

NHS Ayrshire & Arran



Meeting:	Ayrshire and Arran NHS Board
Meeting date:	Monday 14 August 2023
Title:	NHS Ayrshire and Arran Corporate Parenting Strategic Promise 2021-30
Responsible Director:	Jennifer Wilson, Nurse Director
Report Author:	Laura Doherty, Public Health Project Manager, Infants Children and Young People Kathleen Winter, Child Health Commissioner Jayne Miller, NHS Ayrshire & Arran Corporate Parenting Task Force Chair Rosemary Robertson, Associate Nurse Director

1. Purpose

This is presented to the Board for:

- Decision

This paper relates to:

- NHS Board/Integration Joint Board Strategy or Direction

This aligns to the following NHSScotland quality ambition(s):

- Safe
- Effective
- Person Centred

2. Report summary

2.1 Situation

NHS Ayrshire & Arran (NHSAA) have a legal obligation to ensure we fulfil our corporate parenting duties, in the best interests of our Infants, Children and Young People (ICYP) who experience the care system. Duties must be carried out in partnership with our three co-terminus local authorities. We must also report collaboratively on our progress to uphold our duties, to the Scottish Government. Although strong links exist with each of the Corporate Parenting Groups in the three co-terminus local authorities, until recently there were no dedicated groups or structures to facilitate reflection, improvement action or reporting requirements in system areas more specific to health.

To meet these requirements, the NHSAA Corporate Parenting Promise sets out a cross-cutting strategy which will be progressed via 3 year action plans with specific measurable actions.

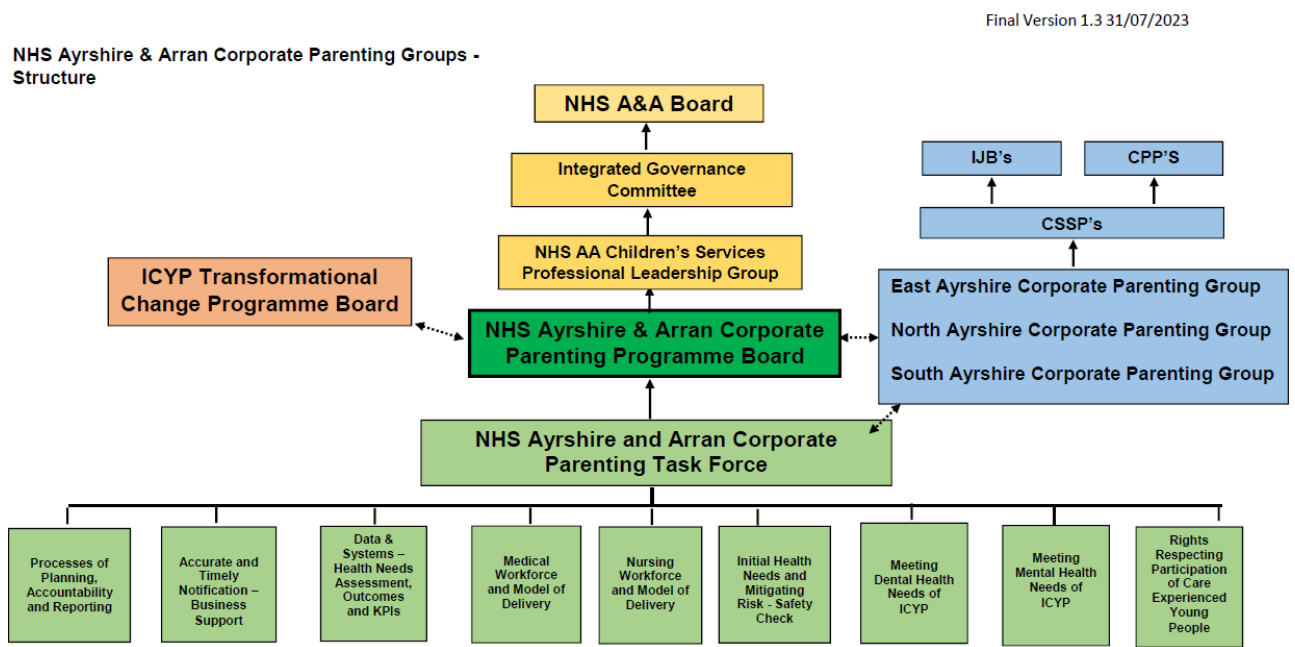
Now that robust Corporate Parenting governance and reporting structures have been established, and given the urgency and pace of change required in line with the National Promise and UNCRC implementation, it is proposed that we restate NHSAA’s commitment as corporate parents to infants, children and young people within our care via our NHSAA Corporate Parenting Promise. This will challenge us to look widely across all systems and directorates with a strong emphasis on continuing collaboration to improve the way whole systems work together, and to plan, deliver and report as a corporate family. This paper proposes that Our Promise (**Appendix 1**) is implemented as a formal cross-cutting strategy.

Board members are asked to support this approach and approve the NHSAA Corporate Parenting Promise as a formal strategy.

2.2 Background

The NHS Ayrshire and Arran Corporate Parenting Task Force (NHSAACTF) and NHS Corporate Parenting Strategic Programme Board (NHSCPPB) have been established to help NHSAA drive forward action required to meet our children’s needs and be the best corporate parents that we can be for them. These new groups are underpinned by a robust governance and reporting structure to provide updates and assurance to the board responsible director for Looked After Children and the NHS Board around corporate parenting activity and duties. (**Image 1**)

Image 1 – NHS AA Corporate Parenting Board Structure



Over the last 2 years, the Task Force and Programme Board have been meeting bi-monthly, to progress the development and implementation of the 2021-2024 action plan.

During the first year, a significant amount of scoping was undertaken to allow workstream leads to understand the systems which ICYP and their families may experience on their journey through care. The second year was used to translate learning into aspiration and action, around what collectively needed to be done to ensure that the Board could keep The Promise to our ICYP.

Until now the focus of the groups has been on the core clinical duties of NHSAA as a territorial health board in relation to corporate parenting. However; in order to fully meet our aspirations as a corporate parent, we must consider wider organisational responsibilities, across not only children's but adult's services and commit to a shared responsibility as parents across all directorates.

