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NHS HEALTH SCOTLAND ANNUAL REVIEW 2017

I am writing to you following the NHS Health Scotland Annual Review on 22 September 2017. This year was one of the biennial non-Ministerial reviews. I am pleased to note that, again, you invited a stakeholder panel to lead the review which was conducted in public.

I understand that the approach taken by you enabled a valuable discussion which challenges your Board sufficiently as well as generating ideas for the future. I would like to pass on my thanks to the panel members for a successful review.

General Points

Scottish Government officials attended the review and, based on their conclusions from the discussions, I will offer the following feedback and recommendations.

New Public Health Body – you are now in a period of major organisational change as the shape and form of the new public health body for Scotland is developed. This will clearly present challenges for you and your staff. It will be important for your Board to continue to deliver on your priorities, while allowing for sufficient flexibility within your resources to support the work on the new body. I know that the Scottish Government and CoSLA team leading work on public health reform is already engaging with NHS Health Scotland, and I am grateful for the support and cooperation they have received so far.

New 5-year strategic framework – you have published a new 5-year strategic framework which will run into the establishment of the new public health body. I hope



that this will allow for continuity and stability of your current activities until the new body is ready to take on responsibility, and that it can provide a degree of reassurance for NHS Health Scotland's staff through the transition. As we look to the future I am keen that the legacy of Health Scotland is recognised and informs our thinking – your strategic plan and the priorities that you have identified will help with this.

Leadership – NHS Health Scotland continues to have an important leadership role in public health and, in particular, in addressing persistent health inequalities. This should extend to identifying what practical support you can offer to local authorities and integrated bodies, and with NHS Boards to help them develop as public health bodies. NHS Health Scotland should anticipate changing relationships with local NHS Boards as public health reform works through toward implementation. We will still look to Health Scotland and its successor organisation to provide a strong voice for public health amongst National Boards, starting this year with an expectation of a clear commitment to public health within the joint Delivery Plan currently being developed by National Boards. We will look to Health Scotland to influence a modern style of leadership that is effective in meeting public health aims, supporting the Programme for Government, and Scotland Performs outcomes.

The Place Standard – I would like to single out the success of the Place Standard that you developed with the Scottish Government and Architecture and Design Scotland. Since its launch at the end of last year it has been widely praised, winning the Royal Town Planning Institute's award for Excellence in Planning for Wellbeing. I have also noted that the World Health Organisation European Healthy Cities Network held a masterclass on place-based approaches in Edinburgh recently, featuring the Place Standard. This is a sign of the exceptional quality of the work undertaken by NHS Health Scotland with others.

Health in all policies - We recognise that Health Scotland has steadily extended its reach and influence into Scottish and local policy and strategy; colleagues across Government value the quality of the work that underpins this influence. We would like NHS Health Scotland to continue to shape health into policies across the range of matters highlighted in the Programme for Government that have a positive impact on health and wellbeing.

Workforce – As I have previously noted, you will need to support your staff as they make the transition to the new public health body. It will be challenging to maintain staff engagement while there remains a lack of clarity on the new body. However, you will need to work with your leadership team and the staff themselves in sustaining the important values and culture of NHS Health Scotland over this period of change and into the new body that succeeds it. We also expect you to use this period to work with your Board and staff to determine what has been successful about Health Scotland's work and should be actively carried forward into the new body, but also what has not been successful or is no longer relevant and should not be brought forward. We will help you with these processes in any way we can. We also anticipate that the new organisation will take on a wider workforce leadership function in public health, and we would expect you to develop this capability in partnership with stakeholders in the public sectors, as well as education bodies.

Conclusion

I would like to thank you and your Board, and the staff of NHS Health Scotland, for their continued commitment and hard work over the last year.

This year's Annual Review has shown the benefits of engaging in open dialogue with key stakeholders. It has allowed you to demonstrate the range of good work you have delivered over the last year while also highlighting opportunities for the future. I am pleased to note that you have already recognised the challenges ahead.

I feel assured that you are well aware of the work that will be required from all of you as the new national public health body begins to take form over the next 12-18 months. My thanks also for the open spirit in which you continue to bring you and the staff's expertise and advice to bear as we continue to develop public health in Scotland.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Aileen', followed by a long, horizontal, slightly wavy line that extends to the right.

AILEEN CAMPBELL

