

# NHS Ayrshire & Arran



<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Ayrshire and Arran NHS Board</b>
<b>Meeting date:</b>	<b>Monday 2 June 2025</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Area Clinical Forum Annual Report 2023-2025</b>
<b>Responsible Director:</b>	<b>Claire Burden, Chief Executive, NHS Ayrshire &amp; Arran</b>
<b>Report Author:</b>	<b>Dr Tom Hopkins, Area Clinical Forum Chair</b>

## 1. Purpose

This is presented to the Board for:

- Decision

This paper relates to:

- Government policy/directive

This aligns to the following NHS Scotland quality ambition(s):

- Safe
- Effective
- Person Centred

## 2. Report summary

### 2.1 Situation

Rebuilding our National Health Service (2001) emphasised that NHS Boards should draw on the full range of Professional skills and expertise that exists in all parts of their local NHS system. These professions should provide advice on clinical and other professional matters. CEL 16 (2010) Area Clinical Forums (ACFs) suggested that NHS Boards further develop and enhance the role of ACFs and the individual Area Professional Committees which advise on profession specific issues. The current Professional Committee structure was formed in 2001 and an additional Committee, the Area Healthcare Science Professional Committee (AHCSPC), was added in 2011. The AHCSPC paused in March 2024 to allow background work to take place to reinvigorate the Committee which has struggled to be quorate in recent years.

### 2.2 Background

ACFs and their constituent members have a key role in supporting the implementation of the key dimensions of the Health and Social Care delivery plan (2016), the development of the Integration Joint Boards and the implementation of other key strategic documents such as: National clinical strategy, Realistic Medicine, a Vision for Nursing, Prescription for Excellence, National Active and Independent Living

Improvement Plan, Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy, both AHP and HCS delivery plans and National Workforce Plan. This will ensure that our staff can support services and planning as we look ahead to care for our citizens.

## **2.3 Assessment**

The new ACF Chair, Dr Tom Hopkins, took over the role from Mr Adrian Carragher on 18 August 2023 for a four year term. Dr Hopkins is keen to promote early engagement with the ACF and Professional Committees around key areas of strategic work being progressed by the Board. The ACF has developed a work plan (shown at Appendix 2) and colleagues leading on key areas of work are invited regularly to join the meeting to promote engagement and input from the ACF to ensure the clinical voice is heard.

The Area Clinical Forum (ACF) in NHS Ayrshire & Arran and its associated Professional Committees have undergone a period of redesign in activities over the last year. We have been trying to promote and encourage dialogue between the Professional Committees and the NHS Board, as well as to encourage requests for clinical advice between the teams leading key pieces of work for the Board and individual Professional Committees. This has moved away from a reactive model where the Professional Committees mainly reviewed Board papers, possibly too late in the process to provide any constructive clinical advice to lead to any significant change. This proactive approach has resulted in a change in activity, with different teams from throughout the organisation being invited along to the ACF or Professional Committees to present their work and have a conversation about the direction of travel.

Developing ACFs within this broader strategic context aims to harness the knowledge, skills and commitment of clinicians across NHS Scotland.

Throughout the year the ACF has been involved in a range of consultations and discussions. Views were sought for the Board's responses on specific pieces of legislation, such as the 'Adults with Incapacity Act' and 'Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults'. This helped to influence and support the NHS Board in its strategic response, at the same time as supporting and influencing at a Scottish level through the National ACF. The ACF is committed to continuing this support. The strength of the ACF lies in the multi-disciplinary nature of its membership. In addition, the support of the Chief Executive and other Executive Officers is recognised and valued by ACF members.

ACF and Professional Committees are keen to continue to support and engage in taking forward the Board's Caring for Ayrshire (CfA) strategic vision. The ACF Chair is a member of the CfA Professional Reference Group.

- As previously reported to the Board, the support of senior management for the Professional Committee structure is important and welcomed, but not always equal across the Committees.
- ACF and the Professional Committees continue to be involved in a range of improvement programmes across the professions.
- ACF is keen to strengthen relationships between the ACF, the Professional Committees and the Integration Joint Boards.

