



# Communication, Connectivity & Relationships

Care Opinion  
**Annual Review**

April 2020 – March 2021

*“During the pandemic, our Team had to put our traditional methods of capturing feedback on hold, so Care Opinion became our main mechanism to capture feedback. As everyone is aware 2020 was a very challenging time for the NHS but Care Opinion provided the opportunity for staff to hear that their hard work and dedication was recognised and appreciated. Patients, family members and carers were still able to tell us what went well, what we could do better and how they felt about their experience and know that their feedback was being listened to.*

*Over the last 12 months, for me personally, it has been rewarding to see members of staff embracing Care Opinion and actively encouraging feedback from patients, relatives, and carers. It will be interesting to see what the next 12 months bring!”*

NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde

*“Care opinion, in my opinion, is a great tool for patients and their carers/families to provide feedback anonymously to the Board. It helps us to engage with our service users in a very simple way, allowing real time feedback.*

*I have found working with the Care Opinion team and the ongoing direct support they have offered me during this past year extremely helpful. We are working hard to promote CO across our teams within the Board and the response has been positive. Having CO on hand at the end of the phone or via email to ensure we are getting our approach right and ensure we have the right tools is fantastic and makes the day job much easier.*

*I am looking forward to seeing what we can do next.”*

NHS Dumfries and Galloway

*“ Care Opinion stories are invaluable to NHS 24. Following a call to our 111 service, we don't often hear what happens to patients thereafter. The stories let us understand the whole patient journey which can be so insightful. It's great when authors engage with us directly and we can take forward their concerns or indeed share their complimentary feedback with staff. ”*

NHS 24

*“ It's a real honour when a patient, or their carer, takes their own time to provide us with feedback about our service. We all get a real 'buzz' if we are mentioned personally. Whether the feedback is positive or constructive, it can help us shape our service delivery in a way that is patient centred. We are thrilled if we can make a change, however small, that enhances our patient experience when using our service. ”*

NHS Fife

*“During 2020-21, NHS Tayside has increased our engagement with Care Opinion which we see as a vital resource to enable us to understand the experience of our patients and their families and friends. Through the pandemic, it's proved a very effective way for people to provide feedback and celebrate the things that are going well and identify areas where we could improve the service we offer. The team at Care Opinion have been hugely supportive to our staff in sharing knowledge and skills, guiding them through how to use the system. They are also keen to test new approaches and we look forward to progressing some new, collaborative projects over the coming year”*

NHS Tayside

## Contents...

**1** Chief Executive Summary

**2-3** At a glance

**4-5** Connections

**6** Our team

**7** ScotGEM Research

**8** Annual Conference

**9** Keeping connected

**10-17** Dashboards

**18-23** Graphs

## Our CEO gave us his summary of the past year...

There's no doubt that the past year has been immensely hard for very many people. At Care Opinion we have been witness to thousands of accounts of care, good and bad. We've been moved by the willingness of people to share their feedback, encouraging staff and helping services to improve, even in the midst of a pandemic.

The pandemic has brought with it something else too: the sudden normalisation, as a matter of necessity, of all kinds of online communication. Suddenly we are meeting with people without a care as to how far away they might be, making it easy to build relationships and make plans with staff right across Scotland. Alongside this, online public feedback no longer looks so outlandish, and is rapidly becoming the "new normal" for health and social care. Perhaps as a result, there are more health/care staff using Care Opinion than ever before. That matters, because feedback can only create change in health and care services when it is read, shared, discussed, responded to and acted on. The more people who are doing that, the greater the chance not just of simple changes like signage, information leaflets or chairs, but complex and difficult changes like attitudes, behaviour, and team culture.

Encouragingly, evidence is slowly accumulating that patient and family feedback can have just these kinds of remarkable effects on staff. For example, one study\* found that patient-expressed gratitude may enhance medical team performance, while in another\*\* witnessed gratitude may contribute to the spread of helpful, prosocial behaviours. A recent evaluation of Care Opinion in a busy acute hospital setting found that online feedback had created 24 different kinds of positive impact for staff or the organisation.

