

**Forensic
Network**

Annual Report

2022 – 23

This report provides an overview of key aspects of our work and achievements over the last 12 months from April 2022 to March 2023.

If you would like know more about the work of the Forensic Network or SoFMH, please contact the Forensic Network Office by email: tsh.forensicnetwork@nhs.scot or telephone: 01555 842018.

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Dr Lindsay Burley CBE
Chair



Prof. Lindsay Thomson
Director

Joint Foreword

Chair & Director Forensic Network & SoFMH

This has been the year for the Forensic Network when our allegiance to the Robert the Bruce motto of “try, try, try again” has borne fruit. Legend states that as he sat in a cave on Arran and considered whether to give up his fight, he watched a spider repeatedly spin her web, fall down, climb back up and start again, and this inspired him to keep going. Over the last few years, we have completed many reports and attended many meetings on the development of a National Serious Offender Liaison and Prevent Service. We were, therefore, delighted that the Scottish Government has made provision for this national service over the next three years and that NHS Lothian has volunteered to lead on this.

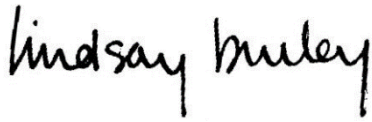
The Scottish Government’s short-life working group to examine the Barron Report’s recommendation of a single forensic mental health board for Scotland completed its work. Whilst stakeholders agreed that the status quo was in need of change, there was no clear consensus on a preferred option. The Network’s position remains that any solution must have the authority and resource to resolve current and future issues across the Network such as patient flow, capacity, service development and quality improvement. A further announcement from Scottish Government on the preferred way forward is expected.

Mental health legislation is a fundamental component of our work across the Forensic Network and we have therefore contributed to the work of the Scottish Mental Health Law Review. Its final report was published in September 2022 and contains 18 recommendations specific to the forensic field. The wider report sets mental health law in the context of protection of Human Rights and focuses on improved accountability and scrutiny. The Government’s response proposes a rolling programme of development work from 2023-29 arising from the recommendations in the report. There will be no big bang new Act fusing mental health and incapacity, but incremental change. It will be incumbent on all of us across the Network to ensure we contribute to these developments to ensure they will be in the best interests of our patients.

The mental health of people in prisons remains a major concern for us. We were pleased to see published our report in conjunction with the University of Edinburgh on the Needs Assessment of the Mental Health of People in Prison, which contains a series of recommendations. Concern continues to be expressed about delays in transfer of some people from prison to hospital. Within the Network, a system has been established with both the prison health centres and the Scottish Prison Service to monitor all patients referred to mental health hospitals and/or raising concerns. Working with the Scottish Association of Medical Directors, it has been agreed that a key decision maker will be appointed by each Health Board to help resolve any problematic cases.

The work of the School of Forensic Mental Health continues with the academic, short course and New to Forensic programmes. This year we have completed a mixed methods review of external scrutiny and assurance arrangements for mental health services in Scotland; worked with NHS Education for Scotland on the new training materials for Approved Medical Practitioners; and in line with the Barron recommendation to further develop the School, we have completed a training needs analysis and consulted on the strategic way forward.

Whilst COVID-19 has been less of an issue this year, it continues to be part of our clinical reality. Staffing, as elsewhere in the NHS, is problematic and extensive efforts are made to ensure that patient opportunities for rehabilitation remain in place. Our thanks to all of you across the Network and elsewhere who contribute to the care and well-being of patients and their families, and to our work.



Dr Lindsay Burley CBE
Chair



Prof. Lindsay Thomson
Director

Executive Summary

The Forensic Network and the School of Forensic Mental Health (SoFMH) are delighted to present this Annual Report for the year 2022/23. The report serves as a comprehensive overview of our achievements, challenges and progress over the past 12 months. As the Managed Care Network for Forensic Mental Health Services in Scotland, we remain committed to our vision of addressing fragmentation across the forensic estate and the standardization of high quality, person-centred care for Mentally Disordered Offenders.

Over the past 12 months, the Network has continued to build on its strong foundation, working to enhance the co-ordination and integration of forensic mental health services in Scotland. Our work has been driven by our values of compassion, collaboration and continuous improvement. Through our short-life working groups and professional fora, we have continued to influence policy, co-ordinate national responses to consultations and further develop practice. In addition to this, through the SoFMH, we have supported training, education and research through delivery of a wide portfolio of courses designed to meet the needs of all staff working within forensic mental health services.

Achieving the progress outlined in this report would not have been possible without the guidance, advice and expertise provided by our stakeholders across the Network. Our extensive thanks and gratitude go to all for their support in helping us to deliver on national aims and projects. We are also grateful to Scottish Government for their continued sponsorship of our areas of work.

