

CASE STUDY

NHS Highland –
Understanding climate risks
to ensure the effective delivery
of health services throughout
the Highlands.

FOCUS AREA

Our climate is changing, and this will impact on how we deliver services. All health sector organisations have a vital role to play in adapting our buildings and the way we operate to address the challenges arising from climate change.



ADAPTATION

For more information contact
nss.sustainabilityscotland@nhs.net



BACKGROUND AND AIMS

To understand and address the risks arising from climate change, NHS Highland have participated in the development and piloting of a climate change risk assessment toolkit.

The work has focused on the 230 buildings within NHS Highland's estate, spread across a large remote and rural area, ensuring that NHS Highland are able to provide high quality health services to the diverse communities as the effects of climate change are realised. This toolkit is now being rolled out to other NHS Boards across Scotland.



ACTIONS

The toolkit was created in collaboration with Health Facilities Scotland and enabled the Board to consider flood risk and other high-level risk assessments over a 100 year timeframe. This provided a comprehensive regional assessment of current and future climate risk to health care facilities.

The work included a number of internal workshops with a range of facilities staff who had not previously been engaged on this long-term issue, to understand how climate change impacts and risks could impact on the delivery of healthcare services across their Estate.

This resulted in a thorough review of buildings and highlighted challenges around issues such as: the impact on buildings of more extreme weather (e.g. hotter and wetter summers), flood risks, water shortages, impacts on IT and emergency systems, communications systems, increased demand on services due to extreme hot or cold weather.



NHS Scotland
Climate Change Risk Assessment & Adaptation Planning Tool
Guidance

The following worksheets will allow you to assess the climate change risks to your health care assets and to identify adaptation measures to help manage these risks. Impacts on these assets will have implications for service delivery and this should also be considered when using the tool.
Note: Many of the cells within this workbook are locked for editing and are automatically populated.

Dashboard

When viewing the Dashboard you will need to select your board from the drop down menu as marked in the image, this ensures the correct filters are applied and new data is associated with the correct board.

If you wish to view a summary of both existing and future risk please click here.

If you wish to view and update the adaptation plan for any identified risk then please click here.

To input new data into the tool please click here.

To update existing information within the database please click here.

To remove existing information from the database please click here.

The login command is for database management purposes, it will unlock the database for manual edits, in order to do this the user will require a password.

NOTE: The password should not become openly available as it leaves the workbook in a state which could easily be broken.

NHS Scotland
Climate Change Risk Assessment & Adaptation Planning Tool

Please select your Board:
NHS 24

View Risk Summary

View Adaptation Plan

Management Tools:

Generate New Record

Update Record

Remove Record

Database Management:

Login

Generate New Record

KEY IMPACTS

- NHS Highland now have a strong evidence base and understand the climate risks relating to their buildings from across their estate: the current and potential impacts of climate change have been “made real” for the Board
- The assessment has influenced thinking on the development of new buildings and hospitals in the planning and design stage, as well as the considering the resilience of current buildings
- It has directly engaged staff on sustainability (through workshops)
- The outputs have been taken on by the Business Continuity and Emergency Planning team within the board

LESSONS

- Consideration of adaptation supported the Board to think about medium to long term planning. This was in stark contrast to the typical 12-month maintenance cycle under which staff are used to operating. Using the tool got people to think differently and to think about long term challenges of climate change in their day to day jobs.
- Thinking about adaptation actively engaged a wider staff team (in particular estates team members) that had previously considered ‘green’ or ‘sustainability’ as uninteresting. Conducting this activity enabled these staff to see the relevance and responsibility of sustainability in relation to the assets that they looked after on a day to day basis.

The methodology for the toolkit was developed by national working group facilitated by Adaptation Scotland, which brought together NHS Highland, Health Facilities Scotland, Scottish Water, Aberdeenshire Council, Historic Environment Scotland and Scottish Natural Heritage.

