

North Skye Urgent Care Work Stream

Summary re 24/7 Urgent Care Staffing

Current Service at Portree Hospital

Portree Medical Practice cover Monday – Friday 8am until 6pm
NHS Highland Rural Support Team all other times. Advanced Nurse Practitioners (ANP) are on shift from 6pm until 11pm Monday – Friday and 8am until 11pm Saturday and Sunday. All other times an ANP is available on-call.

Rural Support Team

This team consists of Advanced Nurse Practitioners and Advanced Paramedic Practitioners. NHS Highland has created an education framework and specific training to enable these practitioners to deliver urgent care services in remote and rural locations. These posts do not exist in other areas and are unique to Highland.

In May 2018 when Sir Lewis Ritchie reported there were 3 ANPs employed. NHS Highland recruited to a further 5 training posts although one person did not take up the offer. There are 4 people in training who are expected to qualify by June 2019. The 5th post has been re-advertised and with 12 applications we are confident we will recruit. Interviews are at the end of February and start of March 2019.

Portree Medical Practice

Recognising the difficulty in staffing the remaining 14 hours of weekdays not covered by the Medical Practice the GPs have agreed to allow NHS Highland to staff the entire service. This will allow NHS Highland staff to cover 2 x 12 hour shifts and deliver a 24/7/365 service.

New Urgent Care Service at Portree

From May/June 2019 NHS Highland will be providing **all** Urgent Care Services delivered from Portree Hospital. This service will include out of hours home visits where clinically indicated.

Access to urgent care is recommended to be through NHS24 by dialling 111. Any emergency should be dealt with by dialling 999 and will be responded to by the Scottish Ambulance Service as at present.

Walk in patients will be dealt with as appropriate but may need to wait for the ANP to become available. This waiting can usually be managed more effectively by phoning first.

Scottish Ambulance Service

Recruitment is going to commence for six additional ambulance staff with a skills mix of paramedics and Technicians. Timescales for full implementation of the 24/7 shift roster will be directly related to how many qualified staff apply for the posts to try and maintain the correct skills mix.

SAS and NHS Highland estates reviewing accommodation at the current Portree hospital site to accommodate ambulance crew based there. NHS Highland are adding 6 additional beds, which changes the options for available space that could have been utilised. SAS/NHSH clinical team to review opportunities of working collaboratively in support of the RST, delivering care to patients within their scope of practice.

Other models considered

Before progressing the above model other solutions were considered. These included:

- Creating a service similar to Broadford staffed by Rural Emergency Physicians. Discussions with the current doctors indicated this would not be an attractive job role as there would not be sufficient activity to warrant two sites on Skye. Therefore there would be concerns about the ability to recruit and more importantly retain doctors. Further this model proved to be very costly.
- GPs covering the entire service. This is not within the current GP contract. Recruitment and retention difficulties were again considered likely.