

12 Maternity Collaborative

Moray Maternity Services

November 2025



Jane Gill

Programme Director Maternity Collaborative NHS Grampian

A Message from Jane Gill

Welcome to our latest update from the Moray Maternity Collaborative. I'm delighted to share more of the exciting progress happening across our teams especially some of the real progress we've made with recruitment over the last few months.

In September, NHS Grampian made a real impact at the Association of Anaesthetists' Annual Congress in Aberdeen, using virtual reality to showcase the beauty of Moray and the fantastic opportunities here at Dr Gray's. We saw strong interest in our ongoing recruitment campaign and you can read more about progress in this edition of the newsletter.

Next Phase of Moray Maternity Project Underway

The next vital stage in building our new maternity service in Moray - which will offer people the widest local choice and strongest specialist support ever available here - is now well underway.

Anaesthetists are a critical part of our service. They provide pain relief and emergency support in labour, and they underpin many other services across the hospital. Strengthening this team, at the level required, is one of the key steps in the work ahead.

That's why the latest phase of Moray's dedicated national recruitment campaign, Wish You Worked Here, is now focusing specifically on anaesthetists.

The response so far has been very encouraging.

In the first month, more than 20,000 visits were made to the campaign website, and we've had serious, constructive discussions with dozens of anaesthetists who are interested in what is being built here. Several are now exploring coming to Moray to meet the team and get a first-hand sense of the work, the culture, and our area.

We are using innovative, targeted routes to reach the right clinicians - from a presence at key professional events and location-based outreach around major hospital sites across the UK, to national advertising on Google, social media, podcasts, as well as advertising features in Time, Newsweek and other clinical professional outlets.

We're also thrilled to welcome Rae Flett, our new Project Manager. Rae brings great experience and enthusiasm, and she's already helping to drive improvements for families in Moray.

In this edition, you'll also meet Leah Hobson, a newly qualified midwife who's begun her career in the same hospital where she was born, a lovely full-circle moment for our team.

And we're proud to introduce Dr Raza Rathore, an experienced consultant anaesthetist whose global expertise is helping strengthen maternity services at Dr Gray's.

Finally, our community engagement work continues to flourish. Through local events and drop-ins, we've heard from hundreds of families - and your feedback is shaping our next steps.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support.



The aim is simple: to make sure people with the skills we need know what is happening here, and to encourage them to explore what Moray has to offer.

Jane Gill, Project Director, said: "Strengthening the anaesthetic team is absolutely essential to the whole project. That's why this is such an important new phase of our recruitment campaign.

"It's the same campaign that has already brought in around 80% of the staff required for the new maternity service. There's no doubt that some of the remaining posts will be the hardest to fill but I want to reassure people we are pulling out all the stops to do just that.

She added: "This is about building a maternity service fit for Moray's future with wider choice, closer to home, and with the best-resourced team the service has ever had, all by the end of next year. That is what we are working towards, and we are leaving no stone unturned to deliver it."



Rae Flett

Project Manager

We're thrilled to welcome our new Project Manager to the team!

A warm welcome to Rae Flett, our new Project Manager, to the team! Rae brings with her a wealth of NHS experience, having joined the Occupational Health Service team in NHS Grampian back in 2018 after an initial spell in the Oil and Gas industry.

Since then, she's worked across Primary Care Support, the Rostering team, and on a variety of projects within Acute Services and Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership. After completing a Master's in Project Management at the University of Aberdeen in 2023, Rae is excited to focus her skills on delivering meaningful improvements for families in Moray and the surrounding areas.

What really motivates Rae is being part of a multidisciplinary team, working side by side with clinicians to help shape the changes that move our programmes forward.

Outside of work, Rae is a self-confessed food lover who enjoys everything from cooking to eating and, of course, sharing good food with others. She also loves a bracing dip in the North Sea and is an enthusiastic open water swimmer, whatever the weather!

Please join us in giving Rae Flett a very warm welcome!