### **2.3.1 Quality/patient care**

The engagement and participation of ACF and Professional Committees in taking forward 'Caring for Ayrshire' will positively impact on quality of care and services. And help to formulate medium and long term plans for the services provided by NHS Ayrshire & Arran.

### **2.3.2 Workforce**

Workforce issues are a cause for serious concern for the ACF and the Professional Committees and the ACF is taking a proactive approach to engage with the HR Director on strategic workforce issues. This is also well understood at the national ACF level. However, it should be noted that individual ACF members and in some cases Professional Committees are also proactive in their discussions with colleagues nationally at NHS Education for Scotland and Scottish Government to ensure that these concerns are understood and acted upon as appropriate. The ACF has also been receiving regular updates on implementation of the Healthcare (Staffing) (Scotland) Act which impacts on all clinical professional groups.

### **2.3.3 Financial**

There is no financial impact.

### **2.3.4 Risk assessment/management**

This report has been informed by the contribution of the members of the Area Professional Committees and has been approved by each of these Committees.

### **2.3.5 Equality and diversity, including health inequalities**

An impact assessment has not been completed as this is an internal report on Area Professional Committee activities.

### **2.3.6 Other impacts**

The Scottish Government Health and Social Care Directorate stipulates close involvement of clinical staff in leading and developing services.

### **2.3.7 Communication, involvement, engagement and consultation**

This report has been informed by the contribution of the members of the Area Professional Committees.

### **2.3.8 Route to the meeting**

This has previously been considered by the following groups as part of its development. The groups have either supported the content, or their feedback has informed the development of the content presented in this report.

- The annual report was considered and approved by Professional Committees at the ACF meeting on 7 March 2025.

## **2.4 Recommendation**

Board Members are asked to:

- Approve the ACF Constitution/Terms of Reference which were endorsed at the ACF meeting on 17 January 2025 with no changes made.
- Be aware of the work of the Area Professional Committees during 2023-2025 and continue to support this work in the future.

- Recognise the challenge that exists for those professionals who wish to contribute to Board's strategic agenda and organisational development, particularly in view of the capacity and workforce pressures across the healthcare system.

### **3. List of appendices**

The following appendices are included with this report:

- Appendix 1, Area Clinical Forum draft Constitution/Terms of Reference
- Appendix 2, Area Clinical Forum annual work plan 2024/25



## **NHS Ayrshire & Arran**

### **Area Clinical Forum**

#### **Constitution and Terms of Reference**

##### **1. Title**

This Committee will be known as the Ayrshire and Arran NHS Board Area Clinical Forum (ACF).

##### **2. Duties and functions**

The core function of the Area Clinical Forum should be to support the work of the NHS Board by:

- Reviewing the business of the Area Professional Committees to ensure a co-ordinated approach on clinical matters among the different professions and within the component parts of the local NHS system (acute services, primary care, health improvement etc);
  - Promoting work on service design, redesign and development priorities and playing an active role in advising the NHS Board on potential for service improvement;
  - Sharing best practice among the different professions and actively promoting multi-disciplinary working – in both health care and health improvement;
  - Engaging widely with local clinicians and other professionals, with a view to encouraging broader participation in the work of Area Professional Committees;
  - Providing the NHS Board with a clinical perspective on the development of the Strategic Plan and the NHS Board's strategic objectives;
  - Investigating and taking forward particular issues on which clinical input is required on behalf of the NHS Board, taking into account the evidence base, best practice, clinical governance etc and make proposals for their resolution. The Committee should be pro-active as well as re-active on these issues;
  - Advising the NHS Board on specific proposals to improve the integration of services, both within local NHS systems and across health and social care.
- a) The Chair of the Area Clinical Forum will, subject to formal appointment by the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport, serve as a Non-Executive Director of the NHS Ayrshire & Arran Board.
- b) The Forum must not concern itself with remuneration and conditions of service.