Key Achievements 2022/23:

Clinical Developments

- Secured Scottish Government support for the National Serious Offender Liaison Service proposal, developed in conjunction with Police Scotland and criminal justice colleagues.
- Published a report on a Review of the Delivery of Psychological Therapies in Forensic Mental Health Services in Scotland, highlighting barriers to implementation of the Forensic Matrix and proposing a number of recommendations to address these.
- Ongoing facilitation of the Women's Forensic Services Planning Group in order to support service development in this area. This included a Clinical Infrastructure Assessment being prepared for The State Hospital, led by our Clinical Lead for Women.
- Review and updating of our guidelines on the Use of Medication to Reduce Sex Drive.
- Publication of the Scottish Government Prison Mental Health Needs Assessment which the Network contributed to.
- Submission of responses to several National consultations on behalf of the Forensic Network (e.g. Draft Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Scottish Mental Health Law Review, Mental Health Regulations and the National Secure Adolescent Inpatient Service (NSAIS).
- Continued work on estate planning and service provision through routine data collection.

Continuous Improvement

- Development of draft Care Quality Standards for use in the third round of the Continuous Quality Improvement Framework (CQIF) Reviews.
- On behalf of Scottish Government, we successfully completed a mixed methods review of external scrutiny and assurance arrangements for mental health services in Scotland.
- Completion of the annual Forensic Network Census across all sites in Scotland.

- Launch of new website and branding to improve corporate identity and communication with stakeholders.
- Delivery of several national conferences (e.g. Lead Nurse Forum, Research Conference & first annual Forensic AHP conference)

Education and Training

- Twelve short professional courses delivered covering a range of topics including risk assessment and management and Working with Personality Disorder or Perpetrators of Stalking.
- Held 8 Clinical Fora events reaching over 1220 delegates on a range of topics including Risk of Sexual Harm, Intellectual Disability, Risk Assessment and Gender Identity.
- Conducted an updated Training Needs Analysis to inform strategic development of the SoFMH going forward and to ensure training needs of practitioners are accurately captured.
- Review of Approved Medical Practitioner (AMP) Materials for NHS Education Scotland.
- Delivered a full suite of Academic courses, across several SQCF levels, including the MSc Forensic Mental Health delivered with University of the West of Scotland (UWS).

What We Do

Forensic Network

The Forensic Network was established in September 2003 following a review of The State Hospitals Board for Scotland. Detailed in the report '*The Right Place: The Right Time: Improving the patient journey for those who need secure mental healthcare*' (Scottish Executive Health Department, 2002). Scottish Ministers requested the development of a Network to bring a pan-Scotland approach to the planning of services and patient pathways, and to address fragmentation across the Forensic Mental Health Estate (Gordon, 2003; Scottish Parliament, 2003).

The predominate focus of the Forensic Network's attention since its development has been on current challenges:

- the configuration of the forensic estate
- defining levels of security
- admission and referral criteria

Development of services for:

- adolescent patients
- intellectual disability patients
- women patients
- mental health services for patients

Quality Improvements across the forensic estate:

- management of personality disorder
- resolving clinical conflicts
- establishing processes for risk assessment and risk management

The Forensic Network has worked closely with regional and government colleagues to develop national policy on the configuration of services and the assessment and management of Restricted Patients.

The Forensic Network seeks to address fragmentation across forensic mental health services and to standardise and improve care for Mentally Disordered Offenders in Scotland.





School of Forensic Mental Health

The SoFMH was established in 2007 under the direction of the Forensic Network. This is a virtual school, offering teaching, training and research assistance to all professional groups and associated agencies involved in the assessment and care of individuals with a mental disorder who come into contact with forensic services.

The model involves expert clinicians, active in the forensic field developing and delivering short courses and the creation of formal qualifications in collaboration with higher and further educational establishments. Included is the development and delivery of the “*New to Forensic*” Programme suite (N2F).

The SoFMH has a strong research focus and supports the dissemination and commissioning of research to establish an evidence base for future service development.

Aims:

To improve the quality of response, care, treatment and outcomes for people with a mental disorder who come into contact with, or whose behaviour puts them at risk of contact with, the criminal justice system, in ways that are non-discriminatory, promote equality and respect diversity

Offer multi-level and progressive provision of learning across the college and university interface

Improve public safety through enhanced risk assessment and risk management

Enhance clinical practice through the development and promotion of findings from large scale research projects

Promote high quality mental health care delivered on a multi-disciplinary and multi-agency basis

Governance

The aims of the Forensic Network are achieved through the Forensic Network Advisory Board, a national stakeholder oversight group. At an operational level, the Inter-Regional Group (IRG) drives forward progress through the commissioning of short-life working groups which are allocated responsibility for topic-specific or geographic-specific projects and provide direction where national guidance is required. The Forensic Network also takes guidance and direction from our professional groups and our Clinical Leads.



Since the Network's inception there has been a strong commitment to a multi-agency approach, which has facilitated information-sharing and supported the development of effective working relationships with our partners in the third and independent sector and regional associates across the estate. These relationships have supported continuous improvement in the planning of services to improve the patient journey across forensic mental health services.

