



Area Partnership Forum

Terms of Reference

1. Aims of Area Partnership Forum

Partnership working within Shetland NHS Board will seek to:

- Promote commitment to working together in order to achieve organisational and clinical excellence to benefit the people of Shetland
- Provide the main forum where representatives of trade unions, professional organisations and management of Shetland NHS Board work together to have early input into, and influence over the strategic decision making affecting service planning, change and development within Shetland;
- Ensure that consistent good quality people management and employment practice is in place within Shetland NHS Board;
- Ensure that the principles of partnership are practiced within Shetland NHS Board;
- Champion partnership working between Shetland NHS Board and other organisations;
- Promote and facilitate the behavioral changes that genuine partnership working entails; and
- Promote open communication and engagement.

2. Composition of Area Partnership Forum

2.1 Membership

Area Partnership Forum is jointly chaired by the Employee Director and the Chief Executive, who are both members of NHS Shetland's Board. This ensures that staff

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views have a direct route into the work of the NHS Board and that Trade Unions and professional organisations have a similar voice.

APF is populated by representatives of staff organisations recognised by the Staff Council and Directors (both clinical and non-clinical). They all work together on a partnership basis to support the organisation moving forward.

Trade Unions represented at Area Partnership Forum are:

British Medical Association	No current representative
The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy	1 Member
Royal College of Midwives	1 Member
Royal College of Nursing	3 Members
The Society of Radiographers	No current representative
Unison	3 Members
UNITE	1 Member

These members must be accredited representatives nominated or elected by their trade union or professional organisation, to represent the interests of their members (who are employees of NHS Shetland). Staff representative members (representing the staff of NHS Shetland) must be an employee of the Board or of a Primary Care Contractor. At any time, at least ten of the eleven staff core members of the Area Partnership Forum must be employees of NHS Shetland.

The core membership of the Area Partnership Forum can collectively agree to amend the staff core membership.

2.2 Co-opted Membership

Other line managers or employees of NHS Shetland and representatives from other stakeholders (such as Primary Care Contractors) may be invited to participate in the Area Partnership Forum and their role will be to enhance effective information exchange and consultation.

Participation is intended to be flexible so as to not to exclude individuals who can contribute to partnership working. The Co-Chairs, on behalf of APF, may jointly invite these co-opted members to a meeting or a series of meetings

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2.3 Election of Employee Director

The staff representative, who is elected by the core staff members of APF to the position of Chair, will be nominated (subject to Ministerial approval) to serve as the Employee Director on Shetland NHS Board. The Employee Director will normally be elected for a period of four years.

2.4 Roles and Responsibilities of Members

All partners of the Area Partnership Forum as required to demonstrate their commitment, which includes adopting the partnership values expressed in this agreement, in their day to day working relationships and be willing to contribute to partnership working. This involves accepting a firm commitment to agreement by consensus.

Staff Side members of APF are expected to represent the forum on a number of committees.

3. Meetings of the Committee

3.1 Frequency

Meetings of the Area Partnership Forum will take place every 2 months and will be chaired by the Employee Director and Chief Executives as co-chairs.

Additional meetings may be arranged as often as outstanding business dictates. This must be agreed by the co-chairs.

3.2 Agenda and Papers

Items for inclusion on the agenda should be notified to the APF Administrator at least 3 weeks in advance. The co-chairs will agree the agenda. Appropriate documentation will be distributed to all core members a minimum of one week in advance of the meetings, with an agreement that wherever possible at least two weeks prior to the meeting taking place.

Members of staff are welcome to attend APF meetings as observers. This is notified on the agenda, with instruction for staff to contact the APF administrator.

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3.3 Quorum

Meetings of the Area Partnership Forum will require attendance by at least three management and four staff representatives to form a quorum.

3.4 Minutes

Draft minutes will be circulated within two weeks of each meeting having taken place, approved at the following meeting and then published on the intranet.

It is envisaged that managers and staff side representatives on the Area Partnership Forum will cascade the decisions and actions taken at the meeting.

3.5 Sub-Committees

APF may establish Partnership Working Groups to deal with specific topics and issues. The membership of such working groups will be determined by the Area Partnership Forum, and may include any individual who can provide information or expertise. Clear terms of reference will be set for the working groups, and a remit will be agreed, which includes a time frame within which a report to the Area Partnership Forum is expected.

3.6 Facilities

In accordance with Shetland NHS Board Facilities Arrangements, facilities time will be provided for members of the Area Partnership Forum, when necessary, to ensure that there is no detriment to service provision. Staff side members must complete the facilities time sheet included in the Facilities Time Agreement. In addition, staff representatives will be given the facility to hold a pre-meeting, prior to meetings of the Area Partnership Forum.

