

PSDB/26/23

“People first, partnership always.”

26 June 2026 Public Board

Chief Executive Strategic Report

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This is my second report to the Public Services Delivery (PSD) Scotland Board, providing an overview of progress since the last meeting in May 2026. It reflects the organisation's continued focus on stabilisation, alongside early steps to strengthen strategic alignment, clarify priorities, and lay the foundations for phase 2.

Given the stage of establishment of the new organisation, this report has an initial focus on how the Transitional Leadership Group (TLG) is working to manage the organisation to ensure no disruption to service delivery, continued staff wellbeing and the development of the organisation's strategic ambitions, with wider delivery updates following in the second half of the report.

- 1.2 Since the previous report, we have made progress in embedding our operating arrangements, continued to strengthen leadership and governance, and improved visibility into organisational priorities and demand.
- 1.3 We have begun to move beyond the initial establishment towards an integrated approach to delivery, taking cognisance of our commitment to a stabilisation period. This includes establishing mechanisms to support collective leadership, improving oversight of commissions and requests, and starting to define a clearer approach to commissioning and prioritisation. Together, these developments are strengthening our ability to balance ongoing operational delivery with longer-term strategic change.
- 1.4 Engagement with staff, partners and the Scottish Government has continued to mature, supporting greater alignment on expectations, priorities, policy commissions and delivery approaches. This is helping to position PSD Scotland more clearly within the wider system, particularly in the context of public service reform and rising demand for national services.
- 1.5 This report highlights positive progress whilst also underscoring the scale and complexity of the transition underway. The next phase requires sustained focus on prioritisation, capacity, and the development of a clear strategic direction and a target operating model. The Board's ongoing oversight and support will be critical as we move forward.

2 Establishment and Stabilisation Phase of PSD Scotland

- 2.1 Since the last Board meeting in May 2026, the organisation has continued to progress its establishment and maintain stability. I have worked closely with my Transitional Leadership Group (TLG), colleagues and partners to embed new ways of working, strengthen collaboration and ensure continued focus on delivery during this period of transition.
- 2.2 I am pleased to provide the Board with a summary of the key activities outlined below:
 - 2.2.1 The Transitional Delivery Group (TDG) has been established and is co-chaired by Karen Wilson, Director of Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professions and Deputy Chief Executive, and Carolyn Low, Director of Finance, Corporate Governance and Legal Services. Working alongside the Transitional Leadership Group (TLG), the TDG will support a collective leadership approach to delivery and provide a dedicated forum to translate strategic priorities into coordinated action. This will enable the TLG to maintain a greater focus on strategic direction, while ensuring effective oversight of delivery activity across teams and services.
 - 2.2.2 The TDG – which met for the first time on 10 June 2026 - will play a key role in supporting the organisation through this period of change by strengthening collaboration, managing interdependencies and maintaining continuity of day-to-day services. Membership has been drawn from across the organisation, with nominees identified by Directors to reflect our broad range of operational and delivery responsibilities.
 - 2.2.3 Further work to support organisational alignment and consistency has been taken forward through the development of a single Establishment and Vacancy Approval Route (EVAR), which is now implemented across PSD Scotland. EVAR brings together previously separate approval processes, providing a co-ordinated, organisation-wide approach to vacancy and establishment decisions. Its introduction supports more consistent and integrated decision-making, replacing existing groups and enabling a clearer, equitable and more streamlined approach to workforce planning and resourcing.
 - 2.2.4 A key strategic development arising from discussions with TLG colleagues has been the creation of a consolidated list of new commissions and requests for PSD Scotland from the Scottish Government. The TLG worked with Planning and Performance colleagues to build an initial organisation-wide picture of these requests, supporting discussions with policy colleagues and PSD Scotland Sponsorship. This represents an initial step to ensure ongoing visibility as we build a robust, single approach to managing

commissions into the organisation and all associated funding and resources.