The School Governance Committee (meets bi-annually) and an operational team reports to this Committee (meets bi-monthly). To date, the SoFMH has responded to commissions from the Scottish Government, National Education Scotland, Police Scotland, Risk Management Authority Scotland, Scottish Social Services Council, forensic services and Local Authorities across the UK.

The Network is funded by an allocation from Scottish Government to cover staff costs and non-pay expenditure. Quarterly meetings are held with Scottish Government in order to review and discuss progress against our agreed objectives.

Forensic Network Operations

Performance against our Workplan

As a National Managed Care Network, we set annual objectives and work towards an agreed set of priorities, consistent with those outlined in the Scottish Government Mental Health Strategy 2017- 2027¹. Across 2022/23 the Network continued to make progress in a wide range of areas relevant to forensic mental health services and criminal justice under each of the following identified priorities:



Remobilisation, Recovery and Transition of Forensic Mental Health Services following COVID-19

Following the publication of our [‘Forensic Mental Health Services’ Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic’](#) report in 2021, we have continued to liaise with Scottish Government in order to advance the recommendations contained within. This collaboration led to a revision of Virtual Familiarisation Guidance and agreement that services should be supported to develop pre-transfer virtual tours and information packs.

We also continued to act as a central liaison between low secure forensic mental health services and Scottish Government, ensuring timely flow of communication and resolution of any identified issues in order to support services during the recovery period across 22/23.

¹ Scottish Government. [Mental Health Strategy: 2017 – 2027](#)

Service Development and Delivery - Supporting and treating people in the right place at the right time

2.1 National SOLs/Prevent Service Proposal

The Network, through leadership from our Clinical Lead for Serious and Violent Offenders, have been working with Police Scotland and criminal justice colleagues to develop a proposal for a National Serious Offender Liaison Service (SOLs). In 2022, the proposal was agreed by Scottish Government and funding secured for the next three years. Discussions are now underway regarding implementation of the service, which the Forensic Network will play a role in supporting.

2.2 Psychological Therapies SLWG

This short-life working group, started in October 2021, sought to review the 'Forensic Matrix' and consider the way forward in relation to the delivery of psychological therapies within forensic mental health services in Scotland. The work of the group concluded in April 2022 with the [final report](#) being published in May 2022.

The report highlighted a number of barriers to the successful implementation of the Forensic Matrix in recent years and proposed a number of ways to overcome these. In total, the report contained four recommendations, which would ensure that psychological therapies would continue to be delivered as effectively as possible within forensic services. It is anticipated that these will continue to be implemented over the next 12 months with support from colleagues in the NHS Heads of Forensic Psychological Services group.

2.3 Forensic Mental Health Services for Women

As part of our ongoing work to implement the recommendations from our 2019 Women's Report, we have continued to facilitate our short-life working group on forensic services for women in Scotland on a bi-monthly basis. We have sought to engage with colleagues from National Planning to identify ways in which to drive forward the development of services in medium and low secure care and hope to continue to progress this work over the coming year.

At the request of The State Hospital, we also completed a Clinical Infrastructure Assessment to explore and outline the clinical infrastructure necessary to support the establishment of an interim high secure service within the site. The findings of this assessment underscored the importance of incorporating relational and trauma-informed principles into any future service development in order to ensure the compassionate care and treatment of women in a high secure setting.

2.4 Medication to Reduce Sex Drive: Guidance on referral, assessment and treatment

In recognition of advances in pharmacological treatment, our guidance on the use of [Medication to Reduce Sex Drive](#) was comprehensively reviewed and updated by colleagues across the Network in December 2022. This guidance is designed to help agencies who work with men convicted of a sexual offence to decide who may benefit from referral for medication assessment. Information on assessment, prescribing and follow up is also included and is aimed mainly at clinicians who receive referrals.

2.5 Understanding the Mental Health Needs of Scotland's Prison Population

During 2022, the Network contributed to research carried out by the University of Edinburgh into a needs assessment of the mental health of people in prison. A [comprehensive report](#) was published in September 2022, highlighting that current mental health service provision does not adequately address the high levels of need

within Scotland's prison population. The report concluded with six major recommendations which, if enacted, would lead to the high-level and strategic change required to overcome many of the challenges identified. As a Network, we are keen to support our partner agencies to implement changes given the direct relevance for patients and staff working in forensic mental health services.

2.6 Response to National Consultations

As a national Network, we aim to keep stakeholders well-informed about opportunities to provide input and offer responses to National Consultations. This ensures that those working in forensic mental health services have the opportunity to consider plans or ideas and to share experiences and knowledge to help inform decision-makers.

Over the past 12 months, the Network co-ordinated formal responses to the following consultations:

- Scottish Mental Health Law Review
- Scottish Mental Health Law Review: Additional Proposals (Forensic)
- Draft Mental Wellbeing Strategy – Scottish Government
- Mental Health Regulations and the National Secure Adolescent Inpatient Service (NSAIS)

Published copies of our responses are stored on our website, where available.

