



Scottish Partnership Forum

Colleagues,

De-commissioning of the Partnership Statement

On 7 May 2020 co-chairs of the Scottish Partnership Forum wrote out to the health service with a Partnership Statement articulating provisions for partnership working under the unique circumstances encountered from the outset of the pandemic response. The statement was subsequently refreshed on 17 November 2020.

The statement outlined a number of temporary changes to working practices, designed to improve the flexibility under which partnership relations operated, helping each party to retain the capacity to honour partnership commitments while working remotely and at an accelerated pace. This included special provision to progress disciplinary matters, grievances and other procedures outwith prescribed timescales, under specific circumstances. We have appended a copy of the partnership statement which describes the changes in full.

SPF co-chairs have agreed that now is the right time to officially de-commission the Partnership Statement. The statement itself said that temporary provisions would continue for the duration of the period that the Scottish Government is stood up on an emergency footing in response to Coronavirus (COVID-19), including the recovery strategy formulation phase.

You will be aware that NHS Scotland took the step to formally end Emergency Footing on April 30 2022, and other aspects of our coronavirus response have also been stepped down and incorporated into business as usual arrangements. The de-commissioning of the Partnership Statement reflects partnership relations that are now operating under more conventional circumstances.

SPF co-chairs have emphasised the importance of retaining valuable lessons around our ways of working during the pandemic. We will continue to build upon efforts to improve flexible working within the service during the pandemic under the auspices of the Once for Scotland policy refresh, and through the ongoing work of the SWAG.

This letter confirms that from July 5 2022, provisions set-out within the 2020 Partnership Statement will no longer apply.

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Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
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The Scottish Partnership Forum will retain the option to revisit partnership arrangements should any significant threat such as that from COVID-19 arise in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Gillian Russell
SPF – Co-chair

Pauline Howie
SPF – Co-chair

Lilian Macer
SPF – Co-chair