- 2.2.5 We have also undertaken a scoping exercise across TLG members to identify any gaps or overlaps across the sub-national groups. This will ensure co-ordinated and consistent representation, and system-wide leadership across the evolving sub-national landscape.
- 2.2.6 PSD Scotland Sponsorship arrangements are now established, with regular formal meetings in place. These arrangements enable strategic alignment, transparency and effective escalation where required. We are continuing to build on our constructive relationship with the Scottish Government Sponsorship Team to support alignment on priorities, governance expectations and delivery approach.
- 2.2.7 As part of these arrangements, the Chair, TLG colleagues and I attended the first PSD Scotland Strategic Sponsor meeting on 12 June. This provided an opportunity to establish the purpose and remit of the meeting, discuss public service reform, and strengthen engagement between Scottish Government and PSD Scotland colleagues.
- 2.2.8 Organisation charts showing the structure of the TLG were published on 12 June, alongside a supporting briefing pack summarising each Directorate's and Business Unit's areas of work. These materials are now accessible to all staff, helping colleagues understand the current structure, areas of work and focus across the organisation. They will be updated regularly, and both the TLG and Partnership Forum were sighted on the materials before publication.

3 **Communications and Engagement**

- 3.1 As PSD Scotland continues to develop, we have maintained a strong focus on staff and partner engagement. This section highlights some of the critical engagement currently underway.
- 3.2 All-staff webinars and live question-and-answer sessions have continued, with positive feedback from colleagues. These sessions provide an ongoing opportunity for staff to engage directly with the leadership team, support two-way dialogue, strengthen leadership visibility and build a shared understanding of PSD Scotland's priorities.
- 3.3 During these sessions, we have provided updates on key organisational priorities, including progress on Phase 2 of the transition programme led by the TLG, the establishment of the TDG, workforce and policy development through the Partnership Forum, and the development of a single, streamlined recruitment process. We have also shared updates on estates planning, including the appointment of a Senior Responsible Officer for the future relocation from Gyle Square,

alongside wider organisational initiatives such as the rollout of the EV Scheme.

- 3.4 These sessions have also highlighted early organisational progress following Day One, including recognition of the exceptional contribution of staff, the stabilisation activity undertaken to date, and the transition from Phase 1 to Phase 2. They have reinforced the central role of the TLG in supporting stabilisation and shaping future strategic direction, alongside continued engagement with Scottish Government, partners and staff. There has also been a strong emphasis on supporting staff through change, recognising the range of experiences across the organisation and sustaining engagement and partnership working.
- 3.5 Participation has remained strong, with 1,372 colleagues attending the most recent webinar on 19 May. This builds on the high levels of engagement seen at previous sessions, including the initial staff event in April and the earlier webinar in May.
- 3.6 Frequently asked questions from these sessions are captured and shared more widely, supporting transparency and ensuring staff feedback is acted upon. To further strengthen this approach, a 'You Said, We Did' section was introduced on the intranet on 12 June, demonstrating how staff feedback is informing actions and decision-making across the organisation.
- 3.7 In addition, the PSD Scotland website, internal intranet and core communication assets continue to support staff engagement and organisational coherence, with usage levels continuing to increase. Over the last 30 days, overall traffic reached 55,416, representing a 7% increase on the previous month, with 16,829 visits recorded in the past week alone. This level of engagement highlights the importance of these platforms in supporting communication, visibility and connection across the organisation.
- 3.8 Work has progressed to further develop and strengthen the organisation's identity and communication materials. An expanded range of branded templates and resources has been made available to staff, supporting a consistent and recognisable organisational identity across all areas of activity.
- 3.9 The TLG has now considered and approved the PSD Scotland Internal Communications Plan, which includes the following initiatives:
- 3.10 A directorate pack has been issued to support clear messaging and content. Building on earlier engagement, the pack brings key information together in a single, accessible format, helping colleagues better understand the organisation's vast scope, services and contributions to Public Sector Reform. It also supports stronger cross-organisational awareness, collaboration and relationship-building across teams.

- 3.10.1 Surgeries are being developed to provide colleagues with additional opportunities for engagement and dialogue with Employee Directors. These sessions are expected to be introduced in Quarter 3.
- 3.10.2 Vlogs and townhall sessions are being organised across directorates and business units, supported by standardised presentation materials to ensure consistent messaging is shared with staff across the organisation
- 3.11 I have also undertaken a number of site visits alongside the Chair and Employee Directors to meet with colleagues and gain further insight into the key services they provide to health and social care. These have included visits to the Cyber Security Centre of Excellence (CCoE) in Dundee (which provides national cyber security services to protect systems, data and infrastructure across NHS Scotland); and to National Procurement at the National Distribution Centre in Cannerside (which plays a critical role in ensuring hospitals and community services have access to the medicines, equipment and supplies required to deliver safe and effective care).
- 3.12 I have valued the opportunity to engage directly with colleagues through these visits, which have highlighted the scale, complexity and impact of the work our teams are delivering across both digital and operational services.