2.7 Implementation of Recommendations from the Independent Review into the Delivery of Forensic Mental Health Services

The Scottish Government Planning and Collaboration short-life working group concluded their Options Appraisal exercise in Summer 2022, with a final meeting of the group being held in January 2023. A report setting out the results of the appraisal exercise is due to be published, alongside a more detailed report setting out progress with implementation of the Barron recommendations and insights into the planned programme of work over the next year.

The Network continued to provide advice, input and support to Scottish Government through participation in the short-life working group and have ensured colleagues across the estate are provided with regular updates on progress in this area. We remain eager to support Scottish Government to progress with the implementation of recommendations from the review and to ensure that appropriate governance arrangements for forensic mental health services are established.

Improving Working Practices and Partnerships

3.1 Forensic Managed Care Network (FMCN) Northern Ireland

The Forensic Managed Care Network (FMCN) Northern Ireland was established in 2019 and seeks to positively shape future service development by informing commissioners of priority areas of need and sharing research to make evidence-based service improvements across the region. We have worked in partnership with the FMCN to share learning, best practice and our experience of developing forensic mental health services across large geographical areas. Over the past 12 months, we have also supported the re-development of educational programmes through our School of Forensic Mental Health (SoFMH).

3.2 Multi-agency Collaboration

Enhancing collaboration among key stakeholders, including the National Health Service (NHS), Scottish Prison Service (SPS), Local Authorities, and third sector organisations is of paramount importance to achieve comprehensive and effective outcomes. Over the past 12 months, efforts have been made to strengthen and optimise our relationships with partners in order to improve joint working and collaboration for delivery of a more

consistent forensic mental health estate. We have continued to ensure a broad range of representation on our Advisory Board, including representation from Mental Welfare Commission, Scottish Prison Service and third sector agencies. We have also sought to work collaboratively with other National Scottish Health in Custody (SHiC) Networks focusing on police and prison care workstreams. By bringing together this collective expertise, we have sought to bridge gaps in knowledge, and promote a holistic approach to addressing the challenges within forensic mental health.

All of our short-life working groups have included representation from a broad range of relevant agencies and partners in order to maximise opportunities for partnership and collaboration, enriching the exchange of ideas, and enhancing the potential for impactful outcomes.

3.3 Supporting Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)

Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) play a vital role in ensuring effective risk management and public safety by co-ordinating the efforts of various agencies. As a Network, we work to contribute at a national level to the strategy, policy and operational implementation of MAPPA. We have continued to host a Health MAPPA Forum on a bi-annual basis in order to support health liaison staff across NHS Boards. Through our Clinical Lead for Serious and Violent Offenders we have also identified and escalated issues relating to information sharing across Health Board areas, Local Authorities and Police Scotland.

Continuous Quality Improvement

4.1 Continuous Quality Improvement Framework (CQIF) Reviews

The CQIF reviews, which were developed in conjunction with Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS), provide an opportunity for consistent benchmarking and auditing across the forensic mental health estate. The aim is to use a multi-disciplinary approach to share good practice and support learning across the Forensic Network, through a culture of openness and facilitated enquiry to identify any potential gaps in practice and support services to work to continually improve their delivery of care.

Our third cycle of reviews, due to commence in 2020, were unfortunately delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, we are pleased to report that work has begun to prepare for this next cycle with the development of a new set of nationally agreed standards for quality improvement across forensic services. Over the next 12 months, we will engage in extensive consultation with services across the estate to establish a visit schedule and progress with the next cycle of reviews where possible.

4.2 Scrutiny and Assurance Arrangements





In Autumn 2022, Scottish Government commissioned the Network/SoFMH to undertake a mixed methods review of external scrutiny and assurance arrangements for mental health services in Scotland, to inform their considerations on how to improve and strengthen these. A full review was undertaken, with significant involvement from scrutiny agencies and key stakeholders and the final report was submitted to Scottish Government for consideration in early 2023. We are hopeful that this will be available for publication in the coming months.

4.3 Data Collection

We recognize that data plays a pivotal role in driving forward continuous improvement and we support a range of data collation processes in order to monitor bed capacity and inform decision-making on transfers to forensic mental health services.

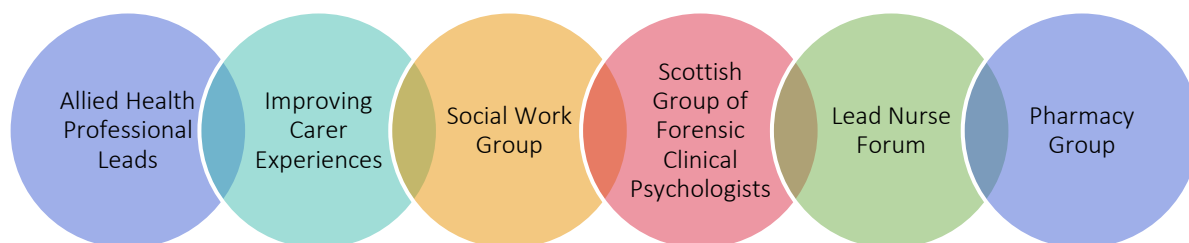
We successfully completed our Annual Forensic Inpatient Census for 2022, and continue to undertake work to develop a 'live' national research database for use across forensic inpatient services.

