NSS Assist Annual Report 2021/22

Partnership and Collaboration

Contents

[Introduction 4](#_Toc116039423)

[NHS National Services Scotland (NSS) – Assist Programme 4](#_Toc116039424)

[Purpose 5](#_Toc116039425)

[Background 5](#_Toc116039426)

[Integration Authorities 6](#_Toc116039427)

[Health and Social Care Workforce Planning 6](#_Toc116039428)

[National Organisations (Joint Account Management) 6](#_Toc116039429)

[Wider Local Government Engagement 8](#_Toc116039430)

[Children, Young People and Adults - Joint Chronologies Pan Lothian Partnership 8](#_Toc116039431)

[Scotland Excel and NSS National Procurement 8](#_Toc116039432)

[Scottish Local Government Digital Office 9](#_Toc116039433)

[Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal 9](#_Toc116039434)

[SOLACE 10](#_Toc116039435)

[COSLA 10](#_Toc116039436)

[Improvement Service 10](#_Toc116039437)

[Emergency Services 11](#_Toc116039438)

[Scottish Fire and Rescue Service 11](#_Toc116039439)

[Police Scotland 11](#_Toc116039440)

[Scottish Ambulance Service 12](#_Toc116039441)

[Third and Independent Sector 13](#_Toc116039442)

[Strategic Networks 14](#_Toc116039443)

[Conclusions 15](#_Toc116039444)

[Appendix A: NSS Assist Strategic Stakeholder Engagement Model 16](#_Toc116039445)

[Climate Change and Sustainability 17](#_Toc116039446)

[Critical Success Factors 17](#_Toc116039447)

[Appendix B: NSS Assist Strategic Engagements, Partnerships and Collaborations 18](#_Toc116039448)

# Introduction

## NHS National Services Scotland (NSS) – Assist Programme

National Services Scotland provides national infrastructure services and solutions which are integral to the delivery of health and care services in Scotland – locally, regionally and nationally.

 Our supporting role to NHS Scotland means that NSS works closely with all our partner organisations, especially the NHS Boards, in the delivery of our services. The Public Sector Reform Order means that NSS now supports the wider public, third and independent sectors and those organisations that have a health and care focus.

We are already supporting Health and Social Care Integration Authorities, Public Health Scotland, Local Authorities and Scottish Government Non-departmental Public Bodies and Agencies.

’’We provide national solutions to improve the health and wellbeing of the people of Scotland’’

## Purpose

To provide an update on NHS National Services Scotland's (NSS) collaboration and partnership working. Such organisations include: integration authorities, local authorities, emergency services, the wider Scottish public and third and independent sectors.

### Background

Service demands are rising across a range of socio-economic groups. The impacts from supporting an ageing population are affecting the Scottish public sector, and beyond. To find solutions, other options around partnership working and shared opportunities should be considered which will allow us to resolve common operational issues and deliver better health and social care outcomes.

As set out in the NSS Strategy, our main focus is on supporting NHS Scotland, however we are now working across the entire health and social care environment. This ensures the benefits and value we achieve through our national infrastructure can assist areas of local front-line services. This results in improved outcomes for the people of Scotland. The key elements which drive the NSS Strategy are:

Our Purpose – Reflects why we were established and guides everything we do:

“We provide national solutions to improve the health and wellbeing of the people of Scotland.”

Our Values and Our People – Guides everything we do to fulfil our purpose and makes our vision a reality. Our goal:

“NSS wants to be a great place to work.”

Our Vision – Recognises what we need to achieve over the next 5 years:

“To be integral to a world-leading national health and care service.”

**Our vision**

Our purpose

**Our Values and Our People**

NSS has well-established networks of key strategic groups. These include Scottish Government, health, local government, emergency services, non-departmental public bodies and executive agencies.