##### **3. Membership of the Forum**

The membership of the Forum will be comprised of Chairs (or in the case of the Area Medical Committee, 2 Co-Chairs) of the Area Professional Committees as follows:

- Allied Health Professions
- Dental
- Healthcare Science

- Medical Practitioners (GPs and Hospitals)
- Nursing and Midwifery
- Optical
- Pharmaceutical
- Psychology

### **3.1 Attending**

Persons other than members may be invited to attend a meeting for discussion of specific items at the request of the Chair. The NHS Board Chief Executive, Director of Public Health and Board designated Lead Director shall be expected to attend meetings of the Forum. All the above will take part in the discussions but do not have voting rights. Non-Executive members will be invited to attend as required. Vice Chairs of each Professional Committee may attend if they wish.

## **4. Sub Committees**

The Forum may appoint ad hoc Sub-Committees as appropriate to consider and provide advice on specific issues.

## **5. Tenure of office**

Members will serve for a maximum of 4 consecutive years and will be eligible for re-election up to a maximum of 8 years, however in exceptional circumstances, ACF can agree to extend the maximum term. If a member resigns or retires, the appropriate Area Professional Committee will choose a replacement. The replacement will hold office for the remainder of the period for which the member he/she replaces would have held office.

Should a Professional Committee Chair be elected as Chair of the Area Clinical Forum, with agreement from the relevant Professional Committee and Area Clinical Forum and approval of the NHS Board, the term of office of the Professional Committee Chair may be extended to enable the four year term of office of Chair of ACF to be fulfilled.

It is recognised that this will also require consideration of membership terms of office to ensure that no staff are disadvantaged should they wish to be nominated to join a Committee through the normal election process.

## **6. Office bearers of the Area Clinical Forum**

The Forum will elect from within its membership the following officer bearers:

- Chair
- Vice Chair

The ACF Chair must be the Chair of their respective Professional Committee.

Should a member be elected to the role of ACF Chair or Vice Chair, the incumbent would normally hold office for 4 years, following which there would be an election process. The Chair will be eligible for re-election to a maximum of 8 years, however in exceptional circumstances, the Board can agree to extend the term of office.

Normally the Chair and Vice Chair will be drawn from different Professional Committees.

The Chair and Vice Chair will have discretionary powers to act on behalf of the Forum but in doing so will be answerable to the Forum.

The Chair, whom failing the Vice-Chair will, except in exceptional circumstances, attend meetings of the NHS Board.

The Chair may nominate another member or representative of the Forum to attend meetings of the NHS Board or other meetings if the Vice Chair is unable to attend.

The office bearers will aim at all times to reflect the views of those within the Forum.

## **7. Selection of a Chair and Vice Chair of the Area Clinical Forum**

Chairs of the Area Professional Committees will be eligible for selection as Chair of the Area Clinical Forum. The following process will be used:

- The ACF Chair will produce a Job Specification agreed by the NHS Board Chair.
- Chair gives 12 weeks' notice of effective resignation or 12 weeks before the end of an incumbent's term of office an election date will be set.
- Following the elections to the Professional Committees and the appointment of office bearers, Chairs and Vice Chairs will be formally notified of an election date and closing date for nominations within one week of an election date being set by the Head of Corporate Governance (Returning Officer).
- Nominations for candidates should be submitted in writing to Head of Corporate Governance (Returning Officer).
- Nominees will submit written details, not in excess of 500 words, of what they can contribute to the post, to the NHS Ayrshire and Arran Head of Corporate Governance. These will be distributed in a common format to Vice Chairs of all Professional Committees who will facilitate discussions of the Professional Committees.
- Each Professional Committee Chair will be provided with a ballot paper to submit by 12 noon on the election date. Ballots can be submitted either by post or in person to the Corporate Department, Eglinton House, Ailsa Hospital, Ayr KA6 6AB.
- Each Committee will consider all of the candidates and provide their respective Chair with their preferred choice of candidate. If there are only one or two candidates, a first past the post electoral system will be used. Under the first past the post system, a successful Chair must receive 50% or more of the eligible votes. In the event of each candidate having 50% support, the final decision will be made by lot. This process will be supervised by the Board Chair.
- If there are more than two candidates, a single transferable vote electoral system will be used to ensure a Chair has at least 50% support.
- The ballot result will be announced to the Professional Committees by the Head of Corporate Governance (Returning Officer) and submitted to the Chair of the NHS Board for recommendation to the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport.