Table 1: Overview of key findings from 2022 Inpatient Census

| 504 Forensic Patients | |
|---|--|
|  | Sex <u>Female</u> : 38 (7.6%) <u>Male</u> : 466 (92.4%) |
|  | Age Mean: 42.9 Yrs Range: 17-84 Yrs |
|  | Diagnostic Category Intellectual Disability 69 (13.7%) Mental Illness 421 (83.5%) Personality Disorder 14 (2.8%) |
|  | Mean Length of Stay 1656 Days (4.5 Years) |

Professional Groups

The Forensic Network provides support for several professional groups, offering colleagues opportunities to collaborate on discipline-specific challenges. The Chairs of these professional groups actively participate in the Forensic Network Advisory Board, establishing strong communication links to ongoing work streams. This ensures effective coordination and facilitates the exchange of valuable insights and information among the various groups.



The Network maintain close links with the Scottish Royal College of Psychiatrists Forensic Faculty and does not host a separate psychiatry professional group.

Across 2022/23, the Forensic Network Office supported 20 professional group meetings. Each group continued their busy programme of work leading to the following developments and key achievements:

- Publication of the AHP Disclosure Guidance, in collaboration with Scottish Government.
- First Annual 'Forensic Allied Health Professionals (AHP) Conference' held in June 2022.
- Continued completion and sharing of good practice from Prescribing Observatory for Mental Health UK Benchmarking Projects within Pharmacy departments in forensic services.
- Pharmacy colleagues supported revision of the '*Medication to reduce sex drive: Guidance on referral, assessment and treatment*' document, published in early 2023.
- The Lead Nurse Forum hosted a successful Annual Conference (October 2022) and continue to support peer supervision opportunities across the forensic nursing estate.
- The Carer Co-ordinator group reviewed their Terms of Reference and were renamed the 'Improving Carer Experience' Group to more accurately reflect their role and remit.

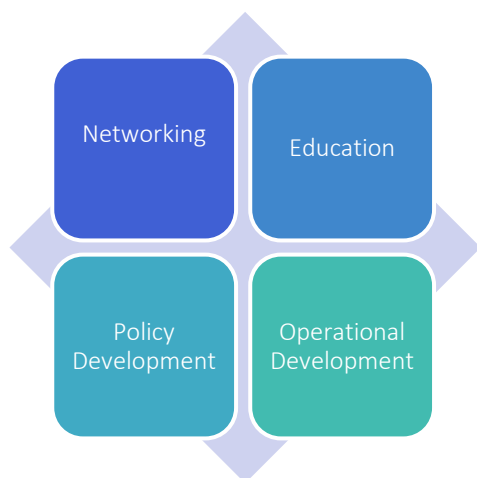
We maintain a proactive approach of seeking advice and input from our professional groups when preparing responses to National Consultations. This practice ensures that we incorporate a multi-disciplinary perspective, considering a wide range of insights and expertise in our responses. By involving various stakeholders, we can provide comprehensive and well-informed feedback on issues such as the Scottish Mental Health Law Review, The Mental Health and Well-being Strategy and Forensic Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services for Scotland.

Clinical Fora

Over the course of 2022/23, the Network has continued to host Clinical Fora via webinar format on Microsoft Teams. As a result, we have been able to maintain a series of events that facilitate networking, education, and operational development across the Network and reached **over 1220 delegates!**

Fora continued to be well supported and valued by colleagues across the Network. Due to the virtual delivery format, many clinical fora have continued to welcome delegates from across Scotland and further afield. Themes for clinical fora are sought from delegates attending events and these are reflected in the development of future programmes and events, ensuring that topics are relevant, current and desirable.

The Network has a robust feedback system in place to ensure that events are of high quality and meet the demands and requirements of attendees. During this period, 99% of delegates rated the webinar sessions overall as either excellent or good and 91% reported that the topics covered were relevant to their current practice.



