

Consultation Response from NHSLothian Healthcare science Committee

The Lothian Area Healthcare Science committee is an advisory group which represents the professions in life sciences, physiology and physical sciences in NHSLothian. The group is acutely aware of the significance of the integration agenda and the challenges of achieving it. It is also aware of the contribution Healthcare Science can and will make to this work since it underpins much of the provision of health and social care. Healthcare Science makes up 5% of the workforce and over 80% of diagnoses are attributed to the work of its scientists and technologists.

It is of concern therefore that there is no mention at all of Healthcare Science in the integration document. There are clear mentions of medical and nursing care as well as pharmacy for example but no mention of laboratory services or rehabilitation provision such as wheelchair services, much of which is provided by healthcare scientists. This would lead us to believe that there has been no focus on how such services will need to adapt or be resourced in order to deliver the quality of health and social care required.

Much of Healthcare Science reaches beyond acute hospital care into the community and can be utilised to maintain the population's health and retain their independence and social inclusion within their own home. Other Healthcare Science services in secondary care provide the means to deliver diagnostic testing to underpin the delivery of timely, safe, accurate and effective hospital or health centre treatment. All of these functions along with the expertise of the staff involved need to be scoped in light of the future demands placed on Healthcare Science as a result of the ageing of the population and the challenges of integration.

The group hopes that by drawing attention to the deficit of detail in the integration document more awareness is placed on the need to scope and examine the opportunities for Healthcare Science to care for Scotland's population in the coming landscape of a joint future for health and social care delivery.

David Gow

Chair NHSLothian healthcare Science Committee

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