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Mr Adam Coldwells
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19 December 2018

Dear Adam

Annual Audit Report 2017/18

As you know, the external auditors of integration joint boards address their annual audit reports to the Board and to me as Controller of Audit. I consider these reports very carefully, as they are a vital part of the accountability framework for IJBs.

Having now read all IJB audit reports for 2017/18 I am writing to highlight some points of interest. In particular, I note from your annual audit report:

- The improvement in managing emergency admissions and delayed discharges and that there is a growing number of adults who feel they are supported to live as independently as possible in their communities. The local auditor has also brought the success of the virtual community ward and the joint equipment store to my attention.
- Across the sector, significant change is required in the way that health and social care services are delivered. I note that work is underway to produce the board's next strategic plan so it is important that it clearly sets out priorities, outcomes and targets so that progress can be measured and monitored. The board is now sufficiently established to carry out longer term horizon scanning and taking the geographical scale of Aberdeenshire into consideration, the impact of the required service redesign on staff, communities and resources should be assessed.
- The board has established an audit committee and it is encouraging to note that a review of its remit, membership and the scope of business is currently underway. The committee needs to take a stronger role in providing the board with assurances on the robustness of existing governance arrangements so that it is well placed to support the approval of the board's annual governance statement.

In addition, you will be aware that the Auditor General and the Accounts Commission recently published their latest update on health and social care integration. The report contains recommendations for IJBs, among others, and your local auditor will follow those up with you during the 2018/19 audit.

In the meantime, if you would like to discuss anything else, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Fraser McKinlay".

Fraser McKinlay
Controller of Audit