➔ **Risk of Sexual Harm**
Joint with NOTA Scotland

➔ **MAPPA**

➔ **Risk**

➔ **Addictions**

➔ **Victims & Trauma**

➔ **Intellectual Disabilities**

➔ **Personality & Problem Behaviour**

➔ **Women**

Examples of topics presented at Clinical Forum events in 22/23:

- Acceptance & Commitment Therapy (ACT): Use with sexually harmful behavior
- 'You, Me, Together' Programme
- Gender Identity and how this may impact on Risk Assessment and Management
- Working with Minor Attracted People
- Tackling Technology Assisted Harmful Sexual Behaviour in Schools
- Impact on Staff of Trauma-Informed Working in Forensic Settings and Beyond

SoFMH Operations

The SoFMH offers teaching and training to all professional groups and agencies involved in the assessment and care of individuals with a mental disorder, who come into contact with forensic services. Prior to the introduction of the SoFMH there were no bespoke training programmes for forensic practitioners. However, there is now a wealth of options at all educational levels.

The SoFMH has become an invaluable resource, providing forensic training and cost-effective solutions to teaching across Scotland. It is the primary educator in the forensic field in Scotland and supports the promotion of research and development of an evidence base for practice, hosting an annual research conference, which showcases achievements from across the forensic mental health estate.



3 Academic Courses

MSc Forensic Mental Health, Forensic Mental Health Module and Graduate Certificate in Personality Disorder

25 Professional Short Courses
3 Flagship 'New to Forensic' (N2F) Programmes



Annual Forensic Network Research Special Interest Group Conference

International Engagement through the Global Citizenship Programme and International Association of Forensic Mental Health Services (IAFMHS)



Over the past 12 months we have continued to work with our partners in NHS Education Scotland (NES) to contribute to the continuous professional development of colleagues across the forensic estate. This year, the SoFMH conducted a review of materials for the Approved Medical Practitioner course, which has recently been updated. We also continued to jointly deliver Low Intensity Practitioner Training to support the implementation and delivery of low intensity therapies across the estate.

Professional Short Courses

The SoFMH remains committed to addressing the training needs of forensic practitioners and partner agencies. As a result, we have developed a comprehensive range of courses and training events tailored to meet these specific requirements. We have successfully generated a strong interest in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) amongst forensic practitioners in Scotland and have actively supported opportunities for knowledge enhancement and skill acquisition.

During 2022/23, twelve short courses took place, supporting training for 175 delegates from a wide range of disciplines and sectors. Courses included:

- Historical, Clinical and Risk Management (HCR-20) v3
- International Personality Disorder Examination (IPDE)
- Risk of Sexual Violence Protocol (RSVP)
- Reflective Practice Group Training
- Working with Personality Disorder
- Positive and Negative Syndrome Scales (PANSS)
- Mentalisation Based Therapy (MBT) Skills
- Working with Perpetrators of Stalking
- Forensic Aspects of Autism Spectrum Conditions
- Ageing and Dementia in Forensic Populations

Training Needs Analysis

We conducted a comprehensive Training Needs Analysis (TNA) to explore the needs of practitioners and services. The TNA focused on identifying the academic and short professional courses that practitioners would like to see offered by the SoFMH. Additionally, it provided an opportunity for participants to share their insights on knowledge or skill gaps they would like to see addressed.

The responses from the TNA highlighted a diverse range of training needs across all SCQF levels. Some of the requested topics included Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Acquired Brain Injury, Foetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder (FASD), and Trauma-Informed Approaches. A notable number of respondents expressed a keen interest in receiving more training on working with patients with Intellectual Disability.

The valuable insights gathered from this TNA will play a pivotal role in shaping the development of future short courses over the coming years. By aligning our offerings with the expressed needs of practitioners and services, we aim to enhance the relevance and effectiveness of our training programs.

Course Delivery and Evaluation

Ongoing course evaluation is crucial for identifying and driving continuous improvements each year. Over the year 2022/23, we received feedback from delegates who completed evaluation forms on the training they received. The results were overwhelmingly positive, with 94% of respondents rating the training overall as 'good' or 'excellent.' Furthermore, an impressive 98% of delegates reported that the training met their aims and objectives, and they found it relevant to their work. This exceptionally high and consistent feedback serves as strong evidence of the quality of our training courses and highlights the commitment of SoFMH to delivering valuable events.

We take pride in delivering our courses through a variety of methods, such as face-to-face sessions and online sessions via Microsoft Teams. These varied delivery methods ensure that our training is accessible and effective for participants across Scotland and the United Kingdom.



Picture 1: RSVP Training delivered on Microsoft Teams

Academic Courses

MSc Forensic Mental Health

The SoFMH, in conjunction with the University of the West of Scotland (UWS), continues to deliver the MSc Forensic Mental Health. This highly successful programme has passed through a stringent validation process and receives highly positive feedback from students. The course provides graduates with a unique opportunity to advance knowledge, enhance skills and gain a critical awareness of theoretical, methodological and practical issues in forensic mental health. The programme attracts professionals from a range of backgrounds including nursing, social care, psychology, occupational therapy and psychiatry.