4 People and Culture

2026 iMatter

- 4.1 The 2026 iMatter staff experience cycle is now underway and will close at 5pm on 29 June. Communications were issued to support staff in participation and engagement. The survey provides an opportunity for colleagues to share their experiences, with outputs informing both local action planning and wider organisational insight. This cycle reflects staff experience across the organisations that now form PSD Scotland and establishes a consistent baseline as we continue through transition. The findings will provide an important evidence base to identify strengths and areas for improvement, supporting decision-making and shaping future organisational development.

Office moves

- 4.2 Work is progressing to support the transition of colleagues into new workplace environments, including the relocation of colleagues from Westport to Gyle Square. This forms part of the wider programme of organisational integration and alignment across PSD Scotland.
- 4.3 Alongside this, a programme of staff support is being delivered, including the development of a standardised workplace induction to ensure colleagues are equipped with the information needed to work

safely and effectively in new environments. This approach supports a consistent and positive staff experience during the transition period.

Recognition

- 4.4 Drew McGowan, Board Secretary and Principal Lead for Corporate Governance, will be joining NHS Grampian as Board Secretary on a six-month secondment. I wish Drew all the best in his new role and secondment, and offer my thanks for the work provided in establishing PSD Scotland's new Committee structure.
- 4.5 In April 2026, procurement colleagues were recognised at the Recognising and Celebrating Excellence in Health, Safety and Wellbeing Awards. We had shortlisted finalists in the following categories: William Coats and the Eurocentral Team in 'Improving manual handling safety through innovation' and Jim McIlroy in 'Exceptional vigilance preventing a serious safety incident'. Several nominees were also recognised for their outstanding contributions, including John Daly and Scott McInroy for successfully extinguishing a contained battery fire, and Loraine Hartley for demonstrating a strong commitment to staff wellbeing.
- 4.6 I would also like to congratulate psychology colleagues, Dr Caroline Bruce, Dr Sonia Anker Peterson and Dr Sandra Ferguson, who received the British Psychological Society Innovation in Practice Award for 2026.
- 4.7 Finally, Professor David Felix, former Dean of Postgraduate Dental Education and Director of Dentistry at NHS Education for Scotland, has been awarded an OBE in the King's Birthday Honours list for services to dental education and clinical training.

Chief Executive Collaboration and Partnership Working

- 4.8 I have continued to engage with a range of national partners and stakeholders across health and social care, including Scottish Government and NHS Board colleagues, supporting alignment on shared priorities and system-wide delivery.
- 4.9 This ongoing engagement is an important part of ensuring that PSD Scotland is well positioned within the wider system, contributing to national discussions on reform, workforce, digital and sustainability, and supporting a coordinated approach to delivery across Scotland.
- 4.10 I have participated in wider system meetings; this includes regular engagement with senior leaders across NHS Scotland and social care, Scottish Government, national strategic and workforce forums, and ongoing involvement in UK-wide NHS Chief Executive peer networks. This is all achieved through my role on the Resident Doctors Contract Reform, as Vice Chair of the Board Chief Executives meetings, on the

Sub-Planning National Oversight Group, and through regular meetings with senior Civil Servants.

- 4.11 I also regularly engage with trade unions through direct engagement and partnership forums, which provide an important opportunity for early dialogue, constructive challenge and shared understanding of issues affecting staff.
- 4.12 Collectively, this engagement supports alignment across health and social care reform, clinical, education, digital transformation, workforce planning and service sustainability, and ensures PSD Scotland remains connected to system priorities and decision-making.
- 4.13 Some key engagement since the last Board meeting in May 2026 is noted below:
 - 4.13.1 On 8 June, I attended a focused session with the First Minister, Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Public Service Reform, bringing together Chief Executives of public bodies to consider their role in delivering the Public Service Reform programme. The session provided an opportunity to hear more about the government's reform and delivery priorities. , It also reinforced the importance of innovation and collaborative leadership across organisational and sector boundaries as we continue to respond to increasing fiscal and operational pressures. On 16 June, I met with Ivan McKee, Cabinet Secretary for Public Service Reform. This provided an opportunity to discuss PSD Scotland's role in supporting the wider Public Service Reform programme, including how the organisation can contribute to improved efficiency, collaboration and sustainable delivery across the system.
 - 4.13.2 On 17 June, I joined the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Care at the launch of the MyCare.scot app. The first version of the free app, which can now be downloaded onto smartphones, will allow people to view their medications and allergies, check their vaccination history and use the national service finder to find local health and wellbeing services. It follows the successful roll-out of a web-based service that began in NHS Lanarkshire in December 2025 and rolled out nationally in April. The app will continue to develop , to enable users to check appointments, provide information about themselves and receive digital letters through MyCare.scot. When fully delivered, it will provide the most comprehensive health and care app in the UK, integrating health and social care services into one space.