Staying Connected with Families Across Moray

By Hannah Ronald, Community Engagement Manager

It's been a busy and inspiring year connecting with families across Moray! Through outreach visits and drop-in sessions, we've had over 300 face-to-face chats with parents and community members - and we're listening closely to what you have to say.

This month, we enjoyed meeting families at baby groups in Portessie and Forres, and our Midwives & Co.



NHS Grampian Showcases Innovation at Anaesthetists' Congress

NHS Grampian made a great impression at the Association of Anaesthetists Annual Congress, held at P&J Live in Aberdeen from 17th to 19th September 2025.

Our team welcomed delegates from across the UK, highlighting exciting career and lifestyle opportunities in Elgin and Moray. Dozens of clinicians had detailed conversations with us to find out more about what Moray and Dr Gray's can offer and we are following those up to help persuade people to make the move here.

Using virtual reality headsets, visitors experienced an immersive tour of some of the region's stunning scenery and vibrant communities - sparking enthusiastic conversations about working with Dr Gray's anaesthetic and perioperative teams.

"The response was fantastic," said Consultant Anaesthetist Dr Andrej Andrasovsky. "The VR experience really added to bringing Moray to life and showed why this is such a great place to work and live."

With over 1,200 delegates in attendance, the event provided a valuable platform to connect with professionals and promote future recruitment and collaboration opportunities across our anaesthetic services.

drop-in in Elgin was another big highlight. It was lovely to see so many new and expectant parents come along to chat, ask questions, and connect with our amazing local teams. Huge thanks to ToyToon Café for welcoming us and providing a fun space for little ones to play.

We're also continuing to work closely with the Moray & Banff Maternity Voices Partnership and other local groups to make sure your voices help shape our services.



Dr Raza Rathore
Consultant Anaesthetist

commandos to lead the team and rescue the patients out of difficult clinical situations. It was inspiring. I am very keen to pass on all the knowledge and skills I have gained over the years to young doctors and trainees."

Jane Raitt, Midwifery Professional Clinical Lead for the Moray Maternity Programme, who has also played a key role in the We Wish You Worked Here recruitment drive, said:

"We are so pleased to welcome Dr Rathore to the team and delighted to be attracting colleagues of such high calibre from around the world to Elgin. Consultant anaesthetists play an integral role in the development of our round-the-clock consultant-led service and Raza will help us to make that possible. The expertise he brings is second-to-none and will be hugely beneficial to the wider team."

To learn more about living and working in the North of Scotland, visit www.wishyouworkedhere.scot

Global Expertise Strengthens Maternity Services at Dr Gray's

As Dr Gray's Hospital in Elgin continues to expand its maternity services, the team has welcomed consultant anaesthetist Dr Raza Rathore to the fold.

Dr Rathore joins from a major tertiary care hospital in Qatar, where he was involved in setting up a new maternity service. He brings with him nearly four decades of experience, having also worked in Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Ireland and the UK.

Born and raised in a small town at the base of the Himalayas in Kashmir, Dr Rathore says making a home in the North of Scotland feels like a return to the landscapes of his youth.

"We were considering returning to Dublin but my three grown up children are all working or studying in Aberdeen and when we saw the North of Scotland we loved it. It has calm, peace, fresh air, highly rated universities and health care, and when I saw this role advertised it very closely matches my background in delivering high quality care to obstetric patients. I love travelling to this part of the world, with the wonder of nature and tranquillity.

"Everybody is so helpful here. There is great team spirit, and everyone is so passionate about delivering a safe maternity service. Making mothers' journeys safe throughout their stay in hospital is something I'm very passionate about too."

Dr Rathore specialises in obstetric anaesthesia, high risk obstetrics and critical care, cardio-obstetric anaesthesia, advanced techniques of labour analgesia, chronic pain management and clinical governance related to safe motherhood. He is also passionate about sharing his knowledge with the next generation.

"I remember in the initial stages of my career, when I was working in one of the major hospitals in Islamabad, considering whether I'd follow a career in medicine or cardiology, I saw anaesthetists coming in like medical



Rachael Shewan
Clinical Lead for
Maternity Triage

Welcome to the Team

We're delighted to welcome Rachael Shewan as our new Clinical Lead for the Maternity Triage Project.