Graduate Certificate in Personality Disorder

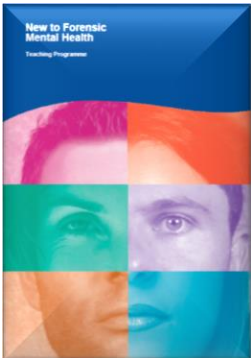
Another course delivered in conjunction with UWS, this course has now been established for over ten years and continues to be highly popular with practitioners across the Network. There are three modules in the course: theory of personality disorder, risk assessment and risk management, and interventions and strategies.

Forensic Mental Health Module

The SoFMH continues to deliver this introductory level course in collaboration with New College Lanarkshire (NCL) and serves as an articulation route to the MSc Forensic Mental Health for those looking to re-engage with education. Since 2020, the course has been delivered on a remote basis which has broadened access to practitioners who would have otherwise found it difficult to attend in-person on a weekly basis.

New to Forensic (N2F) Programme Suite

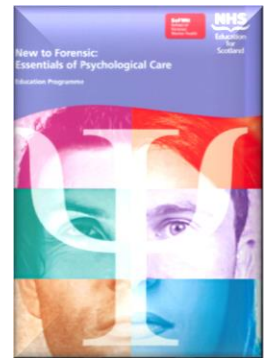
We have been delighted to continue to offer a range of programmes under our New to Forensic (N2F) suite across 2022 – 23. These programmes are introductory and suitable for a range of clinical and non-clinical staff working within forensic services in Scotland.



The original New to Forensic programme continues to cultivate interest and has become part of the induction training suite at many NHS Boards. To date, over 2000 practitioners have completed the programme across the NHS, independent sector, social work, voluntary sector, criminal justice services, Mental Health Tribunal for Scotland and Scottish Government. A further 131 are currently registered on the programme and due to complete within the next year, with half of all registrants coming from a mental health nursing background (50.6%).

This programme launched in 2015 to improve psychological literacy amongst those working in forensic mental health services and to demonstrate that providing psychological care is a shared responsibility.

Over the past 12 months there has been small, steady growth in the number of registrations for this programme, with 30 undertaking the programme at the current time. We have delivered Training for Trainers across several Health Boards this year in order to ensure adequate levels of mentors to support interest in the programme going forward.



The New to Forensic: Medicine course was launched in 2014 in collaboration with NHS Education for Scotland. It is designed to support medical and nursing staff working in police custody and assumes that many staff entering these services in Scotland will have little prior knowledge of this area of work. The programme is designed to ensure that participants are equipped with the basic competencies to practice safely in police custodial health care. Across 2022/23, work commenced on reviewing and updating the programme in conjunction with the National Police Care Network.

The suite of New to Forensic programmes continues attract international attention. Through the Global Citizenship programme, we have worked in collaboration with colleagues in Pakistan to develop a **New to Forensic 'Let's Work Together'** programme for use in mental health services in Sindh province. This is nearing completion, with plans for implementation due to be discussed over the next 12 months.

We will also be working with partners from the Forensic Managed Care Network Northern Ireland to update their New to Forensic programme.

Research

The SoFMH supports research across the forensic mental health estate through a variety of initiatives and these are coordinated through the **Forensic Network Research Special Interest Group (FNRSIG)**. The group meet on a quarterly basis and contribute towards a broad range of research activities, some of which are detailed below.

Annual Conference

The FNRSIG held their 9th National Research Conference on 4th November 2022. Whilst initially planned for a face-to-face event, the Conference was moved to an online event for the third year in a row in response to feedback from delegates of previous conferences. The conference provides a fantastic opportunity for focused discussion on forensic mental health research and is a particularly welcoming and supportive forum for first time presenters and students to disseminate their findings.

The FNRSIG 10th National Research Conference will take place on 2nd November 2023. An exciting list of keynote speakers have been identified and there will also be breakout sessions for presentations and a rapid poster presentation session. Planning for this event is underway and we look forward to sharing more details soon through our website and newsletters.

Census and Database

The Forensic Network annual census was conducted on 26th November 2022. The first census in 2013 was a full data set and for all subsequent years (2014 – 2022) the census has a reduced dataset which seeks to monitor the movement of patients through the forensic estate. There has been a strong investment by services and the Network in this as a tool for estate data analysis and we remain grateful to services for their engagement.

Requests to access the Census data have been received from a number of sources and work has been ongoing on the development of a national Forensic Network Inpatient Database. It is hoped that the database will provide services with useful information and provide a national longitudinal dataset to support future Scottish forensic mental health research.

Research Mapping

The annual research mapping exercise updates the development of the Forensic Network project list. Across 2022/23 this identified 41 planned, ongoing or recently completed research and evaluation studies within forensic mental health services and associated partner organisations.

Full listings are available on our website.

