

**NHS 24
BOARD MEETING
18 DECEMBER 2025
ITEM NO 11.2
FOR ASSURANCE**

**KEY POINTS OF THE STAFF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE HELD
ON 3 NOVEMBER 2025**

Executive Sponsor:

Anne Gibson, Chair

Lead Officer/Author:

Dr Jacqui Hepburn, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Workforce

Action Required:

The Board is asked to note the key points for assurance from the Staff Governance Committee meeting held on 3 November 2025.

Key Points for the Board to consider:

The NHS 24 Board is asked to receive and note the key points outlined.

1. Workforce Quarterly Report Quarter 2 (July - September 2025)

The Committee noted the workforce report in terms of the progress made during quarter 2 (July – September 2025).

Overall, the contents of the report demonstrates that we continue to progress towards achieving our strategic objectives as set out in our Workforce Strategy and Plan 2022-2026. Some key insights from the report worth highlighting are:

Highlights:

- Rolling year turnover continues to decline and is now at 12.74%, exceeding the Workforce Strategy KPI target.
- Attrition for Clinical Supervisors has dropped significantly, now at its lowest since June 2022.
- Following a successful submission, we received Disability Confident Leader status in September 2025 which is valid for a further 3 years.
- Gained SCQF Inclusive Employer accreditation, this demonstrates our commitment to aligning all advertised roles to an SCQF level.
- Year 2 Workforce Data and Digital workplan has concluded with 96% of all year 2 tasks complete. The outstanding year 2 task is being progressed with key stakeholders with a view to conclude by the end of the calendar year.
- Essential Learning compliance is at 93%, above the 90% target, with all directorates meeting or exceeding this.
- Last year's excellent iMatter results for NHS 24 were exceeded. The 2025 Response Rate: 82% (up 6% on previous year), the 2025 Employee Engagement Index: 79 (up 2 points on previous year) and the 2025 Action Planning submission: 95% (up 3% on previous year)
- The NHS 24 Leadership Development Programme has been selected as finalist for the 'Learning and Development of the Year' category. Winners will be

announced in mid-November, and the whole team are proud of the recognition received for the programme.

- Workforce transitioned our People First ticketing system successfully to SysAid in August 2025, and we have seen a smooth launch with over 300 tickets submitted and responded to within agreed KPIs.
- A successful implementation of Phase 2.2 of Once for Scotland Workforce Policies took place this quarter:
- Our Podcast channel “People Matters” has been launched which is designed to provide quick, accessible guidance on key areas of people management. Each episode is short and focused, making it easy to find the support quickly.
- Stability index for new starters improved from 67% in Q1 to 69% in Q2.
- CC/CRM Training Plan Phase 2 nearly complete, with high competence and confidence scores among staff.

Continued development:

- We continue to look to integrate of digital solutions for workforce across all areas of the employee lifecycle and reporting.
- Expanding digital skills training, with MS Teams, SharePoint, and Copilot identified as priority areas.
- Launching new leadership development programmes, including the Emerging Leaders Programme and scoping a Digital Leadership Programme for 2026.
- Enhancing the Core Training Programme and transforming training environments to support flexible, self-directed learning.
- Year 2 directorate Culture and Wellbeing Action Plans are in progress and Q2 updates are being collated.
- With four cohorts of different leadership development programmes taking place in Q4, a lot of activity is ongoing for planning and scheduling; refresh of materials; engagement; and pre-course work including psychometric reports, 360-degree feedback and 1:1 coaching sessions.
- Appraisal completion is below target (53.8%), but the window has been extended for frontline staff due to digital transformation. All other directorates have achieved 90% completion.
- Supporting organisational-wide projects including estate sustainability, information governance, security, and hybrid working.
- Advancing the Anti Racism Action Plan, with a public launch aligned to Black History Month.
- Supporting staff wellbeing through updated Culture and Wellbeing Action Plans and ODLL interventions.