5 Key Delivery Highlights

- 5.1 The Quick Update Template, a standing item on the TLG agenda, is an effective way to highlight key activity and achievements across the organisation. From these updates, I am pleased to share some examples from across the organisation which show the breadth and

impact of this work in practice. If you would like to know more about any of these items, please contact the CEO office, who will be pleased to provide further information.

Finance Academy

- 5.2 In preparation for launch, work is underway by the People and Culture directorate to shape the new Scottish Government commissioned Finance Academy programme, in partnership with Deloitte.

Screening Oversight and Assurance Scotland (SOAS)

- 5.3 The Scottish Director of Screening has featured in a STV news documentary on the importance of cervical screening to promote screening uptake.

Medical Training (Prioritisation) Act

- 5.4 The Act introduces a legal framework for determining how applicants are prioritised for postgraduate medical training across the UK. To inform how non-UK graduates may be prioritised in future recruitment rounds, stakeholder engagement sessions are being held across the UK. Throughout May, the PSD Scotland Medical Directorate held five engagement sessions to gather evidence for the national data collection exercise, which will help inform the detailed regulations for future recruitment rounds.

Training post recruitment

Medical training recruitment

- 5.5 To date, we have made offers for 1065 medical training posts across Scotland to start in August 2026. All offers for round one of medical recruitment for core and run-through training programmes such as general practice, paediatrics, core surgery, core psychiatry and core medicine have been made and the fill rate is currently 99.5%. Offers for round two recruitment to higher specialist training continue and are also looking positive with previous hard to fill specialties such as geriatric medicine and higher psychiatry having filled very quickly.

Psychology doctoral training

- 5.6 Psychology Doctoral trainee intake numbers for September 2027 have been maintained at previously increased levels, which is helping to support sustained workforce capacity.

Pharmacy Foundation Training Year

- 5.7 Recruitment to the Pharmacy Foundation Training Year 2026-27 cohort has concluded, with all 220 funded posts successfully matched.

Launch of NHS Scotland Assure SharePoint site

- 5.8 NHS Assure launched its SharePoint site on 16 April, which is now live and accessible across NHS Scotland. The site provides information from NHS Scotland Assure, including the latest news and events, Key Stage Assurance

Reviews (KSAR) and lessons learned, NHS Scotland Design Assessment Process (NDAP) reports, and links to service- and programme-specific SharePoint sites and newsletters.

Flood Risk Assessment Project

- 5.9 NHS Assure has completed the Flood Risk Assessment project in collaboration with JBA Consultants, delivering six detailed reports covering all prioritised sites. The reports, which have been shared with the relevant Boards, include comprehensive flood risk assessments outlining key sources of risk, findings from site visits and topographic surveys, updated flood mapping, and a range of adaptation options with indicative cost estimates.

Chief Nursing Officer Visit

- 5.10 On 4 June, the Chief Nursing Officer visited PSD Scotland, providing an opportunity to showcase the organisation's activity and achievements.

NHS Scotland Academy

- 5.11 The Upper Gastrointestinal (GI) endoscopy work within NHS Scotland Academy has now gained recognition across the UK and Europe. The consensus document developed to support changes in upper GI endoscopy has been adopted by the British Society of Gastroenterology (BSG) and published in the 'Frontline Gastroenterology' journal, supporting its use as guidance and best practice across the UK and Europe.

Scottish National Blood Transfusion (SNBTS) summer campaign

- 5.12 The Scottish National Blood Transfusion Service (SNBTS) has launched a summer campaign linked to Scotland's participation in the 2026 FIFA World Cup, using the increased national focus to encourage people to support patients by giving blood. The campaign reflects the impact that major events can have on donation levels and aims to encourage both new and returning donors to come forward to help maintain a stable blood supply across the summer period.
- 5.13 Alongside this, SNBTS has partnered with global band Metallica as part of a UK-wide initiative to promote blood donation around the band's tour dates, including their Glasgow performance. The collaboration provides an opportunity to engage different audiences and reinforce the ongoing need for donors, highlighting the importance of regular donations to sustain supplies and support patients across Scotland.