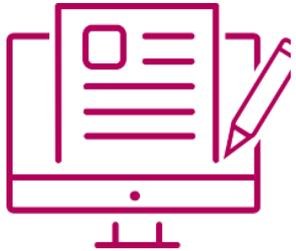
Given this, we need to move beyond thinking about feedback simply as "data" about a service. Instead, let's understand feedback as one expression of a relationship of solidarity, and even of mutual caring, between those who provide services and those who use them. And as we grow our understanding of the nature and benefits of simple, rapid, online feedback, let's keep looking for ways to extend Care Opinion to help even more people, patients and staff alike. That's our manifesto for the year ahead.



James Munro, CEO - Care Opinion

**At a glance..**

Take a look at some of the highlights from the last year...

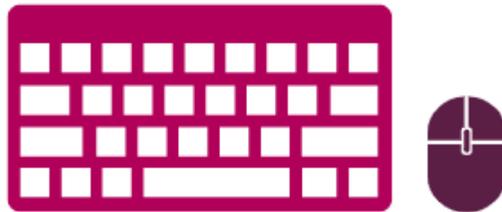


**3333**  
stories in  
the last  
year



The most popular story  
was read **5,027**  
times

**64%**  
of staff on  
subscriptions can  
respond



**19%**

increase in  
staff on  
subscriptions



**96%**

Response rate

Total no of times  
stories were read

**615,039**



**At a glance..**

Take a look at some of the highlights from the last year...

On average, each story was read

**165**

times  
in the last  
year



**74%** of  
stories are  
**Positive !**



What was Good?

**staff  
care  
friendly**

What could have been  
Better?



**communication  
staff attitude  
support**



How did you feel?

**thank you  
grateful  
at ease**

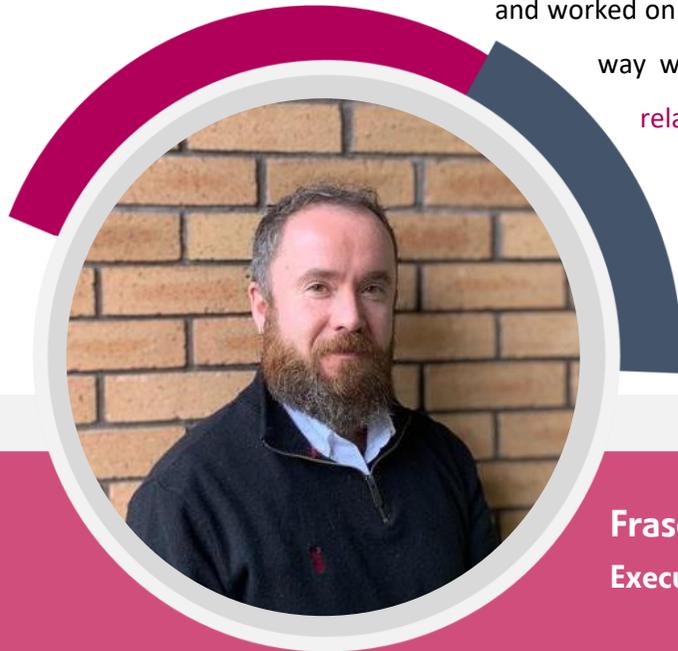
## Connections...

The last year has been a tough one for everyone in Scotland, the UK and globally. The pandemic has changed the way we all work, live our lives and has impacted on our services, most of all our health and care services.

At the start of 2020/21 (funny enough, when I started with Care Opinion) as the pandemic hit, we initially saw a reduction in the numbers of stories that people shared across Scotland. However, this trend did not last for long! Month by month, we saw increases in the number of stories being shared, to the point whereby in the last month of 2020/21, we actually saw a 20% increase in the number of stories, as compared to the same time the year before.

Like the rest of the world, we have had to adapt and change our working practice, to enable us to effectively support our subscribers. We have innovated and worked on new ways for people to share their stories, and like the theme of this review suggests we have modified the way we **communicate**, found the best ways to stay **connected** and worked hard to develop and cement our **relationships** with our subscribers.

Even through these tough times, we have been hugely impressed by the dedication of our subscribers, and the importance they have placed on continuing to encourage feedback across healthcare services in Scotland.



**Fraser Gilmore**  
Executive Director & Head of Care Opinion Scotland

Although we have not been able to meet in person, in 2020/21 we have been able to spend even more time with each of our subscribers than ever before, through the wonders of technology!