Previous Activity

Health Care Governance Committee (HCG) and NHS Board considered an initial paper for assurance titled **NHS Ayrshire and Arran Corporate Parenting Responsibilities, The Independent Care Review and The Promise** dated Monday 28 March 2022. The paper summarised the relevant legislation and related directives and policies concerned with Corporate Parenting. The Children and Young People Scotland Actⁱ, CEL16ⁱⁱ, The Independent Care Review and its output: The Promiseⁱⁱⁱ obligate NHSAA to ensure we are carrying out our duties as corporate parents, and part of being a good parent means we must reduce inequalities and improve health outcomes for our ICYP experiencing care.

A second paper entitled **Update on NHS Ayrshire and Arran Corporate Parenting Responsibilities and Actions** dated 9 January 2023 was presented to HCG following the first report by the National Promise Oversight Board^{iv}, a national board established by Scottish Government to hold corporate parents to account for the work required to ensure transformational change is achieved. It detailed a need for greater pace of change from corporate parents in order to keep The Promise by 2030. The paper provided an update to members on Task Force activity and progress being made toward fulfilling NHSAA Corporate Parenting Responsibilities as well as highlighting areas of risk.

Latest Update

Since the 9 January 2023 paper, Promise Oversight Board Report 2^v has been published. It details that Scotland we will not realistically meet the aims of national Promise plan 21 – 24 within the desired time frame. Contributory factors include: public funding cuts, the cost of living crisis, increasing proportions of families experiencing poverty, the housing crisis and the impact of Covid-19 recovery.

Although progress toward keeping The Promise is being made, there is a requirement for greater urgency. In order for Scotland to deliver the promise by 2030, there must be a step change in the pace and scale of improvements being made. Part of this requires organisations and services to look inward, take action and think creatively and differently, advocating for real change.

2.3 Assessment

As a corporate parent in health and a key member of our ICYP's corporate family, we can still keep our promise by 2030 but to do so we need to respond to the findings of Oversight Board Report 2. We must push harder and be more focussed. Appreciation has been expressed of the workforce and individuals who are playing their part to make sure the Promise is kept in an increasingly difficult context.

The NHS Board has a significant and key role to play in supporting and promoting the shared aims of corporate parents across our settings and services, and we can act now to make a real difference.

The National Oversight Board make specific mention of ensuring that we maintain focus on:

1. Ensuring governance locally which holds us all accountable for the roles we must play to achieve our goals for ICYP and their families
2. Cross sector, service and agency working and collaboration to address barriers
3. Developing and supporting the workforce and models of delivery
4. Making data more useful and reportable
5. Long distance placements
6. Understanding circumstances around early deaths in care experienced people

The first five of these points are areas which we are continuing to focus on via our Task Force action plan with wider consideration of risk being taken forward via the NHSAA Corporate Parenting Programme Board and the final area is being considered by our Pan-Ayrshire Child Death Overview Group which has strong links across Ayrshire and Arran Corporate parenting groups via the Infant Children and Young People Transformational Change Programme Board.

Next Steps

The actions which will continue to be progressed via the Task Force and respective workstream leads are of vital importance to meeting core clinical corporate parenting responsibilities. However, we know that at an organisational level being an excellent corporate parent means that we must think and act more widely, outside children's services and across directorates, at what is within the gift of NHSAA as a corporate parent.

NHSAA are in a strong position to keep our Promise as we have excellent relationships with our partners across Ayrshire and Arran, and are the only health board in Scotland which has developed a dedicated health specific corporate parenting group and structure to allow progression of health related work, which feeds into and back from those of our corporate family. This has been recognised as an example of best practice by Who Cares Scotland and featured in their newsletter^{vi} which is shared nationally.

Our Promise and Strategic Vision

The strategic group and Task Force link closely to the strategic vision of partner corporate parenting groups in our 3 co-terminus local authorities, to reduce duplication and maximise impact, whilst remaining in line with the areas outlined as priorities for change in the national Promise Plan^{vii}. Areas of health that ICYP told us is important to them in the local and national research, statutory duties and the priority areas within each of our partner corporate parenting plans and The Promise were cross referenced to allow NHSAA to develop a Strategic Document, in the form of our own Promise to our ICYP. Our high level areas of focus can be found detailed in the infographic below.

Figure 1, NHSAA Corporate Parenting Promise 2021-30 Vision and Focus



With Our Promise, we make explicit for the longer term the areas in which we can and will effect change that will be felt and experienced by our ICYP and their families.

Our Promise and Vision has been finalised and will help guide our actions as Corporate Parents until 2030, in line with the time frames of the national Promise.

Formalising and Embedding our Promise

To ensure the pace and scale of change is actioned and that we are held accountable, it is proposed that we embed this Promise formally with the agreement and support from our NHS Board. The work that underpins this will be progressed via shorter action plans with specific and measurable areas of focus.

Rights Respecting Participation

Upholding the rights of all children to have their views respected is of key importance in moving forward and improving health and social outcomes for ICYP who experience the care system. Listening to the health experiences of older care experienced young people and adults who may have their own children will also teach us a lot about what we need to do to keep Our Promise.

Each shorter term plan will be consulted upon with our ICYP as key collaborators as part of the journey toward true participation, and in line with ensuring the rights of ICYP are upheld under the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child¹ (UNCRC).

We have strong support for our efforts within health from participation leads from each local authority who have already established a variety of ways to work with our youngest citizens and include their voice and participation. East, North and South Ayrshire participation working group members are already progressing a child friendly version of our NHSAA Promise as part of their Task Force workstream priorities and have agreed to facilitate consultation on future action plans, in spaces which are preferred by our CYP, to ensure their views are at the centre of these.

Any action plan related to this organisational strategy will require adequate consultation, input and ownership by key stakeholders prior to implementation. It is proposed that the next action plan should begin in 2025 with a duration of three years. Wider actions will be added to the existing actions being progressed by the Task Force. Decision makers across directorates will be included as key partners to ensure the required breadth of consideration is achieved and that all NHS staff understand their role and what is within their gift as a corporate parent.

There is already a great deal of relevant partnership work which is being undertaken across the Board and directorates, which advocates for and aims to improve the experiences of ICYP. At the moment this is disconnected and would benefit from greater synergy under a formal strategy and established local and national reporting cycle.

2.3.1 Quality/patient care

The work of NHSAA Corporate parenting Groups over the past year has focussed primarily on improvement work required to ensure the core clinical duties of NHSAA as a territorial health board are met. This has mostly been in relation to directions of CEL16, risk mitigation, pathways and the health inequalities which our care experienced children still experience.

The NHSAA Taskforce have extensively researched each workstream area and recognise that being a good corporate parent requires a wider perspective, and consideration of the experiences and opportunities of care experienced people of all ages across a wide variety of circumstances.

