



STAKEHOLDER BRIEFING

Date:	14 April 2026
To:	Moray Integration Joint Board Members, Health & Social Care Moray and NHS Grampian staff groups
From:	Dr Gray's Hospital Ward 4 Oversight Group
Subject:	Refurbishment and ligature reduction of adult mental health admission ward – Dr Gray's Hospital

A project to improve the safety and environment of the adult mental health admission ward at Dr Gray's Hospital in Elgin is progressing during the 2026/27 financial year.

Purpose of the project

Ward 4 at Dr Gray's is an 18-bed acute psychiatric admission ward for adults who require inpatient assessment, treatment and care during periods of significant mental ill health. The service is managed by Health & Social Care Moray (HSCM).

The refurbishment and ligature reduction programme will upgrade the ward environment and support the delivery of safe, effective and high-quality care, support and treatment.

The project will:

- Provide and maintain a safe environment for patients, visitors and staff
- Enhance privacy and dignity for people receiving care
- Provide modern facilities that meet the needs of patients and staff
- Create a therapeutic environment that supports recovery and wellbeing

The planned improvements will reflect best practice in the design of inpatient mental health settings.

Project approval and governance

Improvement work to Ward 4 has been a longstanding priority for HSCM and NHS Grampian.

Following discussions between the HSCM Senior Management Team and the NHS Grampian Chief Executive Team (CET) in late 2025, an options appraisal on the future of Ward 4 was presented to CET on 13 January 2026. The recommended option to refurbish and ligature reduce Ward 4 was endorsed.

A project team was established to develop a business case. This was approved in principle by the NHS Grampian Asset Management Group on 25 February 2026, pending

procurement of a contractor to enable the overall programme and project costs to be finalised.

An external professional design team has been appointed and has started working with local stakeholders, including staff and service representatives, to develop detailed specifications.

The project team meets weekly to progress the programme and will provide regular updates throughout the project stages.

Impact on the inpatient service

Care, support and treatment will continue to be delivered safely throughout the project.

Detailed plans are being developed to minimise disruption and may include phased working and temporary changes to how the inpatient service operates. While the aim is to maintain provision within Ward 4 wherever possible, planning is still underway and all arrangements will be carefully managed to ensure patients continue to receive the care they need.

Existing safety measures and operational procedures remain in place to ensure identified risks, including ligature risks, continue to be actively managed.

Planning will also ensure disruption to other services on the Dr Gray's site is kept to a minimum, including mental health services delivered from Pluscarden Clinic.

Expected benefits

Once completed, the refurbished and ligature-reduced ward will provide a modern, safer and more therapeutic inpatient environment for people receiving mental health care.

The improvements will support recovery and wellbeing, enhance privacy and dignity, and provide a better environment for patients, visitors and staff. The refurbishment will also support staff to deliver high-quality care in a setting that better meets the needs of the people experiencing challenges to their mental health.

Timeline

The programme is progressing during the 2026/27 financial year. A detailed timetable for the refurbishment will be confirmed as part of the design and planning stages.

Further information

For further information, please contact:

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