

SWAG Secretariat
Monday 16 December 2024
10:00 – 11:00
MS Teams

Attendees

Confirmation of members in attendance at the time of writing:

Name	Organisation
Mary Morgan (Chair)	National Services Scotland
Fiona Hogg	Scottish Government
Jane Hamilton	Scottish Government
Anna Gilbert	Scottish Government
James Vasey	Scottish Government
Catriona Hetherington	Scottish Government
Steven Lindsay	Unite
Norman Provan	Royal College of Nursing
Gordon MacKay	Unison
Pamela Jamieson	NHS Dumfries and Galloway

Additional attendees:

Name	Organisation
Hilary Robb	Scottish Government
Beverly Lamont	Scottish Government
Anniemarie Biker	Scottish Government

Apologies: [None](#)

Agenda item 1: Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

- Mary Morgan welcomed SWAG Secretariat attendees.
- The meeting was quorate with attendees listed. It was noted that the meeting is quorate if there is one representative from each of the tripartite groups.
- Minutes from the meeting on 24th September 2024 were agreed.
- SWAG Membership was discussed. It was noted that Tracey Ashworth Davis has retired, Elaine Watson HRD and Jacqui Jones HRD will join the group as Employer Representatives.
- Pamela Jamieson is attending this meeting to deputise for Jacqui Jones who is unable to attend.
- It was noted that there is a vacant Staff Side seat on SWAG. Norman will confirm with Trade Unions for Secretariat and full SWAG.

Action:

- The Scottish Government will circulate the current list of SWAG members to SWAG Secretariat so they may review membership and update if necessary.

Agenda Item 2: Nursing and Midwifery Taskforce : Findings

- Beverly Lamont and Annemieke Bikker, Recruitment and Capacity Building team in Health Workforce, presented findings from the Nursing and Midwifery Taskforce, Listening Project and subsequent task Force discussion, themes and recommended actions.

Comments

- NP referred to the extensive set of focus groups with nurses across the boards in Scotland and asked how confident SG are that the views of staff will turn into tangible actions. It is key that staff feel their concerns have not only been listened to, but acted upon. BL indicated that she had confidence most of the issues have been addressed within the NMT Listening Project and wider NMT workstreams.
- PJ asked for clarification about the expectations of all Boards in relation to enacting and delivering the recommendations and communicating progress to employees.
- AG referred to the concerns highlighted about employees feeling safe to raise concerns under whistleblowing processes. She advised that the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care will be writing to Whistleblowing Champions requesting progress updates and said that this could be picked up in this exercise. This can also be addressed through the Staff Governance Monitoring exercise.
- MM raised that we must not lose sight of all the positive actions Boards are already undertaking to address issues raised with the NMT Listening Project. She also thinks there is a lot of read across with the NMT findings and iMatter data.



Looking at these two resources together may help establish if similar concerns are shared in staff groups out with Nursing and Midwifery.

- SL said that through his role in the development of the NHSScotland Workforce policies, he is interested to learn whether the policies are being used to their full potential. He acknowledged that there are reported implementation challenges in regard to the flexible work policies i.e. that flexible working requests were not always fairly considered. MM concurred with this point.
- FH said that we need to take the specific experiences of Nurses and Midwives, and where possible, apply them to a wider range of staff groups. Many of the issues raised via NMT are universal in their appeal to staff. BL agreed with this point and confirmed there will be sequenced recommendations plans to support the effective implementation of the NMT's findings.

Outcome

- MM said there is a lot in this around publication, actions and a question mark around the role and responsibilities for taking this forward. Also, there needs to be alignment with Board plans. She noted SL's comment about NHSScotland Workforce policies, how are these interpreted and deployed, might actually be very different at a local level.

Action

- Presentation to be sent on to attendees, noting this **is not shared more widely at the moment.**

Agenda Item 3: iMatter

- James Vasey introduced himself and gave a brief update on the Staff Governance Monitoring (SGM) Review. The Short Life Working Group (SLWG) for this work met on 4th Dec and agreed to reconvene in the new year and share internal assurance templates, with a view to drafting a streamlined annual SGM review template. He agreed to update SWAG in the new year following the next meeting of the SLWG.
- JV then outlined the iMatter Key Performance Indicators (KPI) from the recently published Health and Social Care Staff Experience Report.
- He highlighted that the response rates had seen a 1% drop but the actual numbers of responses remains pretty static and strong in terms of numbers.
- The Employee Engagement scores also saw a drop of 1%. Digging into the data there is quite a variance across NHS Scotland with some Board's scores dropping. However others are increasing. We can see why this has happened and it's not black/white as it may seem on the surface.