¹ https://www.unicef.org.uk/rights-respecting-schools/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2017/01/uncrc_summary-1_1.pdf

Children receiving the care of corporate parents today will grow into the care experienced adults of tomorrow and corporate parents in health must recognise and support the individual journeys of those with care experience and families on the edges of experiencing care, across the entire life course.

A whole systems approach is required to Corporate Parenting, to build on and support the vision of Caring for Ayrshire, and the Corporate Parenting work established is an example of a whole systems approach bringing separate areas of work together for the first time. Agreeing and implementing a wider board corporate parenting strategy will positively impact the quality of care delivered by the board by formalising efforts across directorates. This will ensure action and accountability which will help address the impacts of early adversity across the life course for our care experienced population and mitigate the potential future impact on the health and social care system.

2.3.2 Workforce

Consideration of how to ensure that all relevant representatives and senior decision makers from across the organisation are involved in the consultation process with regard to future action planning is required.

Agreement of a strategy and Promise to our care experienced population would result in positive impact on our staff in that it would:

- Allow for consideration of participation in its widest sense, including recognition and celebration of care experience within our current workforce at a strategic level
- Allow for the connection, strengthening and further exploration of key areas looking at opportunities for work experience and employment of those with care experience in the health service, who can bring their own unique life experience to our organisation.

2.3.3 Financial

Development and implementation of the Strategy and associated action planning is expected to be undertaken within existing resource.

Any resource implications will be considered via the appropriate governance and management structures at the appropriate juncture.

2.3.4 Risk assessment/management

The NHSAA Corporate Parenting Programme Board has been set up with suitable standards and objectives, to address and mitigate risks identified as part of the corporate parenting work undertaken. Where corporate risk is identified this will be escalated and addressed via the appropriate governance routes which exist within the organisation.

If action is not taken at pace in relation to meeting our duties as corporate parents and Keeping our Promise, there will be a resulting impact on ICYP, their families, the organisation and the workforce.

2.3.5 Equality and diversity, including health inequalities

The risk of compounded inequality is one of the core reasons that a wider strategy for Corporate Parenting is being considered. Promise Oversight Board report 2 explicitly states that we must go further to counteract the impact of public funding cuts, the cost

of living crisis, an increase in families experiencing poverty, the housing crisis and the impact of Covid-19 recovery. Full account of socioeconomic disadvantage is and will continue to be taken as part of all work stream activity in line with the aim of the Fairer Scotland Duty.

A children's rights and wellbeing impact assessment has not been completed in relation to this paper as the paper does not relate to any proposed process change, however the NHSACPTF Project Manager and Participation Workstream lead will jointly support the undertaking of Equality Impact Assessments and Children's Rights Impact Assessments for relevant projects related to the strategy.

Our role as Corporate Parent should be viewed in the context of increasing the urgency toward the full incorporation of the UNCRC^{viii}. As it is anticipated the articles will become enshrined in law in 2023 there will be an increased focus and scrutiny across all public bodies to ensure children's rights are being upheld.

2.3.6 Other impacts

- **Best value**
A formal strategy which considers the life course and whole systems through a public health lens will support the aims and vision of Caring for Ayrshire.
- **Vision and Leadership**
The high level areas of focus detailed within the strategy allow for renewed and enhanced focus on areas which are important to ICYP and their families, our partners in the corporate family (as laid out in their respective strategies) and national strategic priorities which will facilitate the Promise being kept by 2030.
- **Effective Partnerships**
A formalised corporate strategy that reaches further than children's services and across directorates will provide an opportunity for cross cutting agendas to be considered. Focussing on the areas of change which can be progressed at pace by health as a corporate parent will allow for better and greater contribution to our partner's corporate parenting plans and actions.
- **Governance and accountability**
Establishment of a corporate strategy will allow for exploration and ensure accountability across the whole system for activity which will progress Corporate Parenting efforts and children's rights.
- **Use of resources**
The agreement of our Promise as an organisational strategy will allow for joining up of work already being progressed, facilitating less duplication and ease of reporting into the 3 yearly reporting cycle to Scottish Government.
- **Compliance with Corporate Objectives**
An overarching corporate parenting strategy will contribute to ensuring that the organisation and every staff member within it is mindful of the rights and experiences of every individual who has experienced care in any form. This will support rights based and trauma informed approaches.

- **Local outcomes improvement plans, community planning etc.**

The work of the NHS Corporate Parenting Strategic Group and Task Force supports the Corporate Parenting strategies undertaken collaboratively across our Health & Social Care Partnerships. Further action to be undertaken within this strategy will be inextricably linked to agreed priorities within each of the respective Integrated Children Services plans.

2.3.7 Communication, involvement, engagement and consultation

The Board has carried out its duties to involve and engage external stakeholders where appropriate:

- Corporate Parenting is a core consideration within locality Strategic Children's partnership meetings.
- Local Authority Corporate Parenting Plan Priorities were core considerations underpinning the development of the NHSAA Corporate Parenting Promise
- NHSAACTF links to each respective HSCP area's Corporate Parenting and Promise Groups and NHS AA Corporate Parenting Promise was developed and agreed by the Task Force group and approved by the Corporate Parenting Programme Board.
- Close links are maintained to Champion's Boards (local authority Board which are led by care experienced young people) via the pan Ayrshire participation working group of the Task Force to ensure we are working toward meaningful, considered, non-tokenistic participation of those with care experience in all we do.

2.3.8 Route to the meeting

This has been previously considered by the following groups as part of its development. The groups have either supported the content, or their feedback has informed the development of the content presented in this report.

- NHSAA Corporate Parenting Task Force
 - 01 December 2022
 - 02 February 2023
 - 06 April 2023
 - 01 June 2023
- NHSAA Corporate Parenting Programme Board
 - 18 February 2022
 - 27 April 2022
 - 17 June 2022
 - 20 October 2022
 - 21 February 2023
 - 20 April 2023
- NHSAA Healthcare Governance Committee
 - 09 January 2023
- NHSAA Integrated Governance Committee
 - 31 July 2023

2.4 Recommendation

Board members are asked to approve the implementation of the NHSAA Corporate Parenting Promise as a formal cross-cutting strategy which will be progressed via 3 year action plans with specific measurable actions. Any associated action plan will undergo further consultation and agreement with appropriate key partners from across the system.