2. Powered By People Strategy 2026 – 2029 Consultation

The Committee noted the paper which highlighted the current timescales for the development of the Workforce Strategy. Ms Westwood advised the following:

We have proposed three high level objectives followed by “our commitment – what staff should expect to see statements” which are as follows:

Workforce optimisation - making the best use of staff skills and resources to meet service needs.

Our commitment:

- We will strengthen NHS 24's identity and brand to continue to provide a sustainable workforce.
- We will redesign our roles to support service delivery models and technological advances.
- We will continuously redesign the Training & Practice Education (T&PE) function/role for improved value and delivery.
- We will leverage technology for workforce processes.
- We will strengthen our workforce planning approach.

Sustainable inclusion – creating a workplace that supports diversity and long-term wellness for all staff.

Our commitment:

- We will build a diverse and inclusive workplace where all staff feel respected and valued.
- We will create early careers and clinical development frameworks in partnership with others to expand opportunities and fulfil our role as an Anchor Institution.
- We will foster psychological safety and belonging in the workplace.
- We will prioritise employee wellness through programmes of physical, mental, and emotional health to support attendance.
- We will embed sustainability into everyday practice and making it everyone's responsibility.

Skills Evolution – developing new skills to keep up with changes in technology and healthcare.

Our commitment:

- We will identify and develop future leaders by planning for key roles and ensuring we have the right talent.
- We will focus on cultivating leadership skills to enhance innovation, productivity, and efficiency.
- We will develop the digital capabilities of our leaders and managers to maximise the benefits of our digital transformation.
- We will create a continuous learning culture where upskilling and reskilling will be essential due to rapid technological advancements and become the norm for employees.
- We will support collaborative workforce development with other health boards, primary care, and third-sector partners.

3. Early Resolution Approach

The Committee noted the intention to strengthen NHS 24's approach to Bullying and Harassment (B&H) case management by formally positioning early intervention as the default pathway.

The shift reflects a renewed focus on psychological safety, minimising harm to employees, and reducing the emotional and operational burden associated with a prolonged formal process.

The Committee noted the following highlights:

- Following a recent lessons-learned exercise regarding formal investigations into Bullying & Harassment cases it identified that cases are often lengthy, distressing, and frequently result in “no formal case to answer.”
- The process can negatively impact the psychological wellbeing of all parties and is commonly associated with increased sickness absence.
- Evidence shows that B&H investigations often correlate with increased sickness absence and deteriorating wellbeing.
- It has been shown that when mediation takes place first it is more effective at resolving concerns than the formal investigation route.
- Once a formal investigation has taken place, it is often more difficult to repair working relationships fully.
- NHS 24 will prioritise early intervention, informal resolution, and skilled mediation, aiming to address issues before escalation and reduce reliance on formal investigations. This approach is being developed in partnership with Trade Union and Professional Body colleagues, who are supportive and engaged in the process.

4. Strategic Attendance Taskforce Improvement Plan

The Committee noted the implementation of the Attendance Improvement Task force and Attendance Improvement Plan, noting the following highlights:

- NHS 24 has experienced a sustained rise in absence rates over recent months, exceeding seasonal expectations and presenting a growing concern particularly in the Service Delivery Directorate.
- A deep dive workshop took place on 25 August 2025 to review themes and challenges. In response, an Attendance Improvement Taskforce and Plan has been developed collaboratively by colleagues across Service Delivery, Trade Union and Professional Bodies, and the Workforce Directorate.
- Nursing and Care and Practice Education will also be represented on the Taskforce going forward.
- The plan outlines targeted actions to enhance attendance levels and will be implemented through cross-directorate collaboration. The dedicated task force that has been established will oversee delivery, with each action assigned a named lead and timescale with the lead responsible for providing monthly progress updates.
- This structured approach will enable strategic oversight of the plan and improvement efforts. The Executive Management Team (EMT) support is essential to ensure successful implementation and consistent engagement.