- Increase in Action Plans by 1% which is fantastic. Data also shows that returns for Action Plans continue to be sent in after survey closure dates, figure as of 5th Dec have Action Plans as 62% completed.
- In terms of looking forward to next year we'd like to see the increase in Action Plans translate into more local actions, in turn leading to positive iMatter results.
- Due to the tight timescales associated with iMatter, there is little ability to make changes to the programme in advance of the 2025 roll out. As such, SG intend to set up a working group to help drive updates to 2026 iMatter programme.
- JV asked SWAG for their approval to take forward this action and asked members to flag any key updates they would like for iMatter in 2026.

Comments

- MM asked how this should be operated and what changes need to take place? She commented that a lot of issues that were raised we are seeking to address through iMatter Survey. They come up time and time again, people not being involved, boards not being visible. What are we going to do differently? The working group must provide clarity around these points.
- MM also flagged that iMatter is externally validated and asked if any of the possible changes would require results to be revalidated which takes a long time. AG confirmed that SG have no intention of updating the KPI questions, as such, revalidation would not be required. However, new supplementary questions could possibly be included, much in the same way the 'Raising Concerns' questions were added to iMatter.
- NP stated he was supportive of the working group being set up, but mentioned there are often costs associated with any changes to iMatter. As such, the working group must have a clear remit laid out in the Terms of Reference.
- AG stating there is no intention to stop using iMatter but it's how we do iMatter better.
- JH picked up on NP comment and confirmed that we have a contract in place so we are committed to funding going forward.

Action

- All in agreement to setting up a SLWG. First steps are to agree the terms of reference, proposed membership and timeline.

Agenda Item 4: 2025 Workplan

- AG present proposed workplan for SWAG meetings for 2025.
- She noted that the Scottish Government currently drive many of the agenda items and there is an opportunity for Employers and Staff Side to input.
- Good practice that Secretariat continually review the workplan.

Directorate for Health Workforce

Workforce Practice Unit

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- Looking for views on this and caveating that it could be a short discussion at each Secretariate area to confirm its still current or if there is anything else that needs to be considered and included.
- Review previous Agendas from Committee and Secretariate to try and marry up items, mapping across and issues in relation to Finance. These are of mutual interest.

Comments

- NP said it does technically report into SWAG, so having an update into the full SWAG meeting would be appropriate. One other potential admission is that we were asked to put someone forward from SWAG to join Staff Council Health & Safety Group Committee, which we agreed to. This will need to be put into the plan in terms of the SC work. Also leaving spaces for things that come up and hasn't been planned for rather than discussing in AOB as this can become another meeting.
- JH added that we need to make space for updates on the iMatter SLWG throughout the year.
- SL welcomed the NHSScotland 'Once for Scotland' Workforce Policies programme approval being part of a regular SWAG meeting rather than an extraordinary meeting. He also flagged that the SGM SLWG should be reflected in the workplan going forward. AG and JV agreed to include in the workplan.

Outcome and action

- Agreed to leave free agenda slots in the workplan.
- iMatter SLWG progress update to be scheduled into the workplan.
- SGM SLWG progress updates to be scheduled into the workplan.

Agenda Item 5: AOB

- AG advised going forward who leads on what work in her team now since James has joined. Catriona Heatherington is leading on Partnership, working with Zac Deponio who is currently on Paternity Leave. James is leading on iMatter and Staff Governance Monitoring.
- AG raised that the Office of the Chief Operating Officer in the Scottish Government has developed a Standards of Business Conduct for NHSScotland Staff.
- This has been developed with stakeholders but without staffside involvement. We are looking to bring the item to wider SWAG for engagement. We have recently received a paper that provides background that we can share with SWAG Secretariat members following the meeting.
- There is also a consultation in NHS England by the gov.com leading the NHS proposals to regulate NHS Managers. Is there any intention of doing that in Scotland? FH has been involved in conversations around this as well as the NHS England Leadership and Management Standards and Framework, which is not

applicable to NHSScotland. This will be picked up with colleagues in CNOD as there is a crossover.

- AG advised that she has been approached by SG colleagues who are dealing with vaccinations of frontline staff. They plan to bring a presentation to SWAG and are requesting staffside membership for their group who will be focusing on the implementation of advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI). They will approach NP with this membership request. Agreement that this work needs to be reflected on the Workplan.

Action

- Add vaccinations of frontline staff to the 2025 Workplan for SWAG.

[END]