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COVID-19 Recovery Committee
Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

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Our Ref: Response to COVID-19 Recovery Committee
Email: ceo.nes@nes.scot.nhs.uk

By email

Dear COVID-19 Recovery Committee

Inquiry into Long COVID – written submission from NHS Education for Scotland

NHS Education for Scotland (NES) is the national health board with statutory functions for providing, co-ordinating, developing, funding and advising on education, training and supporting health and social care staff in their learning and development. It is a national organisation with a significant regional presence.

NES is a leader in educational design, delivery and quality assurance. Utilising the very best in technology enabled learning, organisational and leadership development, workforce and learning analytics and digital development, across the entire health and social care workforce and in every community in Scotland, NES will help to facilitate staff to be supported, skilled, capable, digitally enabled and motivated to deliver improved outcomes.

NES leads national programmes such as the NHS Scotland Academy and NHS Scotland Youth Academy (with NHS Golden Jubilee), the planned National Centre for Remote and Rural Health and Social Care, and the Centre for Workforce Supply. NES also leads national level quality improvement development programmes and is leading on the development of the national digital platform and a wide range of digital technology solutions.

NES welcomes the opportunity to offer the following information to the Covid 19 Recovery Committee's Inquiry into Long Covid.

From a medical trainee perspective, there is an e-module on Post-Covid syndrome which was developed in June 2021 by the Royal College of General Practitioners and also a SIGN guideline developed in November 2021. In addition, there has been a national teaching webcast organised by the Scottish Government in 2022.



Chair: Dr David Garbutt
Chief Executive: Prof Karen Reid

NES offers a structured work based blended education pathway to support the development of registered nurses employed in general practice nursing roles. The General Practice Nursing (GPN) Education Pathway has ensured Long Covid is identified and discussed within the learning materials. Unit 2 focuses on respiratory conditions, entitled 'Living with a Long Term Condition - Putting people at the centre of Care'. The nurses on the pathway will research and learn about Long Covid through specifically written case studies which have been encountered in clinical practice by our Clinical Facilitators (experienced General Practice Nurse/Advanced Nurse Practitioners currently working in General Practice engaged with NES to support the delivery of the GPN Education Pathway). The aim of this is to provide learning opportunities and resources for our nurses around Long Covid to use and to bring back to their own clinical areas to directly impact patient care in a positive way.

These Long Covid resources are included in Unit 2 activity map for the learners, Academic Assessors and Clinical Facilitators:

- [Royal Society of Medicine Long Covid Series](#)
- [RRHEAL webinar](#)
- [SIGN Guideline](#)

Learners will also be signposted to the Long Covid Support Scotland [website](#).

District nurses are also experienced in providing care and support to people with a range of long term conditions in their own homes. This includes supporting people with Long Covid, providing holistic care and helping them to achieve the best outcomes.

Allied health professionals (AHPs), including Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Radiographers, Dietitians and Speech and Language Therapists, play an important role in the diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation of people with long term conditions. They offer therapy and rehabilitation to people in hospital and in their own homes, supporting people to achieve their person outcomes. NES is working with AHPs from NHS Tayside who are experienced in supporting people with long covid to consider how they can best share their learning and knowledge with other AHPs. These are at an early stage and require review before proceeding.

NES is involved in a number of strands of work to support and improve psychological care offered to the Scottish population. NES supported psychology staff working in paediatric and adult physical health services across Scotland to attend an online conference on 'Priorities for Long Covid services, care and research' in January 2023. Psychologists often work as part of wider multidisciplinary teams and it is therefore important for them to understand the medical issues around specific long-term conditions, in order to consider the psychological adjustment and coping needs for those populations and promote a shared language and understanding within their teams.

NES has a suite of resources for multidisciplinary staff working in children's and adult services in understanding how to help people adjust and adapt psychologically to living with a long-term condition, the majority of these resources are also relevant for staff working with people with Long Covid and will be included or adapted for inclusion on our learning platform section for Covid 19. This includes training on generic topics, such as building a shared understanding of symptoms and the condition, communication skills, person-centred working and shared decision making, along with more specific skills such as psychological approaches to managing pain.

Within paediatrics, NES has made links with a UK-wide Paediatric Psychology Network Special Interest Group on post-Covid-19-syndrome in children and young people and to colleagues who are developing resources for health and care professionals in England. This helps us to share good practice across Scotland and collaboration with NHS England colleagues will inform the development of resources on the psychological impact of Long Covid in children and young people in Scotland. NES meets regularly with local clinical psychology physical health service leads and training networks to update them on the current evidence base and support the sharing of good practice.

From April, additional educational capacity will be available to develop resources for multidisciplinary staff working with children, young people and their families, focusing on psychological adjustment and support for Long Covid. This will build on existing training including the following: the psychological impact of long-term health conditions; psychological skills to promote coping and adjustment to a long-term health condition: psychological approaches to managing physical symptoms and how to communicate with families about symptoms for which the underlying pathological mechanism is not yet clear. Bespoke training around understanding Long Covid will also be considered. Key aspects of these resources will include attempting to address the stigma experienced by people with Long Covid and raising awareness of the unique aspects of adjustment to Long Covid.

We hope the Committee finds this information helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Karen Reid
Chief Executive, NHS Education for Scotland