

**GUIDANCE:
SUBMITTING PARALLEL/SPOTLIGHT
SESSION BIDS**

NHS SCOTLAND EVENT 2026

**Transforming Health and Care Services through
Collaboration**

**Monday 21 September 2026, Technology &
Innovation Centre (TIC), Glasgow**

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1. Event

The NHS Scotland Event will take place on **Monday, 21 September 2026** at the Technology & Innovation Centre, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow.

This year's Event programme will be delivered in a hybrid format, giving delegates the option to either attend in-person or join remotely via our virtual platform.

The programme will feature:

- 2 x plenary sessions
- 2 x mini plenary sessions
- 8 x parallel sessions
- 2 x spotlight sessions (each with 3 x 20 Minute presentations)

Additionally, the Event will showcase a tabletop exhibition and poster display.

Each year there is significant interest from NHS Scotland and its partners to feature in the NHS Scotland Event Programme to showcase work that supports the challenges we face. As a result the maximum number of bids to be submitted from each NHS Board/ Organisation will be **five bids**.

2. Background

Health and social care services across Scotland continue to navigate rising demand, operational pressures, and financial constraints. Yet, in the face of these challenges, our workforce has shown extraordinary collaboration, adaptability, and resilience.

The Health and Social Care portfolio remains steadfast in its ambition to deliver bold, reform. Our aim is clear: to build a Scotland where people live longer, healthier, more fulfilling lives, supported by care that is accessible, consistent, and tailored to individual needs.

To these ends, the **Population Health Framework** and the **Health and Social Care Service Renewal Framework** set a clear strategic direction. Together, they support the reform and renewal agenda and underpin efforts to improve outcomes, reduce inequalities and create a sustainable, resilient health and social care system for the future, with collaboration at their core.

The NHS Scotland Event offers a unique space for collaboration, learning, and inspiration.

It's an opportunity to share stories that matter - stories of innovation, partnership, and best practice - while reflecting on how we are collectively delivering more accessible, personalised care across homes, communities, and hospitals.

Delegates will also hear directly about the evolving vision and priorities for Scotland's NHS, helping us all move forward with purpose and ambition.

2. Programme Themes

This year's NHS Scotland Event will explore the priorities at the heart of the national reform agenda - those essential to delivering lasting improvements for the people of Scotland:

- **Prevention** - Services that prevent disease, enable early detection and effectively manage chronic and long-term conditions. Prevention is one of the most cost-effective interventions that the NHS can make in improving population health and reducing inequalities.
- **Person-Led** - Delivering health and social care that is people-led and 'Value Based'.
- **Integration** - Strengthening system-wide integration.
- **Access** - Improving access to services and treatments in the community.
- **Hospital Redesign** - Redesigning our hospitals as we deliver more care within our communities.
- **Digital** - Services which are accessible through digital technologies, with people and our workforce able to access the right information.

3. Parallel and Spotlight Session Bid Content

Parallel Sessions

Duration - 1 hour and 15 mins

These sessions will showcase excellent practice from across NHS Scotland and its partners. We encourage speakers to create thought-provoking content that sparks discussion and engagement.

You will find more details on how to prepare your bid below. Please make sure you follow our requirements and top tips.

Spotlight Sessions

Duration – 20 minute presentation (with Q&A)

Please note each Spotlight Session will feature 3 x separate presentations.

Each presentation should also include time for a Q&A which will be guided by the Session Chair.

Bids for sessions should focus on practical actions that your organisation is taking to work across the whole of our health and social care system to deliver our priorities. When submitting your bid you can ask that your work be considered for either:

- (i) a Parallel Session; or
- (ii) a Spotlight Presentation; or
- (iii) either

3.1. Requirements for your bid

Your bid **must not exceed 300 words** excluding the title, headings and any references.

When drafting your submission, please structure your response using the **STARR** approach (*Situation, Task, Action, Result, Reflection*) in order to provide clear, structured, evidence-based examples.

In particular, your bid must contain a clear articulation of:

- How the work/project/initiative you wish to include within your session contributes to one or more of the event themes.
- What did you/your team do and what was achieved? What were the challenges?
- How your organisation is working towards making services better for people and improving their experience of the NHS.
- Examples and strong fact-based evidence of the impact or outcome of your work/project/initiative. What are the next steps and how can this be replicated across other areas/Boards?

