



**SWAG**

**Scottish Workforce & Staff Governance Secretariat Minute  
Thursday 1 July 2021  
MS Teams**

**Present:** Tracey Ashworth-Davies – NHS Education for Scotland  
Victoria Bowman – Scottish Government - (**Chair**)  
Caroline Cooksey – NHS Dumfries and Galloway  
Anna Gilbert – Scottish Government  
Pauline Howie – Scottish Ambulance Service  
Steven Lindsay – Unite the Union  
Gordon McKay – Unison  
Norman Provan – Royal College of Nursing

**In attendance:** Niall Anderson - Scottish Government  
Catriona Hetherington – Scottish Government  
John Malone – Scottish Government - (**Minutes**)  
Jennifer Martin Nye – Scottish Government  
Felicity Sung – Scottish Government  
Roxanne Van Zyl - Scottish Government

**Agenda Item 1 – Welcome, Introductions, Minutes and Summary of Action Points of meeting held on 20 May 2021.**

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that the Secretariat was quorate.
2. The minute of the meeting and summary of action points were agreed as an accurate record. There is one outstanding action point which is for the letter to be issued to STAC from SWAG Co-Chairs, regarding Long Covid being remitted to STAC to consider the approach to the Workforce. This is in draft and will be issued shortly.

**Outcome:** SWAG Secretariat agreed minutes as accurate and action points.

**Agenda Item 2 – Menopause / Menstrual Health Workplace Policy**

Felicity Sung provided an update on plans to develop NHSScotland wide Menopause and Menstrual Health Workplace Policies. Menopause and menstrual health are two of the priorities identified for the new Women's Health Plan, which will be published in the first 100 days of the new Government. The Plan is a commitment in the SNP's manifesto and will be a focus of policy delivery over the course of the next Parliament, led by the new Minister for Public Health, Women's Health and Sport – Maree Todd, MSP.



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The impact of menopause on women in the workplace is additionally highlighted in other Scottish Government priorities. The Gender Pay Gap Action Plan recognises the need for gaining a clearer picture of the issues faced by women transitioning through the menopause and the need for improving workplace practices to support women. In 2019-20, the Workplace Equality Fund in 2019-20 was extended to encourage applications from projects that support women transitioning through the menopause.

Felicity asked SWAG Secretariat members to provide their views on how Scottish Government might best develop NHSScotland wide menopause and menstrual health workplace policies and to consider a representative to attend the short life working group.

Having considered whether it was policy or guidance that was needed on this issue members agreed that NHSScotland needs this new policy as it affects a substantial volume of staff in all areas. Members also highlighted that menopause doesn't just affect women, it also impacts men (e.g. men who are line managers supporting women with menopause symptoms) and consideration should be taken when creating the policy.

It was noted that NHS Wales created their menopause policy, which was published in February 2019 ([Link](#)). Members agreed to engage with this work going forward and that it should be in the style of the Once for Scotland Workforce Policies format.

**Outcome:** SWAG Secretariat welcomed the update.

**Action point:** SG Secretariat circulate link to NHS Wales Menopause policy to members.

### Agenda Item 3 – New Workforce Policies

Victoria Bowman led on the discussion around the best way forward for new Workforce policies. Victoria highlighted that the Once for Scotland (OFS) programme has a limited remit and the original request was to transform all existing workforce policies, currently known as Partnership Information Network Polices (PIN) into a OFS approach. It was also highlighted that the OFS policy development group (PDG) has limited capacity with a full programme of work.

Members discussed and agreed the current portal that stores the OFS Workforce Policies is the correct location for new policies to be stored. Some members felt that the PDG timescale to deliver the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of workforce policies is constricted and additional help would be needed, should there be additional work requested.

It was agreed that the PDG would be asked if they could add Menopause to their programme of work, with the understanding that the majority of the work will be

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undertaken by Scottish Government policy officers who are creating the new policy in consultation with various stakeholders.

The final point raised was how OFS PDG is concluded, i.e. resourcing capacity for ongoing requirements of the OFS programme and what happens with new policy after this date. Members were asked to consider this going forward.

**Outcome:** SWAG Secretariat agreed that new workforce policies should be stored on the Once for Scotland website. It was also agreed that the PDG would be asked if the Menopause policy could be added to their programme of work.

### Agenda Item 4 – Home Working Policy Development

Steven Lindsay updated members on the refreshed homeworking policy within the extant Supporting the Work-Life Balance PIN which has been prioritised ahead of the other policies in the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase. It will sit alongside the other elements of the supporting the Work-Life Balance PIN to be refreshed when the OFS Workforce Policies Programme of work formally restarts in August 2021. The consultation on the Homeworking policy will run for a 4 week period from 28 June to 26 July 2021 inclusive. The PDG has requested that the timetable is further expedited, noting the risks to the service and its employees of not having a national policy in place by autumn 2021.

Steven requested that SWAG Committee meeting which was scheduled to take place on 12 August be moved to 28 September to allow this work to progress. On 28 September, SWAG Committee will be asked to review and approve the draft policy. It was also requested that SWAG Secretariat acknowledge that the homeworking policy is a single policy.

Members supported that the August meeting is rescheduled to 28 September and welcomed the draft homeworking policy to be presented to Committee members.

**Outcome:** SWAG Secretariat agreed to reschedule the next meeting to 28 September.

**Action Point:** John Malone to reschedule SWAG Committee from 12 August to 28 September 2021 and to cancel SWAG Secretariat on 12 August.

### Agenda Item 5 – Review of SWAG Committee on 1 July 2021

- **Equalities Work** – Members felt there was no need for this subject to be presented to both SWAG and SPF Committee members. John Malone to ensure equalities is presented to SPF going forward, unless SWAG's input is required.
- **Wellbeing** – There was 3 action points (1) presentation slides to be issued to Committee members, (2) Scottish Government to ensure public messaging about



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waiting times when services are fully opened up. (3) Jennifer Veitch to be invited to SWAG Secretariat and provide an update.

- **Future Vaccinations Workforce** – There was one action point for Scottish Government to issue information on the second tranche of the vaccination programme when it is available.

### Agenda Item 6 – Set agenda for next SWAG Committee & Secretariat

#### SWAG Committee

- **Homeworking policy** – draft policy to be presented to members
- **Independent National Whistleblowing Officer** – Update following 6 months of whistleblowing standards being live.

#### SWAG Secretariat

- **Once for Scotland Workforce Policies** – Update on the work undertaken
- **Leadership work** – Update on the work undertaken

### Agenda Item 7 – AOB

Roxanne Van Zyl updated members that Once for Scotland Workforce Policies has been shortlisted for CIPD peoples management awards 2021 under “Best digital/technology initiative in HR/L&D”. The next stage of the awards round is taking place on 13 July. Members were delighted to hear this good news and noted the amount of work that has gone into the programme.

### Date of Next Meeting

SWAG Committee – 28 September 2021, MS Teams – (14.00 – 15.30).

SWAG Secretariat – 28 September 2021, MS Teams – (15.30 – 16.30).