

T: 0300 244 4000  
E: [scottish.ministers@gov.scot](mailto:scottish.ministers@gov.scot)

All NHSScotland Health Board  
Chairs  
Chief Executives

Copied to:  
HR Directors  
Employee Directors

20 May 2019

Dear Colleague,

## **Scottish Government Response to the Sturrock Review into Cultural Issues related to allegations of Bullying and Harassment in NHS Highland**

As you may be aware, I recently announced in parliament, the actions the Scottish Government will take in response John Sturrock QC's Review of cultural issues in NHS Highland. The [full report](#) and [Scottish Government response](#) are published on the Scottish Government website.

Whilst the Review only considered matters in Highland, it is clear to me that there are important issues raised that require serious reflection across the health service more broadly. What the Review articulates about how we work to build supportive cultures to engender and encourage behaviour that reflects our NHS values is of general application. I am clear that Mr Sturrock's review provides not just an opportunity for NHS Highland, but an opportunity for us all in NHS Scotland.

My response sets out in full a package of measures I will implement to support positive workplace culture across the whole of the NHS. Furthermore, I have undertaken to write to all NHS boards to ensure that they reflect on and learn from the findings of the Sturrock Review. With this in mind I am asking that senior leadership of all Boards consider the recommendations falling from this report (contained within the Scottish Government's response), and noting the points raised at Annex A, that you provide, where appropriate:

- Details of immediate actions your Board have taken/plan to take on the back of the recommendations made in the Sturrock report.
- What support the your Board have put in place/will put in place for any member of staff who has been affected by bullying and harassment.
- Details of your Board's plan for staff engagement to consider these recommendations and a timeline of when this will be carried out.

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot)

St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG  
[www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)



Accredited  
Until 2020



I ask that you provide this information directly to Anna Gilbert, Head of Staff Governance, Health Workforce Directorate [anna.gilbert@gov.scot](mailto:anna.gilbert@gov.scot) by **Friday 28 June 2019**.

I am committed to ensuring that everyone in the NHS in Scotland feels valued, safe and supported and that they can raise any concerns that they have, no matter what they may be. This is not only important to every member of staff in our NHS, but it also matters greatly to the patients that we serve.

I hope this letter is helpful in clarifying my position.



**JEANE FREEMAN**

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot)

St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG  
[www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)



INVESTORS  
IN PEOPLE

Accredited  
Until 2020



We will explicitly look for assurance that all boards:

- Are fostering opportunities for open and active dialogue with all staff, in the spirit of our Everyone Matters Workforce Vision and Values;
- Senior leaders are challenging themselves and their teams to ensure that a culture in which our vision and values are routinely modelled, and that positive behaviours permeate throughout the whole organisation;
- Remain assured that their local Staff Governance Monitoring arrangements effectively scrutinise implementation of the Staff Governance Standards, in particular that staff continue to be treated fairly and consistently, with dignity and respect, in an environment where diversity is valued;
- Are using systems for staff engagement and feedback, including iMatter, effectively and that boards continue to take action where issues are identified;
- That boards review the implementation of workforce policies relating to bullying and harassment and whistleblowing; that they promote staff awareness of these policies including how they can safely and confidentially raise concerns, the sources of support available and that staff are supported throughout the process;
- That boards review their existing workforce training and development needs and make use of the talent development and management programmes NHS Scotland has in place, including Project Lift, to ensure that we are equipping all our staff with the skills and abilities they need to be effective managers of people.

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot)

St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG  
[www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)



INVESTORS  
IN PEOPLE

Accredited  
Until 2020