3. List of appendices (where required)

The following appendices are included with this report:

- Appendix No 1, List of References within Text
- Appendix No 2, NHS AA Corporate Parenting Promise

References

- i <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2014/8/contents/enacted>
- ii https://www.sehd.scot.nhs.uk/mels/cel2009_16.pdf
- iii <https://thepromise.scot/>
- iv <https://thepromise.scot/resources/2022/promise-oversight-board-report-one.pdf>
- v <https://thepromise.scot/resources/2023/promise-oversight-board-report-two.pdf>
- vi <https://www.whocaresscotland.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/December-2022-Newletter-29.7-%C3%97-21-cm.pdf#>
- vii <https://thepromise.scot/what-must-change/plan-21-24>
- viii NHS AA Board Paper, Monday 16th August 2021, State of Child Health: United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)



NHS Ayrshire and Arran Corporate Parenting Promise

2021-2030

NHS Ayrshire and Arran Corporate Parenting Promise 2021-30

Foreword

In Ayrshire and Arran we are aspirational about what being a good corporate parent to our Infants, children and young people means.

We know that continuing to build on the excellent relationships across our corporate family is central to supporting infants, children and young people in Ayrshire and Arran, helping them to realise their hopes and dreams, and supporting them to be healthy and well, experiencing good outcomes across their life course.

NHS Ayrshire and Arran's Corporate Parenting Promise to our children reflects this with a strong emphasis on continuing collaboration to improve the way whole systems work together, and to plan deliver and report as whole corporate families, across services.

We want to ensure that our children, young people and their families are central to service improvement, and that we work in partnership with them, as our most important stakeholders, to deliver transformational change.

Importantly, we want to look inward, at our own systems, data, and workforce, and how we can use and improve each of these to positively influence the life journey of individuals who experience care in Ayrshire and Arran. We want to exceed the expectations placed upon us as corporate parents and a territorial health board.

Through our Corporate Parenting Promise, we have restated our commitment to our infants, children and young people in the context of the Independent Care Review and its findings.

We have established robust governance structures, including a Corporate Parenting Programme Board, to hold us to account and monitor progress, and our Corporate Parenting Task Force to drive forward required changes at pace.

We recognise the unique gift that we have as corporate parents and this document sets out our high level vision and the ambitious aspirations across a number of areas we have as corporate parents in line with the ambitions set out in Caring for Ayrshire.

1. NHS Ayrshire and Arran Corporate Parenting Promise 2021-2030

This document is intended to restate NHS AA's commitment as corporate parents to children and young people within our care. It sets out the high level vision of the NHS AA Corporate Parenting Strategic Programme Board, and the broad key areas of focus for us over the next ten years. Related measurable actions will be set out within shorter term dynamic action plans, from 2021-2024, 2025-2027 and 2028-2030.

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014¹ (The Act) places a specific requirement on us to 'pay particular attention to groups of children and young people who do not have other adequate means by which they can make their views known'. In NHS Ayrshire and Arran, we recognise that this outlines a need to take on the role of a strong advocate for the rights and outcomes of Infants Children and Young People (ICYP) in our population who face greater inequalities as they journey through life.

With this in mind, we promise to carefully consider children who will come into contact with the care system. Children who experience the care system require the same things to flourish as all other children, and it is the duty of all of us as corporate parents to make sure

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2014/8/contents/enacted>

that they receive the right support and feel loved and respected as they grow. The Act names NHS Ayrshire and Arran as a “Corporate Parent”.

As corporate parents, we will work in collaboration to provide, loving, safe, secure environments and the correct support at the right time, to prevent inequity and disparity in the health and social outcomes of our care experienced population as compared to others in our communities.

Part 9 of The Act places specific duties on us as corporate parents to:

Figure 1 – Duties of Corporate Parents – Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014



Section 58 of the Act sets out the expectations of Corporate Parents in relation to this duty:

Figure 2 – Expectations of Corporate Parents – Part 9, Section 58 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014



The Act places specific duties on us in sections 59² and 60³ to collaborate with other corporate parents in planning and delivering activities to fulfil corporate parenting duties. We must also report on progress toward meeting our duties to Scottish ministers every 3 years.

Collaboration and Partnership to serve the children we are parents to across Ayrshire and Arran is essential and we have worked over many years with partners across geographical areas and services, creating a corporate family.

Corporate Parenting is a central part of each respective Strategic Children's Plan and the NHS AA Corporate Parenting Programme Board and Task Force feeds into each respective HSCP area's Corporate Parenting Group, plans and reports. Via these links we promise to engage and learn from champions boards across AA to ensure and secure the rights respecting participation of care experienced young people in all we do.

2. Health Board Responsibilities - Meeting the Physical Health, Mental Health and Wellbeing needs of ICYP Experiencing Care

The Chief Executives Letter (CEL16) on Looked after Children (2009)⁴, set out for NHS Board Chief Executives the recommendations arising from the Looked After Children and Young People: We Can and Must Do Better report (2007)⁵. It tasked Chief Executives to

² <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2014/8/section/59/enacted>

³ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2014/8/section/60/enacted>

⁴ https://www.sehd.scot.nhs.uk/mels/cel2009_16.pdf

⁵ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/looked-children-young-people-better/documents/>

ensure recommendations to support action 15 in “We Can and Must Do Better” (which concerned emotional, mental and physical needs of children) were implemented within set timescales. We promise to focus on meeting our responsibilities with regard to these recommendations as a matter of urgency.

Figure 3 – We Can and Must Do Better – Action 15



3. The Care Review and the Promise

In October 2016 an independent Root and Branch review of the Care System in Scotland was commissioned by the First Minister. The review was completed between 2017 and 2020 and was founded upon and driven by the voices and experiences of those who had lived experience of care in Scotland.

7 reports were published in February 2020, the main output being published in “The Promise”⁶. It outlines that in order for ICYP to grow up feeling safe, loved and respected, there is a need for a redesign our system of care, transformational changes in how decisions are made and money is spent in supporting children and families so that our youngest citizens experience the childhood they deserve.

3.1 Promise - Next Steps

⁶ <https://www.carereview.scot/conclusions/independent-care-review-reports/>

Work to Keep The Promise between 2021 and 2030 is being shaped by a series of shorter Plans, each outlining the priorities and action across that period. Each Plan will build on the progress made by the one before it to drive transformational change across the priorities identified by the Care Review. Plan 21-24 focuses on the period from 1 April 2021 until 31 March 2024. It outlines a set of outcomes that should be concluded by 2024.

“Change Programme One⁷” will capture the work, as it happens, within the 5 priority areas outlined in Plan 21-24 nationally, recording change as it happens, monitoring progress and identifying gaps and areas of risk.