Since the implementation of The Public Services Reform (Functions of the Common Services Agency for the Scottish Health Service) (Scotland) Order 2013, and the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland Act) 2014, these networks have been even more valuable during the Covid-19 pandemic. This drives more engagement with senior leadership and decision makers across the health and care landscape. The strategic stakeholder’s engagement approach, adopted through Assist is shown at Appendix A.

## Integration Authorities

### Health and Social Care Workforce Planning

NSS was part of the commissioning team for the report produced through the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal, around national, regional, and local Health and Social Care Workforce Planning. We developed links with Health and Social Care Scotland and Chief Officers on the outcomes from this report and action planning.

#### National Organisations (Joint Account Management)

NSS is part of the pan-public Joint Account Management Team. The aim of this team is to engage with Health and Social Care Partnerships (HSCPs), to identify areas where more improvement support can be provided.

We’ve been working with the Improvement Service to support the Integrated Joint Boards (IJBs) self-assessment engagements

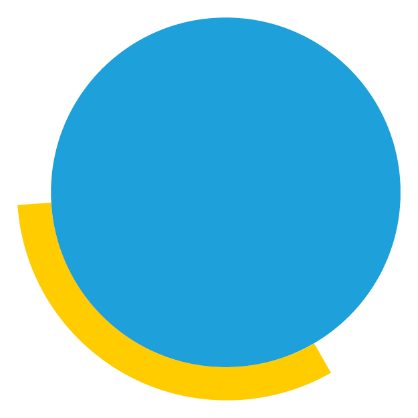
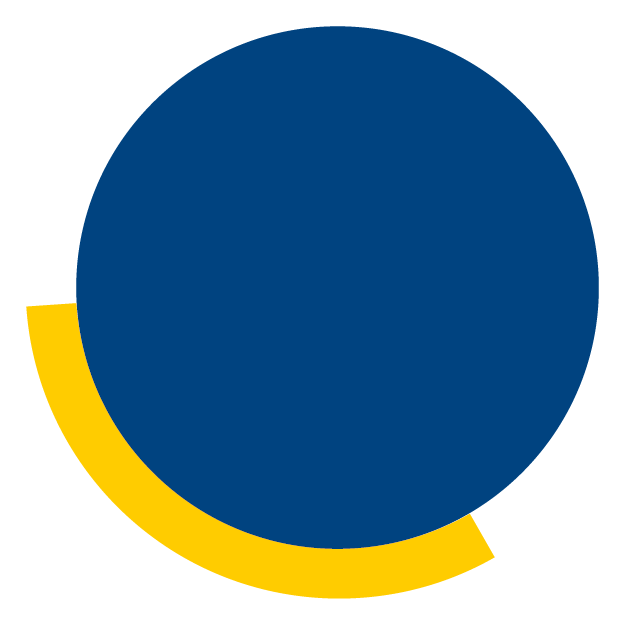
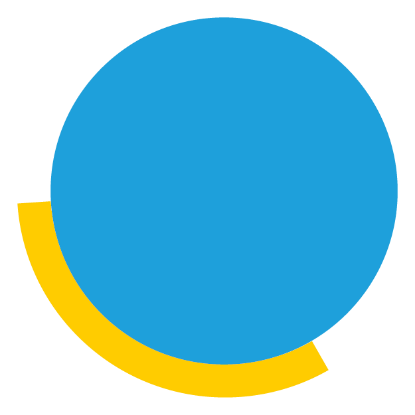
##### Local Authorities

NSS continues to provide high quality and valued services to NHS Scotland boards. Where it is feasible, we continually explore opportunities around partnership working. This demonstrates our commitment to the National Performance Framework National Outcomes, as well as Best Value principles and practice.

We’ve been providing assistance to several local authorities since 2015/16 in areas such as programme and project management; data and intelligence; digital and information technology; and procurement. In these areas business opportunities and requirements have been explored, developed, and delivered in partnership. Developing strategic partnerships and talking to public sector senior leaders and decision makers has been crucial for success.

