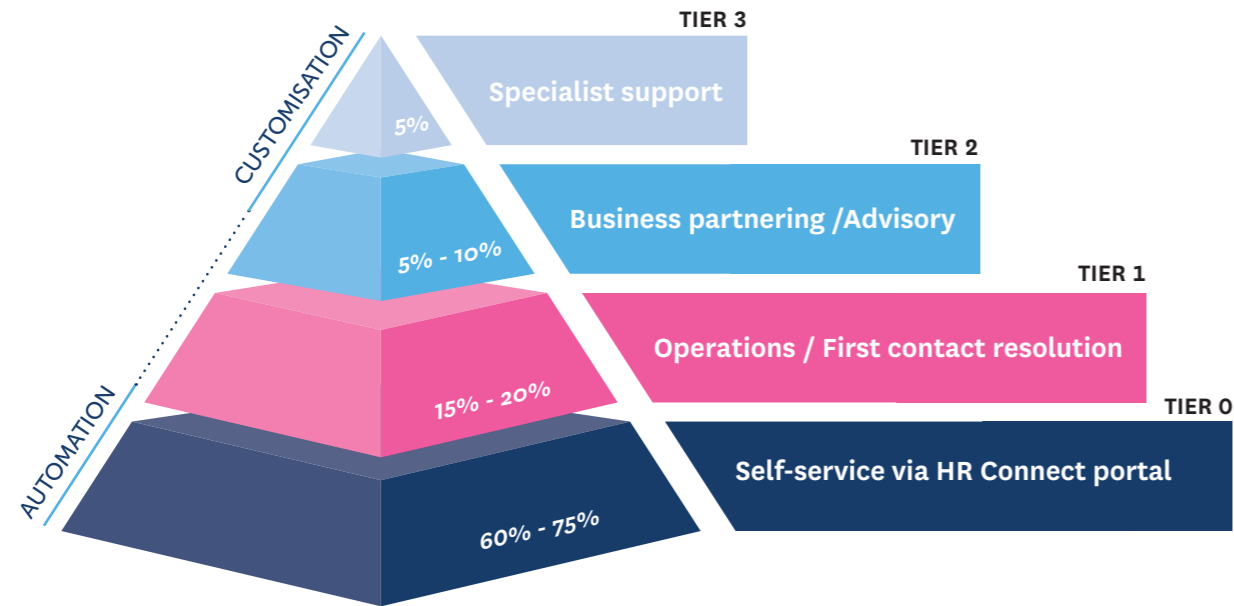
Our **HR Business Partners/Advisors** will own the people strategy for their business area.

Our **HR Operations** function will own all our people processes, data and insights across the following services:

- HR people data management
- Attendance management
- Discipline and grievance management
- Trade union duties and associated activities
- Payroll interface
- This will be delivered through a new **Advisory Model**, the drivers of which are:



Advisory Model



Our Advisory Model, delivered through HR Advisers and Business Partners will provide first, second and third level advice on:

- Organisational change and restructuring
- Health and wellbeing including attendance management
- Employee relations
- Discipline and grievance
- Employment law
- General queries across all people policies
- Data protection
- Coaching and mentoring

Monitoring and evaluation

Effective scrutiny and oversight are key to ensuring that NHS 24 retains the trust and confidence of the communities of Scotland. We pride ourselves on transparency and accountability and as such, have created comprehensive and robust arrangements for the governance of this plan and monitoring our performance. Our 2021 baselines, 2025 targets and our success measures and indicators are detailed in our three-year workforce plan.

Prior to publication, the plan was laid before Scottish Government. Upon publication, activities related to the outcomes and objectives will be monitored through monthly workforce meetings, reporting to Executive Management Team, Staff Governance and NHS 24 Board quarterly. Our progress will further be reported through the annual Staff Governance Standard Reporting as well as the Annual Accounts. The strategy will be evaluated annually and updated to reflect organisational and governmental priorities.

Our success will be reported via both qualitative and quantitative measures. Our quarterly Workforce Report will provide assurance around key success measures relating to our priorities and will also be insights driven, supported by case studies, narrative gleaned from Level 1-4 evaluation methodologies, engagement workshop feedback and staff surveys such as iMatter. The following table provides a summary of the high-level indicators that will be used against each strategic priority along with the 2021 baseline:



Strategic Priority	Measure	Target 2025	Monitoring & Success Indicators
1 Strategic Priority Sustainable Workforce	Attrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year on year reduction Year on year improvements toward 50/50 balance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % increase of staff still employed after 2 years % reduction in attrition by skillset Our workforce makeup in relation to all protected characteristics is representative of the communities we serve (taken from census data when available in 2022)
	Workforce characteristics		
	Ethnic Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year on year improvements particularly around race 	
	Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year on year increase in disabled staff 	
	Transgender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year on year increase in transgender staff 	
	Sexual Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year on year increase in LGBT + staff 	
	Religious Belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year on year improvement in workforce mix of religious belief profile 	
Age Profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year on year increase in 16-29 age profile 		
2 Strategic Priority Inclusive Culture	Actual gender pay gap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year on year improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in gender, race and disability pay gap
	Actual race pay gap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year on year improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased % in iMatter score
	Actual disability pay gap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year on year improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased % of staff attending work
	iMatter engagement score (2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year on year improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased % of staff with protected characteristics
	Staff Absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> < 9% on a rolling basis 	