In late 2023, The Promise Scotland team will embark on planning for the period until 2030 to finalise Scotland’s commitment. By which time, the Promise will have been kept.

3.2 The Promise, and opportunities for NHSAA as Corporate Parents

The Promise is built on 5 Foundations, which must be at the heart of a reorganisation of how we plan and prioritise for children and their families.

1. Voice: Children’s voices must be heard and central to their care
2. Family: Children who are safe and feel loved in their families must be helped to stay
3. Care: Sibling relationships should be valued and nurtured where safe
4. People: Relationships between children and their communities and workforces should be nurtured
5. Scaffolding: Children, families and the workforce need ready and responsive support

The Care Review’s conclusions, as detailed in The Promise across the five foundations, have been translated into five priority areas of change for Plan 21-24. These are

- A Good Childhood
- Whole Family Support
- Supporting the Workforce
- Planning
- Building Capacity

3.3 Oversight Board Reports

The Oversight Board is a national board established by Scottish Government to hold corporate parents to account for the work required to ensure transformational change is achieved.

The first report⁸ by the National Promise Oversight Board in May 2022 outlined that although progress is being made, there is a requirement for greater urgency. In order for Scotland to deliver the promise, a step change was required in the pace and scale of improvements being made. The second report⁹ from the Board was published in June 23. This outlined that the aims of plan 21-24 would not be met within the time period due to factors including: public funding cuts, the cost of living crisis, an increase in families experiencing poverty, the housing crisis and the impact of Covid-19 recovery. It thanked the workforce for their efforts and emphasised a need to push harder for change to Keep the Promise by 2030.

⁷ <https://thepromise.scot/change-programme-one-pdf.pdf>

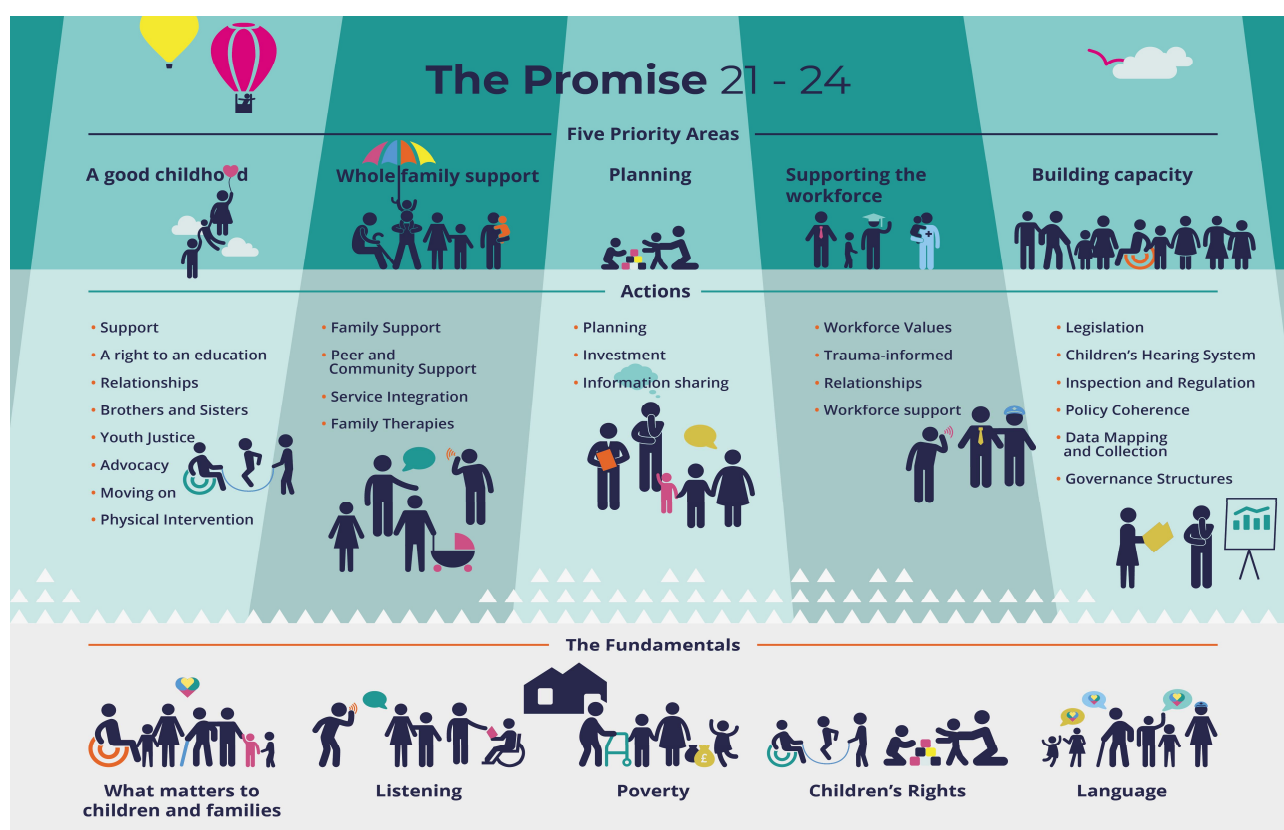
⁸ <https://thepromise.scot/resources/2022/promise-oversight-board-report-one.pdf>

⁹ <https://thepromise.scot/resources/2023/promise-oversight-board-report-two.pdf>

NHS Ayrshire and Arran Corporate Parenting Groups have reviewed the findings across both reports. Our current work plan and Promise outlines a continued focus on areas highlighted by the National Oversight Board as requiring transformational change including:

- NHS Workforce Models, Capacity and Support
- Mental Health Needs of our ICYP in Care
- Data – Measuring Health Need / Outcomes and Progress as Corporate Parents
- The Health needs of children in Cross Border Placements

Figure 4 – Summary of priority areas outlined in Plan 21-24



In order to ensure focus and improvement work centres around these key areas, we promise that they will underpin the NHS AA Strategic Corporate Parenting Vision, and be linked to each individual action in the task force action plan.

4. Our duties as Corporate Parents

Every single employee of NHS A&A has vital duties as a corporate parent. We can only be the best parents possible for our care experienced infants' children and young people if everyone recognises the role they have in keeping The Promise we have made to them.

