

## **NHS Orkney.**

### **Developing a Network of Care for the North Isles**

Briefing to North Isles Community Councils and All NHS Orkney Staff

23<sup>rd</sup> September 2009

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#### **Introduction**

The aim of this project is to develop a robust system of care for the North Isles of Orkney. This paper is a starting point for further discussion and collaboration with the island communities, clinicians and NHS Orkney staff to achieve this end.

The model needs to achieve the following criteria:

- Be clinically safe with a strong clinical governance structure that avoids clinicians working in isolation.
- Provide continuity of care to the individual island communities.
- Be a model that can be recruited to and sustained.
- Provide the communities with ownership in the way their services are delivered.
- Provide efficient and effective use of clinical time.
- Be affordable within the budget of Orkney Health and Care.

This paper has been designed to provide a summary of the current concept of a North Isles Network of Care so that the reader can gain a rapid overview of the ideas and contribute to the discussions around the model.

#### **Proposed Network of Care for the North Isles.**

Following recent General Practitioner (GP) resignations on Sanday, Stronsay and Westray, NHS Orkney will recruit three GPs to these islands. Dr Kevin Woodbridge will continue to provide services to North Ronaldsay.

Fiona McNab will continue to be the resident Nurse Practitioners (NP) on Papay Westray (with visiting GP support from Westray) and NPs will continue to provide Primary Care Services to Eday (with visiting GP support from Stronsay).

These practitioners will provide the bulk of the care to their communities, ensuring continuity of care for their patients. The practitioners will have periods of time when they will not be on call and it is expected that the communities will respect this right and allow them to remain at home, on the island without being contacted for medical reasons. Another practitioner will be available to provide emergency care on the island when the regular practitioner is not on call.

Through shared clinical governance arrangements (see below) these island practitioners will develop close working relationships with the Out of Hours (OOH) Service, Heilendi Family Medical Practice in Kirkwall and the Balfour Hospital.

Island practitioners will be expected to provide services for NHS Orkney away from their island communities. The purpose of this is to help prevent professional isolation, to create a strong, integrated network of care for the islands and to ensure that an individual's skills and training remains current. When practitioners are away from their island, or are not on call, they will be backfilled by another practitioner (NP or GP) who will have the appropriate training and skills needed to provide Primary Care Services to an island community. Every effort will be made to ensure that the same individuals will provide this backfill and that each island will have both male and female practitioners working regularly on the island.

NHS Orkney still has a commitment to provide a GP presence on Shapinsay. In the short to medium term, the service will continue to be provided by Dr Weekenborg for 17 weeks per year and by regular locums for the remainder of the year. There will, however, be a shift away from single handed practitioners working in isolation and delivering services on an Island by Island basis to a network of care where multidisciplinary teams will work together within a strong governance and patient safety framework. We will work closely with the local community in Shapinsay to review options for the way healthcare services will be delivered in the future taking into account clinical evidence for delivering healthcare in remote and rural areas. It is our intention to meet with the Community Council in Shapinsay to discuss this further before following this up with a public meeting in Shapinsay. The meeting with the Community Council in Shapinsay has not yet been arranged but it is anticipated that this will take place during November / December 2009.

### **Additional Services Provided to NHS Orkney by Island Practitioners**

The additional functions that island practitioners will undertake for NHS Orkney will be dictated by the needs of the service and the interests and requirements of individual practitioners. This concept builds on the successful models of working developed over recent years. Prior to his resignation from Sanday, Dr Peter Hardus provided regular ophthalmology clinics in the Balfour Hospital. Dr Kevin Woodbridge is a member of the Acute Medical Team in the Balfour providing one week of service every 6 weeks, as well as an additional night cover each week in Kirkwall. Dr Woodbridge has also taken a Lead GP role within the team and provides significant clinical leadership for the organisation either in person in Kirkwall or via videoconference from North Ronaldsay.

Similar arrangements will be developed for new island practitioners. These may include the following:

- Acquiring the knowledge and skills to become a Practitioner with Special Interest (PwSI) in a clinical area that requires such an individual to develop and deliver a service for the people of Orkney. Examples of similar positions already developed include diabetes, cardiology, heart failure, ophthalmology, rehabilitation and acute medicine. NHS Orkney is currently looking at the feasibility of developing PwSI in other roles.

