

Friday 6 January 2023

Chief Executive's message Prof Caroline Hiscox has recorded a short video message for staff; to watch, [just click this link](#). If preferred, a transcript of the message is below. Please note, this has been generated automatically and while errors have been corrected, it may read a little differently.

Hi everyone, I'm Caroline Hiscox, NHS Grampian's chief executive. Thank you for watching this video, to allow me to say welcome to 2023. I've been able to spend some time in Dr Gray's Hospital yesterday and in ARI the day before, and it was really, as always, important for me to spend time with colleagues who have been working throughout the festive period and who continue to deliver care and support services in incredibly pressured times, and at times in intolerable circumstances.

It was brilliant speaking to everybody and of course there was a there was a broad range of experiences and views and how people were feeling, but there was also a real sense that everybody has been in this together, a real sense of team Grampian and everyone working really hard to do the best they can and that was great to see and to hear.

There were a couple of themes that came out in my conversations, and those were that people are not sure we are doing everything possible to support colleagues and I absolutely agree with that. I hear and I see the distress and impact that our work just now is having on individuals and on teams. I am taking this - as is the rest of the exec team and senior leaders and managers - really, really seriously and we need to do more to support each other. And I will continue to listen and understand what more can be done and that is something that is absolutely in the forefront of my mind. I also had a really interesting question, which I think is probably on the tips of everybody's tongues across Scotland, if not the UK. What do we need to do to sort this and obviously there is not a neat answer to this, although the work that many of you have been doing last year and continue to do around the improvement work is definitely putting us on a on a steadier footing.

However, there is a lot of work to be done and we will do that together; through our Plan for the Future and by enabling you to enact the ideas that I have heard from so many of you, that will make a difference. So that's the work that we will continue to do over 2023. So really importantly, I wanted to thank everyone that continued to take the time to speak to me, share your thoughts and share your ideas and I'm sorry I didn't get round more teams. I know I'm referring to ARI and Dr Gray's and they often are in the spotlight, but to be clear, I know the pressure is being felt across all of our health and care and support services, maternity services, primary care services, community services, social care services. I will have missed out many and I'm sorry about that. It's not intentional, but I absolutely get that the pressure is across the entire system.

Members of the Exec team, senior leaders, your leaders, your managers, I know have been out and about making sure that we are listening to how you are and doing everything possible to improve your working environment and support you under the pressure, that you are doing the things that you do best and that never seems enough, but I know that that has been a focus over the past week and will continue to be so.

One of the things I absolutely wanted to pick up on was the call for staff made last Friday, and I know that was a decision that wasn't taken lightly. However, I also know from the feedback that it was upsetting for many of you to see that call, especially when you were trying to get a proper break. So I've discussed that with colleagues and we're going to make sure that we review that and take learning from it, and we absolutely do not get it right all of the time and I apologize again for the distress that that caused. Right now, we continue to face significant pressures and I think we all know that that's going to continue for at least the next four to six weeks. We're going work through that together and there may be some early glimmers of hope that the current 'flu and COVID numbers are stabilizing but I'll wait and see what the rest of the next week tells us.

Really positively we're not seeing any irresponsible use of hospital services. The public are doing exactly as we have asked by calling NHS 24 and contacting their GP and pharmacy services, and I know that is not easy to navigate sometimes. So I'm at hugely grateful for everything that the public are trying to do to support us.

Let's not forget that we care for thousands of people every day across Grampian and that is a huge commitment and a huge challenge, but it's really important that I convey when I speak to families and individuals that they acknowledge the difference that you are making in those journeys. I know we all feel at the moment we're not doing enough, but you are absolutely making a difference in the interactions that you're having.

Quite often people ask me what my job is, and at the moment it's absolutely about leadership, like many of you, that is really important and the key bits about that are how do we continue to lead our organization, our teams, through this incredibly difficult and challenging time and really importantly, how do we also continue to look forward and give hope because none of us want to continue to work in these circumstances. I know that's really, really important to you and to your colleagues. So we will continue to do that with you, and we will move forward together.

We need to do that to meet the new challenges that we face, thinking about how are we going to care differently for our aging population and really importantly, how are we going to lead happy and healthy lives? I know that feels really far away at the moment, but it needs to remain our focus so that we can continue to do our best.

None of this is possible without the work that you do, and I know that that feels absolutely relentless at times. I am hugely grateful for everything that you have done, everything that you continue to do, and I wanted to make sure that I acknowledge that at the beginning of this new year. I want to wish you all the best and know that we are all in this together and I, with all of you, will continue to lead this organization through what is undoubtedly the most difficult time we have faced. I look forward to seeing you hearing your ideas, as well as the difficulties that you're experiencing, over the coming weeks and months and in person, I hope.

Thanks again. Speak soon.

That was the week that was A shorter working week means a shorter run through of the key items shared. You [can see all previous briefs by clicking here](#)

Wednesday 4 – preparing for power cuts, ePayslips sign up

Thursday 5 – PPE donning & doffing training, launch of new IT self-service portal

STAR Award We have an individual and a team award to share today; congratulations to Ruari McFie (SCN, Loirston Ward) and to the Interventional Radiology Team at ARI on their recent STAR award presentations. You can nominate a colleague or team by [filling in this form](#) or by emailing their details to gram.staffthanksandrecognition@nhs.scot

Tune of the day It's hold your hands up time: the anniversary of David Bowie's death is actually next Tuesday; this Sunday would have been his birthday. Thanks to Liz Grant for putting me right. In return, we are rounding off the week with some Elvis, as The King was also born on 8 January (1935, in his case) – let [American Trilogy](#) take you to the weekend

Whatever you are doing this weekend, look after yourselves. The brief will return on Monday (EP).

If you want to request a tune, follow up on items included in this brief, or suggest an item for sharing, drop us an email via gram.communications@nhs.scot