

Health Workforce and Performance Directorate  
Performance Management Division

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Ms June Love

By Email: [june.love@dounreay.com](mailto:june.love@dounreay.com)



Our ref: 2015/0002900  
26 January 2015

Dear Ms Love

Thank you for your email of 12 January to Shona Robison, Cabinet Secretary for Health, Wellbeing and Sport expressing your concerns about out of hour's surgical cover at Caithness General Hospital being transferred to Inverness. I have been asked to respond.

I am sorry to learn of your concerns and would like to assure you that the Scottish Government is fully committed to providing the people of Scotland with NHS services which meet their needs and maintain a high standard of care. While policies, frameworks and resources are provided by the Scottish Government, each NHS Board – in this case NHS Highland – is responsible for the planning and provision of healthcare services to meet the needs of its population.

In terms of the Board's contingency plans for out of hours surgical cover, I am sure you will appreciate that patient safety is of paramount importance and clinical leaders at NHS Highland had been clear that such a temporary measure may be required to maintain the quality and safety of this specific service. As you are aware that, to date, the Board has not needed to implement these plans as sufficient clinical cover has been provided through a mixture of substantive and locum staff.

Please be assured that the Scottish Government is working closely with all Health Boards in Scotland to ensure that the NHS can continue to deliver the high quality, safe and sustainable services we expect. Ms Robison has made clear her view to NHS Highland that every effort must be made to ensure that Caithness General Hospital can meet the needs of the area, both now and in the future. In terms of the further review of services in Caithness, ottishenn

869221 or by email at [gill.mcvicar@nhs.net](mailto:gill.mcvicar@nhs.net) or in writing at Gill McVicar, Director of Operations, North and West Highland, Lacharan House, Dochcarty Road, Dingwall, Ross Shire, IV15 9UG.

Thank you for taking the time to write and I hope my reply is helpful.

Yours sincerely



Charlotte Fisher