

30 October 2018

Lewis Macdonald
Health and Sport Committee
T3.60
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Dear Mr Macdonald,

— **Governance of the NHS in Scotland**

Thank you for your letter dated 2 October 2018, replying to Councillor Johnston's letter dated 29 August 2018. You will be aware of Cllr Johnston's illness; I am responding on behalf of COSLA as the interim Spokesperson for Health & Social Care.

Firstly, on the matter of the Committee's consultation process, we share your view that it would have been helpful for the Committee to have had COSLA's input during the inquiry given the recommendations made that go beyond the NHS. One reason COSLA may not have responded to the general call for evidence was the initial scope of the call i.e.

- Does the NHS adequately implement the requirements of the Staff Governance Standard (detailed above)?
- Are there particular areas of the standard it implements well?
- Are there particular areas of the standard that are not implemented well?

For this reason, it did not appear relevant for COSLA to comment on how well, or otherwise, the NHS implements the requirements of its own Staff Governance Standard. I appreciate, however, the Committee now being able to consider our views on staff governance across the integrated system.

Turning to the comments in paragraphs 5 and 6 of your letter, COSLA does not accept that the case has been made as to why a uniform staff governance model across the range of employers is desirable and how it would improve service delivery. Neither have we seen any evidence of significant shortcomings in current arrangements, and yet the starting assumption seems to be that the NHS Staff Governance Standard should be reflected in the staff governance arrangements for a range of employers in the social care sector. I would therefore refer to our original letter which said:

“The drive for consistency in managing workforces across the integrated health and social care sectors must not become an end in itself. It should only be pursued where there is robust evidence of improved outcomes. Indeed, we would argue that good staff

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governance should incorporate flexibility to facilitate local issues being dealt with locally, without over-reliance on 'one-size fits all' or top-down approaches. A locally tailored approach to staff governance and trade union relations also supports the democratic accountability of Local Government and IJBs."

I am aware that officers from Scottish Government, COSLA, the NHS, local authorities and representatives from the trades unions work together on a range of HR and workforce related matters in health and social care integration. I will ensure that our correspondence is fed into the relevant officer working groups and will be happy to discuss the issue of staff governance with the Cabinet Secretary at an appropriate moment.

COSLA will look forward to further engagement with the Committee on this specific matter and the wider development of health and social care policy in future.

Yours sincerely,



Cllr Stuart Currie
Interim COSLA HSC Spokesperson

cc. Jeane Freeman MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Health & Sport