Following the election of the Chair, the same process will be followed for the election of the Vice Chair (with the exception of a recommendation to the Cabinet Secretary).

## **8. Notice of meetings**

The Committee Secretary will send agenda, minutes and notices of meetings to every member of the Forum 5 working days before the day of the meeting. Failure by one or more members to receive papers will not invalidate proceedings.

## **9. Minutes**

Minutes of meetings of the ACF will be drawn up by the Committee Secretary and draft copies will be sent to each member normally within 5 days of the meeting. The draft will be approved at the following meeting of the ACF. Once ratified, the minutes will be signed by the Chair of the ACF and published on the Area Clinical Forum intranet page.

## **10. Meetings**

Meetings will usually be held on an 8-weekly basis to synchronise with the NHS Board meeting calendar, but this can be varied at the discretion of the Chair.

The Forum has the right to alter or vary these arrangements to cover holiday months or other circumstances.

### Forum Members

In the event of a member of the Forum being unable to attend, apologies for absence should be sent to the Committee Secretary.

### Persons not Members of the Forum

The Forum will have the power to invite persons who are not members of the Forum to attend meetings.

## **11. Quorum**

Five Committees represented at the Area Clinical Forum will be deemed a quorum. In the exceptional circumstances that the Chair and Vice Chair are not able to attend, those present will nominate a temporary Chair.

## **12. Forum decision**

Where the Forum is asked to give advice on a matter and a majority decision is reached, the Chair will report the majority view to the NHS Board but will also make known any minority opinion and present the supporting arguments for all view points.

## **13. Requesting meetings**

Two members may, by writing to the Chair, request an extraordinary meeting of the



Forum and should specify the business to be discussed at such a meeting. The Chair's decision on whether to accede to the request will be final, and must be reported to the next ordinary meeting of the Forum.

#### **14. Administrative support**

Administrative support to the Forum will be provided by the Committee Secretary. This will include the review of policy documents, summarising the documents and ensuring that they are issued for consideration and/or consultation as appropriate and to the relevant Area Professional Committees. Additionally the Committee Secretary will ensure that copies of the minutes, agenda and other relevant papers are prepared and circulated for the attention of the Area Clinical Forum.

#### **15. Conduct of meetings**

The Chair will be responsible for the conduct of the meetings and for ensuring that the agreed recommendations of the Area Clinical Forum are conveyed to the NHS Board.

#### **16. Alterations to the Constitution and Standing Orders**

Proposals for alterations will be progressed only by a majority of not less than two thirds of the member Committee at a special meeting of the Forum called for purpose, of which, at least 21 days notice will be given setting out the proposed alteration or amendment. Such alterations or amendments so agreed will be intimated to each member of the Forum.

The proposals must be submitted to the NHS Board for approval before implementation.

#### **17. Delegates powers of Sub Committees**

Sub-Committees will have delegated to them such powers as may be agreed by the Forum. The Forum will approve all Standing Sub-Committee Constitutions.

#### **18. Confidentiality**

All members of the Forum will be responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of NHS Ayrshire and Arran documents. The Chair will rule where necessary to advise on the confidentiality of documents.

#### **19. Conflict of interest**

Members are elected to act objectively and will declare any possible conflict of interests as soon as possible after the commencement of a meeting.

#### **20. Expenses**

Members of the Forum and Sub-Committees who incur reasonable expenses will have travelling and other allowances, including compensation for the loss of

remunerative time, defrayed by the NHS Board, subject to the approval of the Scottish Ministers. Payments will only be made as respects the exercise of functions conferred and where they are not met by any other body.