4. Partnership

4.1 Partnership Values

In order to achieve sustainable improvement across the health care system in Shetland, all partners of the Area Partnership Forum have the responsibility to ensure that partnership working reflects the core values of team working, openness and honesty, mutual respect and recognition of individual contribution. These underpin the values set out by the Scottish Partnership Forum, ensuring

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partnership working throughout NHS Scotland.

The guiding principles are used to measure the actions and decision making of any partner, and are based on the core values. The following words expressing values provide further definition of the guiding principles:

Inclusive	Involvement
Participation	Respect
Honesty	Credibility
Openness	Transparency
Trust	Accountability
Equality	Commitment
Challenging	Best use of resources

4.2 Scope of the Partnership Agreement

This agreement will provide a framework within which Shetland NHS Board will decide policies on the major issues affecting staff. These include:

- Organisational culture
- Organisational change
- Employment security
- Employment practices
- Life-long learning

It would be envisaged that Area Partnership discuss matters at a strategic organisational level.

The Key Principles of Partnership Working

- The role of the Area Partnership Forum is to lead the principles and practice of partnership working, on behalf of Shetland NHS Board, in supporting a modern, people centered service and continually improving Health and Health care.
- Partnership is defined as ‘the inclusion of all stakeholders involved in the provision of Health Care & Health Improvement in the processes of formulating, designing, reviewing and consulting with regard to that

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provision’.

- Shetland NHS Board recognises its staff and managers as major stakeholders in the process of designing and implementing Health Care and Health Improvement, and that they have a right to be involved along with other stakeholders at all levels of the partnership process. Other stakeholders may be defined as Area Authorities, Patients and Public, Area Health Council and others.
- This Partnership Agreement is underpinned by a set of core partnership values, as outlined above.
- All partners agree to work within this framework, and any disagreement should not prejudice a stakeholder’s position or duty at any stage of the partnership.
- The Area Partnership Forum will report to the Staff Governance Committee on the position of Staff Governance within Shetland NHS Board, via the active participation with the Staff Governance Action Plan.

The Staff Governance Standard requires that the Area Partnership Forum will be directly involved in assessing the performance against the Staff Governance Standard, of Shetland NHS Board as employers, as part of the accountability arrangements. This assessment (SAT) will form part of the return to the Scottish Government under the Performance Assessment Framework

- ‘Better Health Better Care₁’ states that “each unified NHS Board will have a Partnership Forum which must be fully involved in the development of the Local Delivery Plan (LDP). The Staff Governance Standard affirms that the Area Partnership Forum will contribute to the development of the Local Delivery Plan, and assess the impact of the decisions upon the Staff Governance agenda, feeding in solutions/proposals as necessary.
- Shetland NHS Board is committed to holding regular engagement sessions, which involve all major stakeholders. Engagement sessions are a consultative forum, within the strategic planning process, enabling key stakeholders to participate in the formulation and evaluation of Shetland NHS Board strategy (including the workforce plan. Shetland NHS Board will consult, each year, with all interested parties on the format of engagement sessions.
- The Area Partnership Forum may deal with matters, which require negotiation when agreements are required by Agenda for Change. Negotiation is recognised as that part of the partnership process, which

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is exclusive to the core membership from the management and the recognised trade unions and professional organisations.

- Existing consultation arrangements including the requirements to consult with statutory and professional advisory bodies on all strategic or service developments will remain unchanged, thus honoring the commitments in NHS circular GEN (1992) 17

Working in Partnership with Local Authorities and the Third Sector

NHS Scotland is committed to working closely with partners in local authorities and the third sector. This is crucial to achieving our ambitions for a healthier Scotland and to meeting the challenges of the years ahead. The Quality Strategy provides a basis for NHSScotland to work with partners, through Community Planning Partnerships, to secure progress towards our three Quality Ambitions, and the outcomes agreed locally and nationally through the Single Outcome Agreements and the National Performance Framework. In working with Local Authorities we have the Joint Staff Forum minutes and an update of which will go to the Staff Governance Committee.

5. Review of Partnership Working

- It is acknowledged that partnership working is an evolving process. This agreement may change over time to reflect national guidance or developing working practices.
- The core members of the Area Partnership Forum will agree the process to formally review this Partnership Agreement, on a bi-annual basis.
- Membership levels of the Area Partnership Forum will be reviewed annually, to ensure that adequate representation exists to allow full and meaningful involvement in partnership working. The core membership, described in section 6 above, shall be varied only by the joint agreement of the core membership.
- In the event of a merger or de-merger of any staff representative organization, the core members of the Area Partnership Forum may raise for consideration the terms of membership of the Forum, given the new staff representative framework.

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6. Signing of the Partnership Agreement

Signed on behalf of Shetland NHS
Board

Signed on behalf of Staff Representatives



Chief Executive



Employee Director

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