The support and assistance provided by NSS has focused success around three areas:

**An amplified voice for NSS**



**Delivering value for money**

**Improving performance and prevention**

**Supporting better decisions**

1. **Supporting Better Decisions**

Better information gathering and analysis. This informs decisions through better use of data analytics and research and information sharing.

1. **Improving Performance and Prevention**

Better use of national standards and sharing policies, procedures and practice across Health and Local Government. This is achieved through information governance and national programmes.

1. **Delivering Value for Money**

Better use of resources and exploitation of shared capacities and capabilities. This delivers Best Value through mutual opportunities with health boards around procurement and programme management.

Assist helps to join up the conversations with public sector and wider third and independent organisations encouraging joint-working and partnerships, through bringing together the right people, at the right time and at the right place to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for the people of Scotland.



### Wider Local Government Engagement

## Children, Young People and Adults - Joint Chronologies Pan Lothian Partnership

NSS has provided leadership and support to the Pan-Lothian Partnership (The City of Edinburgh; East Lothian; Fife; Midlothian; West Lothian Councils; Police Scotland and NHS Lothian), around developing common approaches specific to protection and intervention activities for Children, Young People and Adults Joint Chronologies.

A common approach across the partnership has been developed and tested around Lothian’s Data Standards, Protocols and Practices, based on national guidance. The intention is that this shall lead to improving the aggregation, integration and systems exchange of data and information flow across multi-agencies, specific to vulnerable children, young people and adults.

The Pan Lothian Joint Chronologies Common Approach has been included as a practice note within the National Child Protection Guidance published by the Scottish Government in September 2021. The partnership has been approached by other local authorities wishing to be involved in implementing and developing a technical solution.



### Scotland Excel and NSS National Procurement

Scotland Excel (SXL) and NSS National Procurement (NP) are two of the country’s leading public sector procurement organisations. They provide a range of services that help its members and service users deliver effective and efficient public services.

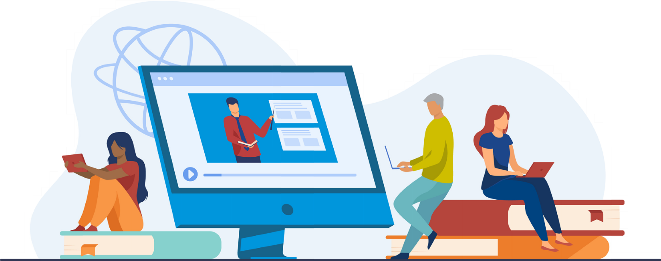
Julie Welsh, Chief Executive, Scotland Excel and Gordon Beattie, Director of National Procurement, and Tom McHugh, Strategic Partnerships Lead, NSS meet on a regular basis. These meetings continue to build on a firmly established strategic relationship enabling joint procurement opportunities which are underpinned by shared learning and knowledge. This relationship has been even more crucial during the challenges of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Both organisations commit to formalise this working relationship through a Strategic Collaboration Agreement.

# Scottish Local Government Digital Office

We are recognised as an important stakeholder in the wider digital and information technology landscape. This inevitably means interaction with local authorities around common themes and local authorities have developed a membership model approach. This is under the auspices of the Local Government Digital Office.

NSS is part of a working group known as Local Government & Health Multi-Function Teams – Microsoft 365 Federation Project. A synopsis is shown as follows:

The COVID-19 pandemic pushed the rapid rollout of Microsoft Teams by NSS across NHS Scotland. Scottish local authorities followed a similar path with the rollout of Teams which requires quicker adoption of Microsoft 365 within their organisations. Through the project, we can increase the benefits of our existing investments by looking at common approaches and common platforms to support collaborative working.

## Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal

The Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal (ESESCR) is a £1.3billion partnership and comprises six local authorities. East Lothian, The City of Edinburgh, Fife, Midlothian, Scottish Borders and West Lothian councils have worked collectively on this bid.

