**GENERAL**

**Q.1 Why are we being asked to apply a Workload Tool?**

**A.1**
This stems from the recommendations of an audit 'Planned Ward Nursing – Legacy or Design' carried out by Audit Scotland published in 2005 which led to the national programme of work which is currently in progress. A number of recommendations were made including the need to have a consistent and systematic approach across Scotland, to measure nursing and midwifery workload and calculate staffing levels.

Since the publication of the report NHS Scotland has pioneered a standard methodology for assessing nursing workload. A suite of tools has been developed for a number of specialties including Adult Inpatient, Mental Health, Neonatal, Children's Inpatient and Community, Community and Clinical Nurse Specialists. Current priority areas include Emergency Departments, Perioperative and Maternity.

CEL 32 (2011) mandated the use of Nursing and Midwifery Workforce Workload Planning (NMWWP) tools as part of a triangulated approach incorporating professional judgement and quality measures. This was supported through further guidance in October 2012 as part of Local Delivery Plans and was further strengthened in August 2013 through further guidance from the Chief Nursing Officer's Directorate.

**Q.2 What’s in this for staff?**

**A.2**
The aims of this programme of work are i) to ensure Boards have good quality information on the workload of this cohort to inform and support decisions on having the right staff in the right place, etc. and ii) to provide staff with a tool to help them in their negotiations locally. It is important that staff recognise the value of the workload tool and how to use the information to the best advantage.

**Q.3 How often will the tool be run?**

**A.3**
The Scottish Government Health Department have mandated the tools to be implemented within Boards at least annually. The tools will be freely available locally and can be used regularly to monitor and record as required.

**Q.4 Will the work result in fewer staff?**

**A.4**
The aim of this programme is to provide workload tools to help staff and organisations recognise staffing needs in relation to workload. Decisions will be taken locally on the information. That is why it is important to be familiar with the tool and the information it provides.

**About the Tool**

**Q.6 How does the tool work?**

**A.6**
The workload tool captures clinical workload, the variability and complexity of patient/tasks. The tool has, built into the calculator, a proportion of time for Indirect Care and Associated workload. Therefore all aspects of workload are measured in the tool. National recommendation supports a triangulated method to workload planning. The tool should be used together with the Professional Judgement Tool and take into consideration local context.
Triangulation Process

The triangulation process offers a reliable method against which to deliver evidence-based workforce plans to support existing services, redesigning of services and/or the development of new services.

Local context includes:
- integrated workforce planning
- skills base
- speciality mix
- model of care

It will be important for staff to be familiar with the workload tool and what it measures.

Q.7 Does the tool capture all aspects of my work?
A.7 The tool was developed by Mental Health clinicians, across Scotland who have agreed that the tool represents what they do. We have carried out a national run of the tool and within most Board areas the tool appears to be accurate and robust. However, results have differed within and across Boards for some specialities. The tool requires to be used more extensively to determine whether the outcomes are reasonable or if further work is required. The National Nursing & Midwifery Workload & Workforce Planning Programme recommend further use of the tool within areas with ongoing education and training prior to any conclusion regarding the appropriateness of the tools application.

Q.8 Is the tool reviewed and updated regularly?
A.8 The tool has been reviewed and updated over a number of years and it is important to use the version of the tool available on SSTS, to ensure that your Board is using the most recent version and you will be able to access reports following tool implementation from BOXI.

Q.9 How is skill mix measured?
A.9 The MHLD Tool does not provide any recommendations on skill mix. It gives the total staffing WTE required (whole time equivalent) for the workload entered into the tool. The Tool should be used in conjunction with the Professional Judgement tool to support Senior staff to decide on the appropriate skill mix for that area.

Q.10 What do I need to do before I start using the tool?
A.10 You need to be familiar with the workload tool. Please read through the guidance provided.

Q.11 How do I access the tool?
A.11 The tool will be on an IT platform in SSTS. You will be provided with an individual Username and Password from your local SSTS Systems Manager.

Q.12 Who do I contact if I need help?
A.12 Contact your local coordinator in the first instance. The national team are available for support if the matter can not be resolved locally.
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<th>Q.13</th>
<th>When do we see the results from the tool?</th>
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<td>A.13</td>
<td>The national team have developed, in collaboration with Board representatives, a standard reporting function which will be available via BOXI locally. It will be up to your Board to decide how and when the information is shared.</td>
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