Scotblood 2026

- 5.14 Colleagues from across SNBTS and partner organisations came together for the Scotblood 2026 annual conference, held in Stirling on

28 and 29 May. The event provided an important opportunity to bring together expertise from across the system, supporting the sharing of knowledge, experience and innovation within this critical area of healthcare delivery.

- 5.15 The conference programme covered a wide range of clinical and service developments, including advances in gene therapy, emergency care, transplantation and donor services, alongside work to improve patient outcomes and experience. Focused sessions provided further opportunities to explore developments across patient services, donor services and advanced therapeutics.
- 5.16 Events such as Scotblood continue to play a valuable role in supporting collaboration, shared learning and continuous improvement across the organisation and wider system, contributing to improved outcomes for patients and donors across Scotland.

Social Care Hub on TURAS Learn

- 5.17 A new Social Care Hub has been added to TURAS Learn, which brings together curated learning and development resources in a single, accessible platform for Scotland's social care workforce. The Hub improves access to high-quality learning and supports workforce capability by making it easier for staff to identify and engage with relevant resources aligned to their roles and practice.
- 5.18 Go to social care hub: **[Social Care Hub | Turas | Learn](#)**
- 5.19 If you don't have a Turas account you can sign up for free **[here](#)**

Modern apprenticeship in the Dental Nursing Programme

- 5.20 PSD Scotland's Modern Apprenticeship in Dental Nursing programme has achieved 'Excellent' ratings across all categories following inspection by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE), reflecting an outstanding and sector-leading approach.
- 5.21 The inspection highlighted the strength of the programme's delivery model, including digitally enabled learning and innovative assessment approaches, alongside its positive impact on learner experience, quality and workforce sustainability. This recognition reinforces PSD Scotland's commitment to supporting a skilled and resilient dental workforce across Scotland.
- 5.22 You can read report the **[here](#)**

NHS Scotland Estate

- 5.23 New national reports have been **[published](#)**, providing, for the first time, a comprehensive picture of biodiversity and natural capital across the NHS Scotland estate. Delivered by PSD Scotland in partnership with

national partners, this work strengthens understanding of how land assets can contribute to climate resilience, biodiversity protection and population health.

- 5.24 It also provides an important foundation for more strategic estate planning and management, enabling NHS Boards to make informed decisions about land use and maximise wider health and environmental benefits for patients, staff and communities across Scotland.

Remote and Rural

- 5.25 Work is underway to support a refreshed national approach to remote and rural health and care, backed by Scottish Government investment in PSD Scotland to design a new delivery model for the remote and island education and training. This will help strengthen workforce capacity, capability and resilience across rural and island communities, with a focus on recruitment, retention, education and service sustainability. The approach will be co-designed with partners to ensure future delivery reflects the needs of local systems while maintaining a strong national framework.

For Noting

- 5.26 On 1 June, TLG approved a revised approach to handling consultations for PSD Scotland, which supports more structured stakeholder engagement and a single organisational position.
- 5.27 To date, PSD Scotland has submitted a coordinated response to five consultations, reflecting a unified, whole system voice across the organisation. This provides increased assurance that national consultations are informed by a consistent organisational position and aligned to strategic priorities across PSD Scotland. If you would like further information on these consultations, please contact the CE Office.
- 5.28 This focus on consistency and integration is also evident in the development of Freedom of Information (FOI) services, which were among the first to come together in PSD Scotland. Since 1 April 2026, PSD Scotland has received 69 FOI requests and maintained 100% compliance with statutory timescales. A first-year transition plan to integrate FOI services into a single PSD Scotland service is in place and being progressed.

6 Forward look and next steps

- 6.1 Over the coming period, the organisation will focus on:
 - 6.1.1 Continued delivery with no service disruption, ensuring we deliver our services to the benefit of the people and communities of Scotland.

- 6.1.2 Continue support and communication to the PSD Scotland staff to ensure transparency, engagement and a focus on wellbeing through the change process.
- 6.1.3 Further development of the formal sponsorship model with Scottish Government.
- 6.1.4 Continued work to define the strategic direction through the development of PSD Scotland Strategy and future target operating model.
- 6.1.5 Development of a commissioning approach to strengthen prioritisation and demand management across services.
- 6.1.6 Robust performance and financial monitoring.

