

## News release

For immediate release, Tuesday 5 November

### NHS Tayside continues to face significant financial and operational challenges

**NHS Tayside has begun to show improvements in financial management and governance, but the board still faces substantial long-term financial and operational challenges.**

In a report to the Scottish Parliament, Auditor General for Scotland Caroline Gardner said NHS Tayside has been in an unsustainable financial position since 2013. The board will need continued financial assistance until 2021/22 to balance its budget.

There have been significant overspends in nursing and agency costs, prescriptions and referring patients out with Tayside, together with widespread concerns about the provision of mental health services.

Caroline Gardner said: "It is a positive forward step that NHS Tayside now has a transformation plan, but moving away from the current ways of working will be difficult without well-developed and detailed implementation plans. So far there is little evidence of the sustainable service redesign and transformation that is critical to reducing costs while maintaining or improving services.

"The future is challenging for NHS Tayside. Effective and stable leadership will be critical in bringing about long-term service transformation."

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#### Notes to editors

1. The Auditor General has prepared these reports on the 2018/19 accounts of NHS Tayside under Section 22 of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000. This allows the Auditor General to bring to the Parliament and the public's attention matters of public interest related to the financial statements of public bodies.
2. Section 22 reports are submitted to Scottish Ministers for laying in the Parliament along with the accounts of the relevant body. While there are statutory deadlines for these reports, the actual timing of publication is determined by when the report is laid in the Scottish Parliament by Scottish Ministers.
3. This is Auditor General's fifth consecutive report on NHS Tayside.
4. The independent audit opinion on the 2018/19 accounts is unqualified. This means that they show a true and fair picture, follow accounting standards and the income and expenditure for the year is lawful.