- Providing services in the mainland-based OOH Service.
- Providing services in the new assessment and admission unit at the Balfour Hospital. This will help island practitioners develop and maintain the skills needed to care for acutely ill patients.
- Providing Primary Care Services in larger mainland practices to increase the number of patient contacts each practitioner is exposed to.

The practitioners that will provide the backfill to the island communities will be employees of NHS Orkney working either in other General Practices, the OOH service or the Balfour Hospital.

### **Clinical Governance and Patient Safety (Ensuring a High Standard of Care)**

Through working and training together in different settings, the island practitioners and those providing backfill for their colleagues will develop a network of care for the North Isles. This network will be consolidated by a number of mechanisms designed to help ensure the highest standards of care and to provide a system of mutual support for practitioners, these mechanisms are part of what is termed clinical governance. Continuous professional development is essential and clinicians are required to provide evidence of ongoing training to their governing bodies in order to remain registered.

Practitioners and administrative staff within the network of care will meet regularly (in person and via videoconferencing) to undertake training together. This already happens to a limited extent in NHS Orkney through the Orkney Multi-Professional Education Programme and there are plans to extend the concept using what is called Protected Learning Time for General Practices. For the North Isles Network of Care the clinicians and staff will be able to concentrate on educational activities that are more particular to the needs of their services and the needs of the individuals within the network.

There are a number of well recognised means used to help clinicians and staff review the way they deliver services. These include audit, significant event analysis, small group practice based learning, the GP Quality Outcome Framework and annual individual appraisal with the creation of personal professional development plans. These tools will be used to create an appropriate programme of ongoing education and review designed to ensure the dissemination of best practice and to produce overarching audit data to ensure continuing improvement of the service.

Clinical protocols and guidelines, along with standard NHS Orkney operating procedures and policies will be developed by the clinicians and staff to ensure high clinical standards and a unified way of working throughout the islands, OOH and Heilendi.

## **Emergency Care Provision**

The provision of high quality care on the islands at times of medical emergencies is an issue that greatly concerns the island communities, NHS Orkney and practitioners. It is proposed that a robust system is developed with the North Isles Network of Care to address this need.

- All island practitioners will undertake training with the Balfour Hospital teams in the following areas:
  - Resuscitation and the management of the critical ill patient.
  - Paediatric critical care.
  - Trauma management

Through this single point of training, practitioners within the Balfour and on the islands will have a common understanding of the skills and systems of care available to each practitioner. Through training they will have the opportunity to develop professional relationships with each other and gain some understanding of each other's different work environments.

- Each island will have standardised emergency equipment and appropriate transport to deal with emergencies.
- In the event of an island medical emergency the island practitioner will contact the Acute Medicine GP within the Balfour Hospital (24 hour service) who will be able to provide advice and support, as appropriate, via telephone or videoconferencing. If required, the Acute Medicine GP will also be able to obtain specialist advice from Aberdeen or in surgical cases handover to the local Surgical Team. The Balfour team will organise the logistics of evacuation to the most appropriate hospital, leaving the island practitioner free to concentrate on delivering clinical care.
- Teams to support the island practitioners will be developed on each island. Individual members of these teams may come from the voluntary fire service or other appropriate individuals within the communities. Training will be provided to these teams.

## **Recruitment**

NHS Orkney is working closely with the communities to recruit and select suitable practitioners for each island. This process is already well underway with the recruitment of GPs to Sanday, Westray and Stronsay. The recruitment campaigns will use websites to provide background information about Orkney and each individual island community. Members of the communities will help provide information to potential candidates; answering specific questions as well as welcoming and showing candidates around when they visit the island.

Appropriate accommodation will be essential for retaining practitioners on the islands. NHS Orkney is keen to open up discussions with the island communities and Orkney Islands Council as to how this could be creatively provided.

### **Management of the North Isles Network of Care**

It is envisaged that the network will have an overarching, centralised management team that would consist of a Network (Practice) Manager, Clinical Leads (NP and GP) and some administrative support. The management team will work with each island surgery, OOH and Heilendi providing managerial direction to the different elements of the network and ensuring the administrative staff of the practices are properly supported and resourced.

### **North Isles Network of Care Project Team**

Karen Crichton (Interim CHP General Manager)

Michelle Manzi (Primary Care Management)

Dr Charlie Siderfin (Clinical Project Lead)

### **Have Your Say**

The Project Team is keen to get your feedback and hear any additional ideas you may have. You can email the generic contact mailbox which has been set up as part of the project's communication strategy:

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Alternatively write or telephone Georgie Clark who will co-ordinate communication:

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