Strategic Priority	Measure	Target 2025	Monitoring & Success Indicators
3 Strategic Priority Enhanced Learning & Development	Mandatory Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases year on year towards agreed target of 90% (allowing for non-available staff) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased % of learners completing mandatory training Increased % of new starts completing initial training
	Core Induction Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase year on year numbers of new starts completing core induction successfully 	
	Appraisal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase year on year number of staff completing an appraisal'. In the Monitoring and success indicators box insert: 'Increased % of staff completing appraisal' 	
4 Strategic Priority Enhanced Leaders & Managers	Number of managers trained at all levels against yearly target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases year on year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased % of managers completing Management Essential Programme Increased % of leaders and managers assessed against talent framework
	Numbers of leaders/managers assessed against talent framework against yearly target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All EMT and Senior Managers assessed against talent framework 	
	Numbers of roles with succession requirements assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All EMT and Senior Manager roles assessed for succession 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased % of senior manager and executive roles with talent and succession plans
5 Strategic Priority Collaboration & Engagement	Number of courses in partnership with colleges/universities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases year on year in line with workforce priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number of courses/programmes delivered in partnership
	Number of 'Once for Scotland' interventions/approaches delivered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases year on year in line with 'Once for Scotland' roll out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number of interventions/approaches delivered through 'Once for Scotland'

Outcome

We believe we will be able to build a highly skilled and engaged workforce, that has the agility and resilience to meet short-term and longer-term organisational demand.

An organisation committed to safety, excellent patient services, operational excellence, and continuous improvement. A truly agile organisation that has transformed its ability to deliver high quality, clinically safe patient services through having a skilled, flexible, well trained, engaged, and healthy workforce.

Impact

We will deliver real impact for our people, our patients, and our stakeholders through delivering our Workforce Strategy and Plan. By creating an agile, efficient, and effective organisation we will be able to meet the challenges of delivering our ambition to attract, develop, retain, and inspire our people every day, ensuring they have the right skills and working environment to deliver digital patient care, collaboratively and innovatively, 24/7.

We will see improvements in our employee engagement scores, our attendance levels will increase, and our attrition levels will reduce. A direct impact will be that our average call handling time will improve as we increase our digital activity. We will create a culture through our vision and values where our people feel supported, are encouraged to 'go the extra mile' and to see the significant contribution that each one is making for the people of Scotland. All of this, will deliver improvements to our organisational performance through putting our patients at the heart of what we do, improving how we use our resources and improve the confidence of our employees, partners, government and patients.

Strategic alignment

NHS 24 is constantly working towards making our service sustainable, environmentally responsible, more efficient, and continually relevant in a world of innovation and developing technologies. Our ambitions to transform our workforce are aligned to enabler strategies, plans and standards:

- Staff Governance Standard
- National Workforce Strategy for Health & Social Care
- Digital Health & Care Strategy
- NHS Recovery Plan
- Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019
- Fair Work/Fairer Scotland Duty
- Net Zero by 2045
- Improving Workforce Cultures and Wellbeing Strategy
- NHS 24 Operational Annual Delivery Plan 2022/23
- NHS 24 Statement of Strategic Intent 2022/23
- NHS 24 Financial Plan 2022-2025

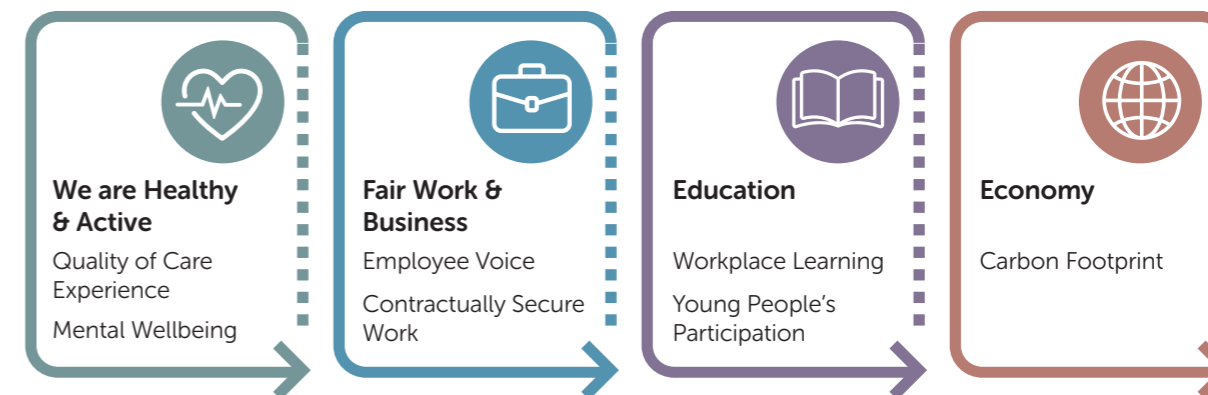
Overarching this is Scottish Government's National Outcomes. NHS 24 and its workforce play a pivotal role in realising a number of these outcomes and we have aligned our ambitions at a local level to deliver strategic transformation, helping Scotland to deliver its purpose nationally:

Scottish Government

Purpose

To focus on creating a more successful country with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish through increased wellbeing, and sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

National Outcomes



National Workforce Strategy Pillars



NHS 24

Our Vision

Our people are fully engaged, and equipped with the right skills and inclusive working environment which enables them to deliver the best digital care in Scotland, 24/7

Our Mission

To attract, develop, retain and inspire our people every day, ensuring they have the right skills and working environment to collaboratively and innovatively deliver digital patient care, 24/7

Our Priorities



Outcome