4.1 All NHS Staff

Our vision is that staff employed by NHS AA will understand that they have a responsibility as a corporate parent and embrace this role. They will understand what being a corporate parent means, what care experience is and the important role they have in advocating for infants, children and young people who experience care. They will undertake training as required in order to fully understand and carry out their duties as corporate parents, regardless of role or remit, and recognise what is within their gift with regard to creating opportunities for and reducing inequalities within our population of care experienced infants, children, young people and adults. We also want to recognise and celebrate care experience and the contribution that those with care experience can make to our workforce. We promise to listen to the voices of those with care experience and learn about how to be better corporate parents.

We promise to be the best corporate parents we can be and we want to ensure we are held accountable for this responsibility

4.2 NHS Board and Chief Executive

- Will work in partnership with the Chief Officers Groups (COG) to identify and commission services which benefit our population of children in care.
- Will ensure the role and responsibility of the NHS Board as set out in legislation and guidance regarding Looked After Children and Young People, is met
- Must be assured of effective provision of healthcare to our population of looked after children and care leavers.
- Will ensure the needs of children experiencing the care system are considered in all relevant Strategic plans and that their views translate into priorities for improvement
- Will ensure operational services are resourced to meet the needs of our care experienced population, including the provision of training.
- Will ensure priority areas for improvement in provision of healthcare are incorporated within all policies, guidance and guidelines and this is disseminated to all staff
- Will ensure Children's Rights are adhered to in the provision of Looked After Children's healthcare services and clinical care
- Will ensure that services are delivered in ways that provide equity of service and take account of diversity
- Will ensure children and young people's views are sought within the development of services and act as advocates for this at all levels
- Will recognise, raise awareness of and advocate for care experience in the health work force

4.3 Executive Nurse Director

The Executive Nurse Director is the Board Level Director nominated as having overall Corporate responsibility for Looked After children and young people and care leavers as outlined in the Chief Executives Letter (CEL16) on Looked after Children (2009)¹⁰.

The Executive Nurse Director will have responsibility to ensure that Health Boards fulfil their statutory duties under the Looked After Children Regulations 1996¹¹ which concern care planning and ensuring adequate health records are available.

¹⁰ https://www.sehd.scot.nhs.uk/mels/cel2009_16.pdf

¹¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1996/3262/contents/made>

They will ensure, on the basis of information from local authority partners, that all Looked After children and young people and care leavers in their areas, including those who are Looked After at home and those placed from out with their Health Board areas, are identified.

The Executive Nurse Director will be supported by the Lead Nurses within IJBs in their duties, providing oversight to ensure that every child or young person coming into the corporate family under the care of corporate parents in Ayrshire and Arran, has a health assessment within 4 weeks of notification to the Health Board that the child has become looked after. They will also ensure that a mental health assessment is offered to every Looked After child or young person,

They will promote and support activity to be assured that where a Looked After child or young person has general and mental health needs identified as part of their health assessment, the person undertaking that health assessment ensures their care plan is delivered and coordinated as appropriate.

They will ensure that the performance of the Board in carrying out general and mental health assessments for Looked After children and young people, and the health outcomes of those assessments, is reported annually to the Scottish Government.

Directors of HSCPs in A&A are responsible for the operational delivery of services on behalf of NHS Ayrshire and Arran Health Board, ensuring joint assessment and planning which takes into account the views of the young person and includes details of their particular health needs. This includes registration with a GP, dentist, regular health and dental checks, advice on sexual health, mental health and emotional wellbeing and access to any mental health services required.

4.4 Directors across directorates within the Health Board

Regardless of directorate, within NHS AA directors will advocate for and consider our children and young people at a strategic level. They will recognise the structural inequalities which exist and may prevent care experienced individuals achieving good health and social outcomes and will work to influence positive change where it is within their gift. They will seek out opportunities which serve to improve healthcare and health and social outcomes for our population who experience the care system at any point in their lives, in line with keeping the promise, GIRFEC and realising the vision set out in Caring for Ayrshire.

NHS AA will work collaboratively with HSCP Heads of Service for children's services in East, North and South Ayrshire to ensure that the priorities embedded across Corporate Parenting Plans, are developed and monitored with consideration of the health and wellbeing of children and young people at their core, and that their strategic vision is in line with reducing inequalities, improving population health and social outcomes and Caring for Ayrshire.

5. Governance

5.1 The NHS AA Strategic Corporate Parenting Programme Board and the NHS AA Corporate Parenting Task Force

The NHS Ayrshire and Arran Corporate Parenting Task Force (AA CPTF) was set up as a group with the responsibility and means to drive forward improvement action. The group aims are to improve outcomes for, and fulfil our statutory health duties to, infants, children and young people under the care of corporate parents in Ayrshire and Arran. Its work contributes to meeting overarching aims of NHS Ayrshire and Arran Corporate Parenting Strategic priorities. The actions within the AACPTF are in line with the principles of GIRFEC and The Promise / Promise Plan. Its aims support the overarching vision of Caring For Ayrshire and the binding clauses of the UNCRC, seeking to actively seek out and hear the voices of CYP and embed them at the heart of everything we do.

We promise to use this group as a vehicle for Pan-Ayrshire collaboration across services in order to ensure that necessary improvement actions are considered and are progressed appropriately.

5.2 NHS AA Children's Governance Groups

In order to assure the board that NHS Ayrshire and Arran, is meeting its corporate parenting duties and to give our Programme Board the best support in our aspirations to be outstanding corporate parents to children in care in NHS AA, we have ensured that a suitable, robust governance structure is in place to drive forward work with appropriate oversight and to provide assurance to the Board as we progress. The Corporate Parenting Programme Board reports to the NHS AA Children's Services Professional Leadership Group (PLG) then reports to the Healthcare Governance Committee and ultimately to the Board. The structure can be viewed at Appendix 1.

5.3 The Infant Children and Young People's Transformational Change Programme Board

The Infant Children and Young People's Transformational Change Programme Board (ICYPTCPB) provides a Pan Ayrshire Platform for a wide range of partners across children's services to come together. Representation includes key senior representatives from Paediatrics, Maternity Services, Public Health, HSCP and Local Authority, Police, Education and Allied Health Professions with representation from across Ayrshire. The NHS AA Corporate Parenting Strategic Programme Board aims will only be met if we have excellent relationships across services which care for our population across the life course. The ICYPTCPB is a well-established group which is available to provide wider support, spanning children's services and beyond should the Task Force leads, or strategic Corporate Parenting Programme Board require this. It will also be used as a forum for sharing progress and best practice. The Strategic Corporate Parenting Programme board will provide updates to the ICYPTCPB when requested or required.