Communication & Engagement

Communications

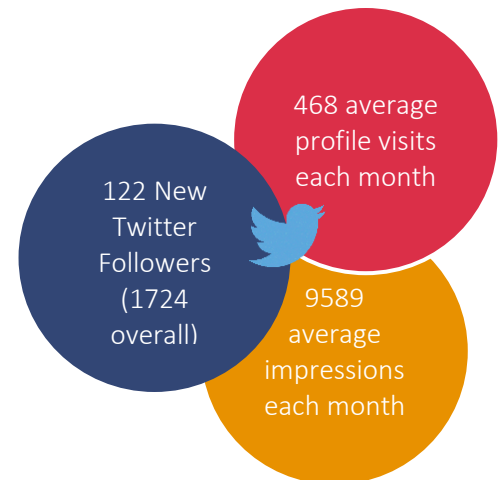
In April 2022, we launched our refreshed website (<https://forensicnetwork.scot.nhs.uk/>) and implemented our new branding across all of our workstreams.

We continued to use the following methods to ensure effective communication and sharing of information across the Forensic Network and SoFMH:

- Monthly event email detailing all upcoming training, events and conferences, alongside a quarterly newsletter to share examples of good practice on behalf of services across the estate.
- Regular sharing of key reports from partner agencies.
- Signposting colleagues to Consultations that are relevant to forensic mental health and justice services.
- Use of Twitter throughout the year to engage with those interested in forensic mental health!

Our mailing list continues to grow –
207 new subscribers
across 2022/23.

An increase of 10%!



International Engagement

As a network, we actively seek to engage with colleagues and partner agencies beyond Scotland, aiming to learn, improve, and share the valuable work taking place within our forensic services. This collaborative approach allows us to gain insights from different perspectives and exchange best practices, ultimately enhancing the quality of our services and contributing to advancements in forensic mental health on a broader scale.

Some of the ways in which we have been able to do this over the last 12 months include:

- Ongoing engagement with colleagues in Pakistan through the Global Citizenship Programme.
- Several presentations given at the International Association of Forensic Mental Health Services (IAFMHS) Annual Conference in Berlin in June 2022.
- A distribution list of subscribers from 12 countries worldwide.
- Website visitors from across Europe, North America, Australia and Asia.



Future Plans

Over the past year, the Forensic Network have worked with stakeholders and colleagues from across the estate and partner agencies to continue to improve the quality and delivery of care across Scotland. We have continued to support a variety of professional groups and to facilitate a number of Clinical Fora on a range of interesting and thought provoking topics to further the continued professional development of the workforce. We have also continued to progress with several short-life working groups which aim to support a national approach to services and provide problem resolution at a pan-Scotland level, improving patient experience and service delivery across the estate.

Across 2023/24, the Forensic Network will continue to progress our aims and to work in partnership to deliver and support national strategic service planning. We will seek to publish guidance on best practice, address wider issues surrounding patient pathways and support the delivery of local service development and implementation.

Over the coming year, our key objectives and areas of work include:

Clinical Development

- Implement recommendations on female pathways in forensic mental health in Scotland through the Women's Forensic Services Planning Group.
- Support the operationalisation of a National Serious Offender Liaison Service, in collaboration with NHS Lothian.
- Produce guidance to support the care and treatment of Transgender Patients in forensic mental health services.
- Launch revised guidance on Medication to Reduce Male Sex Drive.
- Monitor emerging issues in the provision of secure mental health services and suggest areas and actions for improvement.
- Work with Police Scotland, Scottish Government and other key partners to ensure consideration of Health Service needs and concerns in relation to proposed information sharing changes and use of ViSOR.
- Continue to support the implementation of recommendations from the Independent Review into the Delivery of Forensic Mental Health Services across 2023/24.

Continuous Improvement

- Commence the third cycle of Continuous Quality Improvement Framework (CQIF) Reviews in conjunction with colleagues and services across the forensic mental health estate.
- Continue to develop data collation processes to further deliver on the aims of the Forensic Network, particularly around auditing, benchmarking and Key Performance Indicators.
- Delivery of the Forensic Network Service Census database to enable local services to use and enable live reporting and analysis of the data.
- Review and refresh our Communications Strategy to ensure efficiency, effective engagement and to support collaboration across sectors.

Education & Research

- Support new multi-site and network-wide research opportunities through the Forensic Network Research Special Interest Group (FNRSIG).
- Delivery of the 10th Annual Research Conference in November 2023.
- Provide Clinical Fora on emerging topics to support organisational development, education and networking across 2023 – 2024.
- Publication of our 5-year Learning & Development Strategy for the SoFMH.
- Identify a programme of work to address the key areas of need identified in our 2022 Training Needs Analysis including training on: Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Acquired Brain Injury, Foetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder and Trauma-Informed Approaches.
- Development of a new Forensic Network Research Strategy (2024 – 2028)
- Explore opportunities to develop microcredentials in order to support practitioners to increase knowledge and expand career options whilst gaining academic credits.

In 2023/24, we will be commemorating the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Forensic Network. We have a wide range of activities planned to mark this milestone and to reflect on the accomplishments achieved over the past two decades, including a celebratory event in December 2023, which will bring together colleagues from across the forensic mental health sector. Please keep an eye on our website for updates!

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