Version:	Date:	Summary of Changes:	Approved by
1.0	31/03/2014	Review of constitution. Add a maximum 8 year term of office for a member of ACF.	NHS Board
2.0	03/12/2018	Review of constitution. 2.a) addition to clarify that the Chair of the ACF will, subject to formal appointment by the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport, serve as a Non Executive Director of the NHS Ayrshire & Arran Board. 5. Tenure of office, ACF can agree an extension to Members normal 8 year maximum term in exceptional circumstances 6. Simplified term of office arrangements for ACF Chair and Vice Chair. Addition that 8 year maximum term can be extended with agreement of ACF members and the NHS Board. 9. Signed minutes will be published on the ACF Intranet page	NHS Board 3 December 2018
3.0	30/07/2020	Additional wording under "Tenure of Office" to clarify process to fulfil ACF Chair role.	NHS Board 17 August 2020
3.1	27/01/2023	Annual review of constitution – minor formatting changes and update Corporate Business Manager title to Head of Corporate Governance	NHS Board
3.2	17/01/2025	Annual review of constitution – no changes made	

## Appendix 2 - ACF Work Plan 2024-2025

ACF Agenda item/topic	Lead	03-May-24	26-Jul-24 face to face	20-Sep-24	15-Nov-24	17-Jan-25	07-Mar-25	Purpose	Governance route	Frequency
<b>Paper deadline</b>		05-Apr-24	05-Jul-24	26-Aug-24	25-Oct-24	24-Nov-24	14-Feb-25			
<b>Standing items</b>										
Introductory remarks, welcome and apologies	Chair	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			Each mtg
Minute of previous meeting	Chair	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Decision		Each mtg
Matters arising/action log	Chair	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Discussion		Each mtg
ACF business	Chair	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Discussion		Each mtg
Key topics/work programmes										
ACF engagement with NHS Board - Board Chair attendance	Chair				Y					Annual
Caring for Ayrshire	Chair/ Chief Executive	Y	Y Chief Exec	Y	Y	Y Chief Exec	Y	Discussion		Each mtg
Rehabilitation and Stroke Pathways	Lynne McNiven		Y		Y	Y		Discussion		Annual
Flow Navigation Centre and Primary Care	John Freestone/ Vicki Campbell							Discussion		Annual
COVID-19 Inquiry update	Hazel Borland				Y	Y paper only		Discussion		Ad hoc
Digital Services/ integrated care record	Nicola Graham	Y					?Y	Discussion		6 monthly
Digital Services/System access request delays	Nicola Graham				Y					ad hoc
Finance - update on Board's fiscal position	Derek Lindsay			Y						Ad hoc
Health and Care Staffing (Scotland) Bill	Alistair Reid			Y	Y					6 monthly
Information Governance update	Ann Wilson							Discussion		Ad hoc
Cyber security - update from Resilience Officer at NHS Dumfries & Galloway on cyberattacks	Kevin Fergusson						Y			Ad hoc
Complaints improvement update	Laura Harvey QI Lead Patient				Y	Y		Discussion		Ad hoc

Paper 2b - ACF Work Plan 2024-2025

ACF Agenda item/topic	Lead	03-May-24	26-Jul-24 face to face	20-Sep-24	15-Nov-24	17-Jan-25	07-Mar-25	Purpose	Governance route	Frequency
New Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy	Darren Fullarton	Y						Discussion		Ad hoc
HR update	Sarah Leslie		Y	Y				Discussion		6 monthly
Health and Social Care Partnership updates										
East Ayrshire	Craig McArthur						Y			Annual
North Ayrshire	Caroline Cameron									Annual
South Ayrshire	Tim Eltringham				Y	Y				Annual
To note NHS Board Papers	All members	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Discussion		Each mtg
Key items report from Prof Committee Chairs	All members	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Awareness		Each mtg
Corporate Governance										
Engagement with ACF and Prof Committees	HoCG	Y								Ad hoc
Prof Committee annual reports	Prof Committee Chairs							Support		annual
ACF annual report	ACF Chair		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Board	
ACF + Prof Committee Constitution ToR review	Prof Committee Chairs							Decision		Biannual
Approval of ACF meeting dates	ACF members				Y	Y		Decision		annual