5.4 Corporate Parenting Groups across Ayrshire

Across East, North and South Ayrshire the structure of Corporate Parenting Groups are different. Regardless of structure or frequency, these groups are where planning, delivery and reporting on Corporate Parenting Activities across the partnership occur. The NHS AA Corporate Parenting Programme Board promise to ensure that there is strong NHSAA representation and support for each of the structures and groups, to enable collaboration through a Public Health lens and ensure that work pertinent to Corporate Parenting feeds

into and back from each respective group. We will work closely with partners across Local Authority areas to ensure our duty of collaboration as Corporate Parents is met, to foster cohesive progress toward linked goals.

Across East, North and South Ayrshire, The work of the Corporate Parenting Groups is inextricably linked to agreed priorities in each of the Children's Services Plans.

6. What the Promise Means for us - Our Strategic Priorities

Figure 5 – Infographic detailing NHS AA Strategic Priorities



Further Information about each of the 6 areas of focus is below.

6.1 Meeting our statutory duties as Corporate Parents (CEL16)

- Ensure that the obligations placed upon NHS AA by The Chief Executives Letter (CEL16) on Looked after Children (2009)¹², arising from the Looked After Children and Young People: We Can and Must Do Better report (2007)¹³ action 15 (which concerned emotional, mental and physical needs of children) are met.

¹² https://www.sehd.scot.nhs.uk/mels/cel2009_16.pdf

¹³ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/looked-children-young-people-better/documents/>

Health problems generally increase with age. Research¹⁴ shows that in many cases this increasing trend is more pronounced among care experienced children and young people than the general population, if we do not pay attention and act as corporate parents, we may see widening inequalities in health over time.

Children under the care of corporate parents today will grow into the care experienced adults of tomorrow and may require care and support from health services to address impacts of early adversity, if we do not provide the correct support when it is required.

Prevention and early intervention across whole systems is required to build on and support the vision of Caring for Ayrshire, and the Corporate Parenting work established is an example of a whole systems approach bringing disparate areas of work together for the first time. This is the only way we can begin to address the impacts of early adversity across the life course for our care experienced population and mitigate the potential future impact on the health and social care system.

We will use the task force we have set up as the main vehicle to drive this priority forward to undertake transformational change at pace. (Appendix 2 - Infographic outlining the 9 Task Force workstreams)

6.2 Planning, Delivering and Reporting Collaboratively

- We will commit to actions which align with the above aims across short term action plans which align to the Plans created as a result of the independent care review and The Promise. We will produce a yearly progress report, to ensure progress toward agreed goals occur, across departments and services both within and outwith the Health Service in line with our duty of collaboration as laid out in section 59 and 60 in The Act.
- We will work to ensure Public Health and Health Service priorities are embedded within East, North and South Corporate Parenting Plans. We will ensure that strategic direction across partners continues to be coherent and in the best interest of infants, children and young people.
- We will ensure our duty of reporting to Scottish Government on corporate parenting actions as outlined in the act is met.

6.3 Consider Care Experience in the context of our Current and Future Workforce

- We want to develop our workforce by making appropriate training accessible for NHS staff groups on what being a corporate parent means, raising awareness of individual and collective responsibilities and the meaningful contributions we can make to children in care regardless of our role or remit.

¹⁴ Allik, M., Brown, D., Gedeon, E., Leyland, A. H. and Henderson, M. (2022) Children's Health in Care in Scotland (CHiCS): Main findings from population-wide research. University of Glasgow. (doi: 10.36399/gla.pubs.279347).

- We will consider the opportunities that NHS AA can provide for work experience and employment for our care experienced population and recognise, celebrate and further utilise the unique skills and perspective our care experienced workforce bring to the health service.

6.4 Work to tackle stigma and reduce “othering”

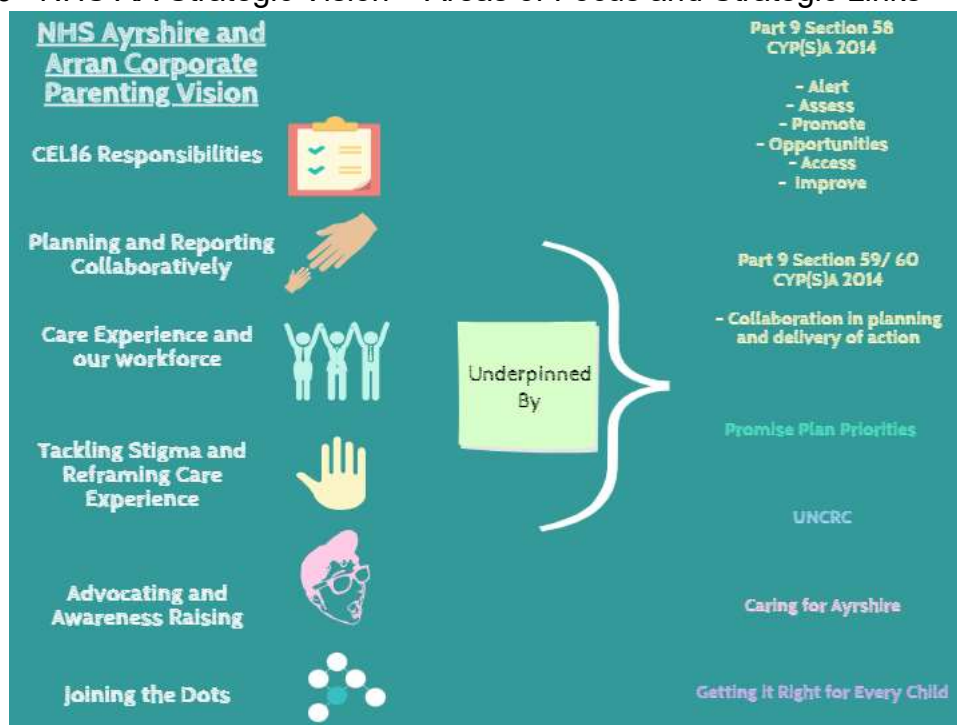
- We promise to work to appropriately frame the narrative around care, care experience and our care experienced children, considering language in all formats.

6.5 Use our voice and platform to raise awareness of our role as corporate parents and advocate for the rights of all of those who experience the care system in Ayrshire and Arran

- In our Promise, we state our commitment in NHS AA to improving health and social outcomes for our population under the care of corporate parents, and others who have experienced the care system, and raise awareness of this across all platforms.
- The group promise to advocate for and respect the rights of children, seeking out and hearing their voices in all of the work, not only in children’s services, that is undertaken to drive transformational change based on the needs of those with experience of the care system.

