

Focus on Frailty programme update June 2026

Focus on Frailty programme 2025/26

The programme for 2025-26 focused on:

- setting up hospital front door frailty pathways, and
- improving integrated care coordination in primary, community and acute care.
- The programme supported the ambition of the [NHS Scotland Operational Improvement Plan \(2025\)](#) for every emergency department in Scotland to provide access to specialised staff in frailty teams, and implementation of the [Ageing and Frailty standards \(2024\)](#).
- 11 NHS board and health and social care partnership areas in Scotland took part in our programme between April 2025 and March 2026.

Programme delivery

Teams were supported to identify, test and spread evidence-based change ideas through:

- in-person learning sessions and virtual events which enabled networking and shared learning
- evidence-based tools and resources to support decision-making
- site visits and quality improvement coaching calls which provided direct support and problem solving, and
- a learning system with over 2,400 members sharing learning nationally.

The next phase of the Focus on Frailty programme draws on learning from 2025/26.

Impact of the programme 2025/26

By March 2026:



100% of acute hospitals that accept emergency admissions and participated in the programme (15/15) provided access to specialist staff in frailty teams.



83% of health and social care partnership community services (5/6) had evidence that a process was in place for early frailty identification.

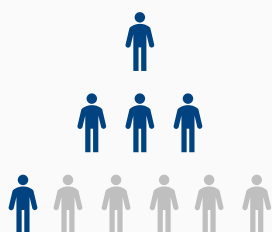


Between 2022 and 2026 mean geriatric length of stay in Scotland reduced by **8%** (1.4 days). Our programme is one of several national initiatives aiming to improve care for older people.

Hear from the teams who participated in the programme in this [video](#).

Examples of impact by teams

Frailty screening



52% of people over 65 on the district nurse caseload screened for frailty, Richmond and Kinneil Practice, Falkirk HSCP. (November 2025-March 2026)

Admission avoidance



1,100 estimated bed days released and **£300,000** estimated costs avoided through emergency department allied health professional assessment to enable discharge with appropriate care delivered, Raigmore Hospital, NHS Highland. (five-week pilot March-April 2025)

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Focus on Frailty programme 2026/27

We support NHS boards and HSCPs to **improve access to and experience of person led and coordinated health and social care for older people who are living with frailty.**

The programme focuses on improving:

- proactive community services to support people to live well in the community and avoid hospital admissions.
- acute hospital frailty services.
- integration and pathways between community and hospital.

This supports the implementation of the [Ageing and Frailty Standards \(2024\)](#).

What we do

We support participating teams to identify, test and spread evidence-based change ideas by:

- Providing one-to-one quality improvement coaching.
- Providing places at two in person learning sessions.
- Site visits from the Healthcare Improvement Scotland team.
- Providing access to clinical expertise on frailty.
- Advising on data and measurement, strategic planning and engaging people and families in improvement.
- Sharing a change package and measurement framework.
- Publishing tools and resources based on the best available evidence.
- Deliver a learning system that that enables people working in frailty services to share and learn.

12 teams are participating in the programme

- NHS Ayrshire & Arran
- East Ayrshire HSCP
- NHS Forth Valley, Falkirk HSCP, Clackmannanshire and Stirling HSCP
- NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, South Sector Older People's Services
- NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde long term conditions team
- NHS Highland
- NHS Lanarkshire
- NHS Lothian, Royal Infirmary Edinburgh
- Orkney HSCP and Age Scotland Orkney
- Renfrewshire HSCP and Royal Alexandra Hospital
- NHS Shetland and Shetland HSCP
- NHS Western Isles and Western Isles HSCP

Recently completed milestones

Between April 2026 and June 2026 we:

- Published [interviews](#) from participants from the Focus on Frailty programme for 2025-26 which describe the impact the programme has had on services.
- Held an online welcome session to mark the commencement of the Focus on Frailty programme for 2026-27.
- Held a project surgery on understanding your system.
- Held a data drop-in session with representation from Public Health Scotland's Local Intelligence Support Team and Discovery teams.

Spotlight on

National learning event: representatives from all 12 teams came together to develop and reflect on their aim for improvement and plan tests of change. They heard from Professor Jugdeep Dhesi, President of the British Geriatrics Society. Professor Dhesi delivered an engaging presentation titled "Why we need change and how can we deliver it". The teams also had an introduction to the Scottish Approach to Change. 93% of respondents rated the learning session extremely or very useful.

"The opportunity to network with other services has been so valuable. They have helped spark ideas and question our thoughts so that we can develop our change ideas."