It’s estimated that an additional £3.2bn worth of private sector investment could be leveraged. The deal was approved by the Scottish and UK Governments in August 2018.  
The five key themes are:

* Research, Development, and Innovation
* Integrated Regional Employability and Skills
* Transport
* Culture
* Housing

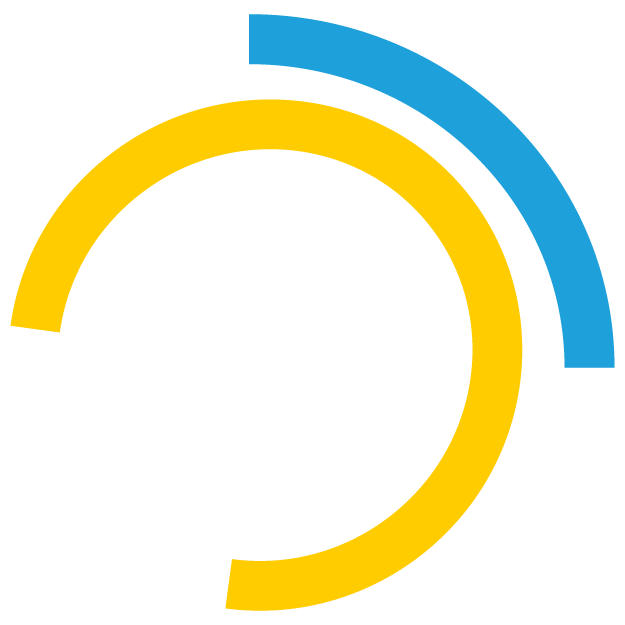
Our range of expertise and knowledge can help support the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal and we are already providing data and information to health outcome indicators, research and reporting activity. These national and local health deliverables help to place Scotland as a global leader in health informatics research.

These pieces of work support the vision of the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal in the creation of ‘Edinburgh the Data Capital of Europe’.  
NSS / NHS Scotland is represented on the ESESCR Labour Market Analysis and Evaluation Theme Group. We are also represented on the Health and Social Care (HSC) Skills Gateway Delivery Board.

We have been an important contributor to the development of the ESESCR Benefits Realisation Reporting Framework.

# SOLACE

NSS has identified SOLACE as a key strategic stakeholder group and we’ve had a positive working relationship since 2015/16. Through SOLACE, we’ve benefited from wider engagement with local authorities resulting in better awareness of NSS and our services. This brings more opportunities to support health and care outcomes which are being explored and developed with respective SBUs.



Our five memberships within SOLACE cover the executive and established leader levels.

## COSLA

Another key strategic partner for NSS is the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA).

COSLA and NSS share opportunities across around the health and social care agenda to link up at a strategic level. A series of meetings have taken place with COSLA to explore areas of mutual interest. The common objectives are focused around national initiatives such as Public Health Reform.

### Improvement Service

The Improvement Service (IS) is the national improvement organisation for local government in Scotland. We’ve been working in collaboration with IS since 2015/16 through the pathfinder initiative with North Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire Councils.

There are distinct synergies with services and offerings provided by IS and NSS and no areas of conflict have been identified. The main engagement has been around sharing exemplars of good practice. NSS has adopted the national Knowledge Hub which is administered by IS and supports wider communication and information sharing requirements for programmes and projects.

Discussions have included understanding common data and analytics challenges. This is across health and local authorities where shared experience and learnings have been positively endorsed. This was even more prevalent during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ongoing engagement with IS continues to explore other potential opportunities which builds on a well-established working relationship. Wider support can be focused around the national public health reform agenda.

# Emergency Services

## Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

NSS has been working with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS), across a range of activities which includes a pilot to develop a shared vulnerability index. This has involved building an understanding of vulnerability across community groups and how that can be reflected in the data analysis process.

The Holistic Risk Assessment Profiling for Targeted Vulnerable Groups brings together data from all the emergency services bodies. Partners examine the shared patterns of demand facing the services and look at the vulnerabilities that generate demand patterns from individuals and households.