6.6 Joining the dots

- We promise to link our strategic vision and improvement activity as Corporate Parents across related work areas to drive transformational change in an informed and coherent manner. This will include tying in related areas of work which have been particularly relevant to our population of children who experience the care system, for example: Child Death Overview Implementation Process, and full incorporation of the UNCRC into Scottish Law - not only ensuring that we hear the voices of our CYP, seeking them out to drive improvement.

Figure 6 –NHS AA Strategic Vision – Areas of Focus and Strategic Links

How we will deliver change related to our identified priority areas

We have restated our commitment to being the best possible parents and developed an action plan to be driven forward by our Task Force informed by:

- The Independent Care Review and its findings
- The conclusions of Oversight Board Report One
- Promise Plan Priorities
- What children and Young People have tell us they need to feel healthy and well
- Areas Scottish Government have told us corporate parents in health in Scotland must do better to improve
- Areas identified which require improvement in order that we can stand out to our Children and Young People as excellent Corporate Parents
- Priority areas identified in East, North and South Corporate Parenting Action plans being delivered across the same / similar time periods
- The binding clauses of the UNCRC
- The Vision of reducing health inequalities and improving lifelong population health captured in Caring for Ayrshire
- The Principles of Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC)

We have ensured that our own priorities map and link to East, North and South Ayrshire's Corporate Parenting priority areas and actions, and considered how each of our aims relate to The Promise Plan Priority areas. These are explicitly laid out in our action plan for year 21-24 and this will continue as subsequent 3 year action plans are agreed. This will facilitate joint working around planning and reporting on progress at the appropriate juncture.

We will seek to have our Promise form the basis of a formal organisation wide strategy to explore areas for improvement across the whole system.

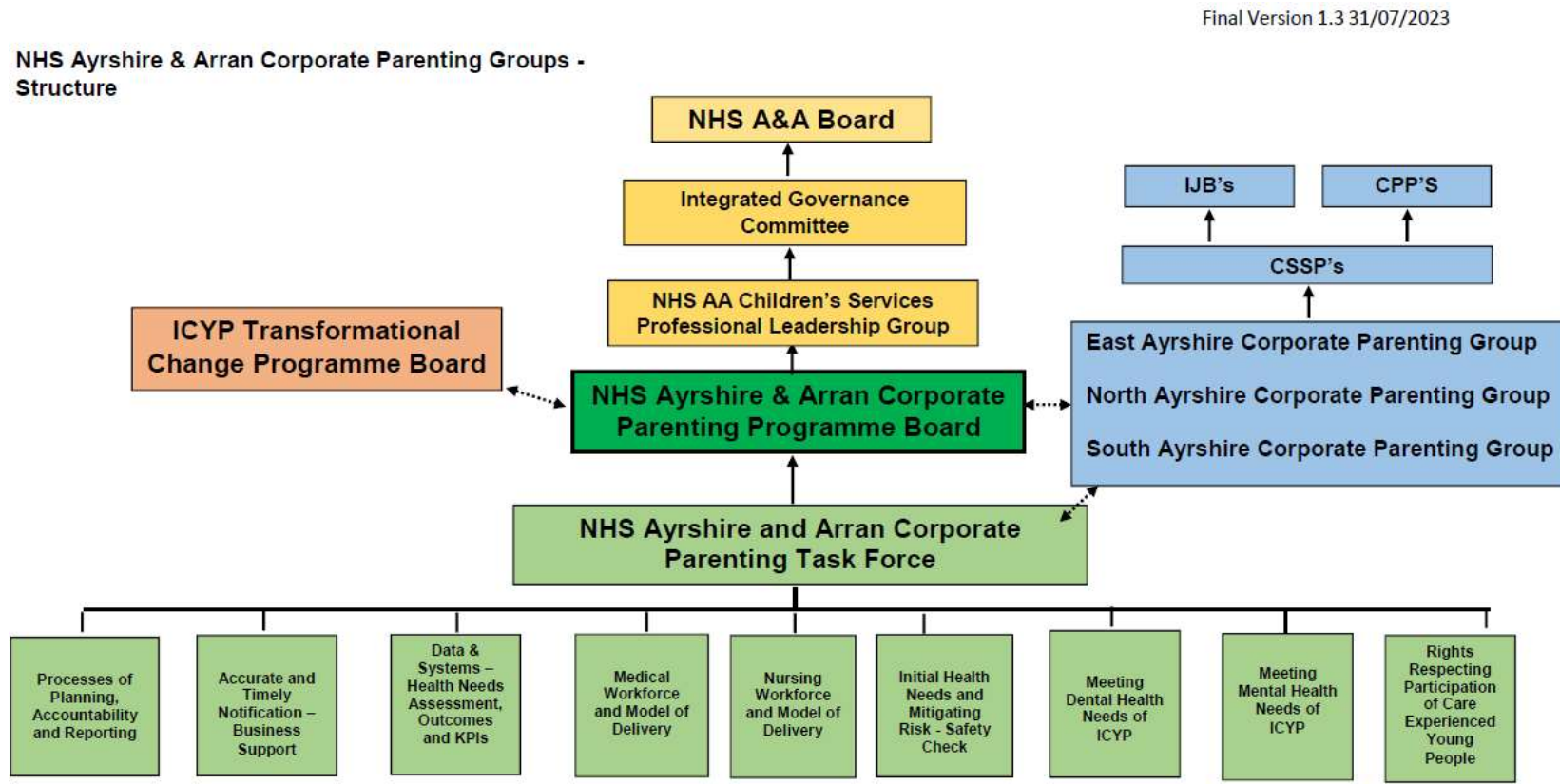
7. How progress towards keeping our promise will be monitored

We have ensured that an appropriate governance process is in place so that we are held to account for the promise we make as parents to improve the experiences and lives of our children in care.

- We will establish Key Performance Indicators which will help us to measure our progress toward becoming the best corporate parents that we can be.
- Task Force Leads will provide updates on progress to the NHS AA Corporate Parenting Programme Board and other relevant groups every two months and will seek support via these routes where required.
- An annual update on corporate parenting activity will be provided to the Strategic Programme Board and this will be shared widely with partners and children and young people themselves.
- We will report to the Scottish Government every 3 years about the progress we are making and any barriers to progress we experience, in line with our statutory duties.
- We will engage with people with experience of care of all ages wherever and whenever possible to ask for their views.

Appendix 1

Governance Structure



Appendix 2

Infographic outlining NHS AA Corporate Parenting Task Force Workstreams