Rachael qualified as a midwife in 2007 and has spent her entire career with NHS Grampian. She's worked across many areas of maternity care, including the Labour Ward, Midwife-Led Unit, Antenatal and Postnatal wards, and Triage and Induction of Labour Suite. Since 2018, she's been the Senior Charge Midwife for Triage and Induction of Labour, a role she's thoroughly enjoyed.

Rachael is passionate about improving care for women, babies, and families. She's focused on creating safe, compassionate, and responsive maternity services that meet people's needs and make a lasting difference. Working alongside the dedicated Moray Collaborative team, she's excited to shape the future of maternity triage systems across Grampian.

Her goal is simple - to ensure every woman and family receives the right care at the right time, with a seamless, supportive experience from first contact to going home.

Outside of work, Rachael loves dance music, especially a bit of 90's Clubland to sing and dance along to!

Maternity Triage – Improving Care in NHS Grampian

We're moving ahead with planning a new region-wide maternity triage model for both telephone and face to face triage that will make care faster to access, safer, and more consistent across Grampian. Following detailed reviews and staff engagement, we have identified the preferred models to take forward:

- Telephone Triage – one single point of access to a maternity 'helpline' for all of Grampian, which can effectively filter unscheduled calls to the appropriate contact point and can prioritise emergency/urgent calls.

- In person Triage – Implementation of the Birmingham Symptom-specific Obstetric Triage System (BSOTS), which is nationally recognised evidence informed model.

Work is already underway to identify an implementation team and prepare for these changes.

Our goal: Target Operating Model by December 2025, implementation planning in early 2026, and go-live by end of June 2026.

This is an exciting step forward, built on staff and service user feedback and focused on improving safety for women, babies, and staff alike.

Rachael Shewan, Clinical Lead for Maternity Triage

Full Circle: Midwife Returns to the Hospital Where She Was Born

A newly qualified midwife has come full circle - starting her career in the same hospital where she was born, alongside the very midwife who cared for her as a baby. Leah Hobson, 21, was born at Dr Gray's Hospital in Elgin in 2004. During her first weeks, she and her mum were visited at home by community midwife Carol Bennett - who still remembers baby Leah, thanks to a memorable naming delay.

"It was lovely, we were involved in trying to find a name for Leah and it took a few weeks," Carol, now 62, recalled. "We would come in with suggestions, we had a really nice relationship."

Leah's mum finally settled on a name after two months. "My mum got in a bit of trouble for it I think because she took so long to decide," Leah said. "I had a nickname, Pinkie... I think she picked well."

Carol added: "Everything was pretty straight-forward and standard, the one thing that sticks in your mind is there isn't a name for the baby yet... We were part of the Pinkie period."

Leah grew up in Elgin, attending Bishopmill Primary and Elgin Academy. Her interest in midwifery started early.

"I wanted to be a midwife roughly since I was nine, but properly since 11," she said. "My niece was born when I was nine, and a nephew born here when I was 11... it was just bizarre but amazing."

After studying midwifery at Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen, Leah returned to Dr Gray's in April to begin her career.

"I did mention on my first day I was born here," she said. "It was strange to think I was born here and I work here. It's all connecting a wee bit. It was good to start here, I was glad of it."

Carol and Leah crossed paths again years later during one of Leah's student placements.



"We live in a small community," said Carol. "We bump into our mums and babies often... I said 'oh you might end up coming to see us' - and she did."

Now colleagues, the pair often meet on the maternity ward. "It's absolutely lovely," Carol said.

Leah joins Dr Gray's during a period of growth for maternity services. After staffing shortages led to a downgrade in 2018, a major recruitment drive has helped rebuild the team. Earlier this year, planned Caesarean sections returned for the first time in nearly seven years, marking an important step toward restoring full maternity services in Moray.

For Leah, it's a dream come true - and a special homecoming.

Thank you for the feedback on the newsletters so far. We have reviewed all of the comments and hope to build some of the requests into this and future publications. Please keep that feedback coming.
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