The project will build evidence to inform the development of more efficient and effective service redesign. This will aim to manage the demand while seeking to achieve better outcomes for the most vulnerable people in our society.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between NSS and SFRS, was agreed in August 2021.

# Police Scotland

Police Scotland is currently implementing the 2022/23 Annual Police Plan which has five Strategic Outcomes:

* Threats to public safety and wellbeing are resolved by a proactive and responsive police service.
* The needs of local communities are addressed through effective service delivery.
* Public, communities and partners are engaged, involved, and have confidence in policing.
* Our people are supported through a positive working environment, enabling them to serve the public.
* Police Scotland is sustainable, adaptable, and prepared for future.

There are clear links to wider heath and care outcomes in the plan, most notably a commitment to:

‘Design services jointly to tackle complex public safety and wellbeing challenges’

We’ve met with Police Scotland on several occasions and there’s an appetite to collaborate around a range of areas including Data & Intelligence, Digital and IT, Research and Business Intelligence. NSS DaS Business Intelligence Team has already partnered with Police Scotland around a joint ‘Vizathon’ which is similar to a hackathon. NSS has helped Police Scotland to better understand data and intelligence, specifically around Custody Healthcare and Interventions. This specific activity is managed through the National Police Care Network with wider support from NSS National Services Division. More information at <https://www.policecare.scot.nhs.uk/>

A Vizathon is a competitive event where groups work on software or hardware projects, often involving data and analytics. The goal is to create a functioning product by the end of the event.

There are ongoing discussions around the exploration of a Joint Strategic Collaboration Agreement.

Police Scotland and NSS held a national event before the pandemic to understand the potential strategic priorities and opportunities for further exploration.

We’ve also provided ‘critical friend’ advice to Police Scotland on the delivery of their Annual Plan.

# Scottish Ambulance Service

There is a history of joint working between the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) and NSS. We’ve worked together to support operational requirements, to meet emergency and contingency planning.

We undertook positive work across national Test and Protect activities which included the management of COVD-19 Testing Sites across Scotland.

Much has been learned and shared between both organisations throughout the pandemic, and it’s evident that there are synergies in how NSS and SAS can support health and care. These opportunities will be explored through the National Services Scotland and Scottish Ambulance Service Strategic Collaboration Agreement which was approved in May 2022.

## Third and Independent Sector

The Scottish Third and Independent sector encompasses an estimated 45,000 voluntary organisations. Around half of these organisations are charities such as:

* small sports groups
* pre-school day care centres
* self-help groups
* health and well-being services
* housing and major social care providers

The sector combines 23,700 registered charities, including 163 housing associations with 138,000 paid employees. Around 1.3million volunteers support Scotland’s Third and Independent sector. The sector has an estimated annual turnover in excess of £5billion with assets worth over £14billion.

Source SCVO <http://www.scvo.org.uk/news-campaigns-and-policy/research/scvo-scottish-third-sector-statistics/>

NSS Assist has met with several Chief Executives and senior leaders for the following organisations:

* The Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE)
* The Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO)
* Voluntary Health Scotland (VHS)
* Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland
* Scottish Care
* The Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland

A range of collaborative opportunities have been identified with follow on meetings arranged.

Key areas include:

* Data and Intelligence;
* Digital and Information Technology;
* Innovation
* Mental health practices.

A formal Memorandum of Understanding around Collaboration Working between NSS and the ALLIANCE was agreed in March 2022.

We recently supported ALLIANCE with data analysis and report writing for a survey on Mental Health Services commissioned by the Scottish Government. This support was from the Strategy Performance and Service Transformation SBU, Customer Experience Team. Further information on NSS Strategic Engagements, Partnerships and Collaborations are shown at Appendix B.

# Strategic Networks

NSS has a well-established network of key strategic groups. These span Scottish Government, health, local government, non-departmental public bodies and executive agencies. Since the implementation of The Public Services Reform (Functions of the Common Services Agency for the Scottish Health Service) (Scotland) Order 2013, and the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland Act) 2014, these networks are even more strategically important. Collaboration between these groups was never more evident that during the challenging circumstances of Covid-19.