3.2. Top tips to make your session bid successful

- Ensure the theme, sub-themes and objectives as above are met. If they are not, your bid might get scored lower and there are less opportunities for it to be shortlisted.
- Ensure your descriptor reflects exactly what your session will be about.
- Ensure your session sounds appealing to delegates – if you can, include lived experience as this always evaluates well with delegates i.e. Case studies, patient representation, service user feedback etc
- Focus on practical actions that your organisation is taking to work across the whole of our health and social care system to deliver our priorities.
- When discussing the challenges, focus on proposing solutions.
- Include evidence with tangible based outcomes.
- Be transparent and honest about what went well – what didn't change – and what needs to be done differently.
- Avoid straightforward promotion of a project/initiative – ideally the session should include the 'next steps' - what will delegates learn from this and how can they implement in their own areas/Boards.

Please ensure that:

- Your session bid content is written in plain English.
- You avoid technical jargon (think about the wider audience).
- Define Acronyms on First Use: Spell out acronyms the first time you mention them to clarify their meaning .

3.3. Quality Assurance

All bids **must** be submitted with the approval of your Chief Executive (for NHS Boards via your Director of Communications/Communication Leads) , Chief Officer (IJBs/Health and Social Care Partnerships) or Chief Executive/Director (Voluntary Organisations) and their details provided as part of the online submission.

Please note only five bids can be submitted from each Board/organisation.

Final approved bids must be submitted online **no later than 5pm Tuesday 21 April.**

3.4. Submitting Your Bid

Please indicate within your submission whether the bid should be considered for a Parallel Session, a Spotlight Presentation or either.

Within NHS Boards, the Directors of Communications/ Communications Leads will collate the proposals and select a maximum of five for the Chief Executives to endorse.

Once approval for submissions has been secured as the main contact you will be asked to email nhsscotlandevents@gov.scot to confirm that you are responsible for submitting the bid.

A link will then be sent to you to gain access to the online application form. The closing date for bids is 5pm Tuesday 21 April.

3.5. Successful Bids

The lead contact for successful bids will be notified w/c 25 May. At this point, we will be seeking confirmation that the named personnel involved in the work are willing and available to attend the NHS Scotland Event.

Session Leads

A Session Lead is someone who is the main source of contact when liaising with the Event Team and session speakers.

Session Lead - Roles and Responsibilities
Produce session title, descriptor and outcomes
Ensure session has had appropriate governance sign off
Attend briefing call
Planning and co-ordination of session
Completion of session requirements and running order documents
Liaising and collating speaker information as below: • Allocate and reserve speakers • Completion of GDPR permission forms • Speaker photograph • Speaker biography • Speaker email addresses, job title etc
Liaising with speakers to collate and produce their presentation
Attend and deliver session at the NHS Scotland Event

3.6. Presentation Design

If your bid has been successful, you will be required to design **a presentation** based on the bid submitted. Further advice and guidance about your presentation and key timescales that **must** be met will be provided in due course.

3.7. Parallel and Spotlight Session Bid Submission

All bid submissions must be processed through the online application form. Details of the link to the application form will be provided once submissions have been given final approval.

4. Programme Positioning

Parallel and Spotlight Sessions will feature in the Event Programme at the following times:

11:15 – 12:30 hours

13:30 – 14:45 hours

We will liaise with the main contact about the session time slot if successful.

5. Evaluation

The Parallel and Spotlight Sessions will feature in the NHS Scotland Event 2026 Evaluation and once the Evaluation is complete, feedback can be provided to the lead contact for each session on request.

6. Key Dates

Please ensure that you can meet the timeline outlined below if your bid is selected.

2026 dates	Activity
23 March	Call for Parallel and Spotlight Session bids
21 April	Deadline for submission
22 April – 19 May	Shortlisting of bids
26 May	Successful bids notified
2 June	Briefing session with session leads
23 June	Deadline for final session descriptors and speaker information
14 September	Submission of final presentations and video content
21 September	NHS Scotland Event