Through Assist, NSS is a contributor to the following groups:

Scottish Government ‘Once for Scotland Group’ Chair Peter Tolland, Director of Digital Programmes

ESESCR Deal ‘Labour Market Analysis and Evaluation Theme Group and Health & Social Care (HSC) Skills Gateway Delivery Board

National City / Growth Deals Programme Management Forum (Quarterly Meetings)

Pan Lothian Partnership Governance – Oversight Board; Chronology Implementation Programme Board and Technical Review Group

Public Health Protection (PHP5) Network

Big Move 9 – Anchor Institutions Network

Mass Casualty and Fatality Incident NHS Boards and Police Scotland (Disaster Victim Identification) Short Life Working Group – First meeting held in May’22

Innovation Exchange Collaboration Group

National Organisations Huddle (NSS Member of Joint Account Mgt Team – Chief Officers HSCPs)

NHS Scotland and Scottish Prisons Service MOU Short Life Working Group

Scottish Government Monthly Data Showcase Sessions

## Conclusions

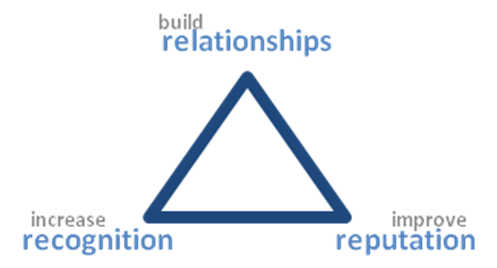
1. Our strategic engagements, partnerships and collaborations with integration authorities, local authorities, emergency services and the wider Scottish Public / Third and independent sectors organisations, has confirmed that NSS has an important part in assisting organisations deliver on their strategic objectives around wider health and social care outcomes.
2. New professional networks and working relationships have been established across organisations. The results are greater awareness and understanding about the specialised services NSS can provide.
3. Our profile has been raised and awareness of our services is now wider across integration authorities, local authorities, emergency services and the wider Scottish Public / Third and Independent Sectors organisations.This not only has a positive impact on our reputation, but validates that we are viewed as a partner of choice and trust.
4. Through a dedicated resource, NSS senior leadership is being supported to develop and build strategic partnerships across sectors with other senior leaders and influencers. This supports our strategic objectives around ‘Assisting other organisations involved in health and care’ as well as ‘Once for Scotland’ and ‘Customer At The Heart’.



# Appendix A: NSS Assist Strategic Stakeholder Engagement Model

Build strong and successful relationships with key partners and stakeholders in health and care.

Increase recognition by key stakeholders of the value that NSS creates for health and care.

Improve our reputation as a trusted partner for national infrastructure solution in health and care.

## 

To assist with promoting an open and transparent approach when NSS is conducting engagement activities, the following definitions will apply:

Co-Ordinator

Acting as a link between NSS SBUs and pan-public organisations to explore potential opportunities for joint working.

Facilitator

Offering to act as an honest broker and critical friend between organisations and NSS, where engagement further supports better health and care outcomes

Deliverer

Identify opportunities and having these developed and implemented through NSS SBUs where added value deliverables contribute to a ‘Once For Scotland’ approach

**Equalities**

All pan-public organisations and NSS are committed to actively promoting equality and inclusion, to ensure that opportunities and activities are aligned with local and national Equalities Legislation, principles, and structures. This will include a commitment to a robust approach to equality and fairer Scotland duty impact assessments.

# Climate Change and Sustainability

NHS Scotland cannot deliver its sustainability aims on its own. We also need to work closely with local communities, local authorities, and other public bodies, third sector organisations and our suppliers to achieve them. We will actively engage in existing forums for collaboration and assist in creating new ones where they’re needed.

Actions to improve the sustainability of our NHS will be delivered by health boards working in partnership with Integrated Joint Boards, Community Planning Partnerships and Regional and Local Resilience Partnerships. This strategy provides the vision and objectives for health boards setting out high level requirements and examples of good practice, recognising that action on the ground will depend on local circumstances and the specific sustainability challenges and opportunities that individual health boards face.

## Critical Success Factors

Developing substantive progress around common principles and approaches to business solutions developments will be reliant upon:

1. Successful agreement across NSS on adoption of consistent principles and where possible, common approaches to solution development for existing and new service users.
2. Through current NSS governance, establish a forward-thinking group to understand the impacts of adopting consistent principles and approaches for solution development across NSS.
3. Develop effective strategic collaboration across SBUs to clearly agree where opportunities for exploring and delivering solutions are captured, managed and progressed.
4. Working intelligently with service users to develop solutions capable of replication.
5. Engaging with stakeholders, influencers and leads.
6. Delivering an efficient, responsive service.
7. Establishing robust systems, processes and documentation to underpin business solution ‘on-boarding’ and ongoing service management.

# Appendix B: NSS Assist Strategic Engagements, Partnerships and Collaborations

| Organisation | Engagement and Support |
| --- | --- |
| North Lanarkshire Council | Use of data analytics to support the council’s wider digital programme. |
| Midlothian Council | Provided ‘critical friend’ support around data requirements to meet wider council’s objectives around Drug and Alcohol Addiction services. |
| Children, Young People and Adults Joint Chronologies | Provided leadership and support the Pan-Lothian partnership around developing common approaches for Children, Young people and Adults joint chronologies – Lothian’s Data Standards, Protocols and Practices, based on national guidance. Also to improve the aggregation, integration and systems exchange of data and information flow across multiple agencies specific to children, vulnerable young people and adults. |
| Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal | The Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal comprises six local authorities (City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian, West Lothian, Fife and Scottish Borders Councils), with £1.3 billion funding from UK and Scottish Governments and the local authorities. NSS Assist provided input to the overall Benefits Realisation Plan. |
| SOLACE | NSS had identified SOLACE as a key strategic stakeholder network, where there has been a positive working relationship since 2015/16. Meetings with Local Authorities CEOs has not only raised awareness and profile of NSS, but has resulted in further opportunities being explored and developed with respective SBUs. NSS has taken up membership for six senior leaders covering the Executive and Established Leader levels. |
| COSLA | There are synergies across COSLA and NSS around the Health and Social Care agenda and where there are opportunities to link up at a strategic level. A series of meetings are taking place with COSLA to further explore areas of mutual interest, where common objectives are focused around national initiatives such as Public Health Reform. Meeting held with COSLA around Further Education Proposal Dual Qualifications for Social Care entrants to support future demand. |
| Scottish Local Government Digital Office | NSS through DaS, is working with Scottish Government and the Scottish Local Government Digital Office, around a Federation Health and Care Project and to help shape key elements around MS365 Federation via a project team with representation from pan-public organisations including NSS. |
| Scotland Excel and NSS National Procurement | Both Scotland Excel (SXL) and NSS National Procurement (NP) are now firmly established as two of the country’s leading public sector shared services organisations. Through regular engagements there are joint procurement opportunities underpinned by shared learning and knowledge transfer.  A shared Strategic Collaboration Agreement is being developed. |
| Improvement Service | Ongoing engagement with IS continues to explore potential opportunities around data and intelligence, building on an already well-established working relationship, and how wider support can be focused around the national public health reform agenda. |
| Scottish Fire and Rescue Service | The aim of the Holistic Risk Assessment Profiling for Targeted Vulnerable Groups project is to bring together data from all the emergency services delivery bodies and partners. This is to examine the shared patterns of demand facing the partner services, and the nature of vulnerabilities that generate those demand patterns from individuals and households.  A formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) around collaboration working between NSS and SFRS, was agreed in August 2021. |

If you require an alternative format please contact [NSS.EqualityDiversity@nhs.scot](mailto:NSS.EqualityDiversity@nhs.scot)

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