Working with our subscribers we have designed and delivered bespoke training and new materials, and developed, tested and launched new and exciting functionality on Care Opinion. All to make it easier and safer for people to tell their stories and for subscribers to be able to better respond, learn and change from the feedback.



2020/21 also saw the first online Care Opinion Scotland conference that was well attended by people as far away as Canada, Australia and the USA, where we were able to share some of the great work that is going on in research, policy and service provision in patient feedback and the uses of Care Opinion. In 2021/22 we are looking forward to hosting our second online conference.

This last year also saw the launch of our Research and Care Opinion chats. At these short online events we have been inviting speakers to talk about all things patient feedback from various service and research areas. This has given all those interested in online patient feedback the opportunity to share learning and practice from around UK and further afield.

So, although the past year has been a challenge, our subscribers and Care Opinion have continued to achieve a great deal in ensuring that patients, their families and carers have a platform to share their experiences during a time of immense change and uncertainty.

On that note, I thought I'd end with a quote from an author...

**"May I tell new people this site is tremendous, it reaches the people who you wouldn't normally manage to contact, I've used this before and the responses from my local hospital was successful, it's good to have a such supportive site."**

**Our team..**

“Enabling people to tell their story is important to me because I believe that giving people an open platform for feedback, from their own perspective, honestly and without judgement is the best way for improvements to be made that are truly meaningful to service users. I also think that for many people, having the ability to put their story out into the world, good or bad, can be a large part of their overall experience.”



**Ali**  
Moderator

“Feedback is all about encouraging conversation, learning & change. I really enjoy seeing the conversations that happen on Care Opinion, & how having a safe feedback platform can not only connect patients & staff, but boost staff morale. It’s great that author’s can see what happens to their feedback, including any changes which follow. I think it keeps people engaged with services and helps them to see how their feedback can improve services for themselves and others.”



**Danielle**  
Support & Engagement

“As the newest member of Care Opinion in Scotland, I believe every single voice is important in shaping services, meeting the needs of people and making changes to benefit all. We all use health services in Scotland, & I strongly support having anonymous, honest conversations, in order to involve everyone in improvement of these services.”



**Lisa**  
Support & Engagement

We asked our team  
**"Why enabling people to tell their stories about health & care services in Scotland is important to them?"**



**Clair**  
Business & Operations

“All too often in our busy world it can be difficult to be heard. When people tell their story & I see a conversation unfold it always makes me smile.

To be a small part of that journey is such a privilege.”



**Dayle**  
Support & Engagement

“Enabling people to tell their stories about health and care services in Scotland is important to me as I believe everyone should have a voice and access to fair, transparent evolving health care and enabling individuals to share their stories is one step closer to achieving this!”

## ScotGEM Research

This year Care Opinion was joined by 2 first year medical students on placement from St. Andrews University's ScotGEM course for 3 months. Dan & Andrew did some research into stories on Care Opinion, looking into

### **"The experiences of patients, relatives and carers of communication during the Covid-19 pandemic in Scotland"**

The stories they looked at :-



- Communication, Covid-19, General Medicine, NHS Scotland
- mentioned "Covid-19" in the body of text, or allude to the pandemic by using phrases e.g. health crisis, current situation
- Were related to an in-patient hospital stay.
- Mentioned or discussed communication

The findings from their research were subsequently presented as both an online presentation and a written paper.

The research summary finding was...

**When they are unwell, people feel happiest when they are able to be with those close to them, understand the reasons when they can't and believe those reasons are fair. They appreciate when care is person-centred and individual adjustments are made to facilitate their wishes.**



You access the can presentation and paper [here](#)

## Annual Conference 2020

In October 2020 Care Opinion Scotland held its first ever conference online. The event included some amazing speakers and special guests and was so successful that Care Opinion will host a second conference later this year.



- |   |  |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| <br><b>Professor Paul Gray</b>              | <br><b>Janice Malone</b><br>Macmillan Scotland | <br><b>Pennie Taylor</b><br>Journalist & Broadcaster      | <br><b>Margaret Mary Cowan</b><br>Kilbryde Hospice           |   |
| <br><b>Dr Deborah Baldie</b><br>NHS Tayside | <br><b>Michael Greco</b>                       | <br><b>Fadhila Mazanderani</b><br>University of Edinburgh | <br><b>Professor Louise Locock</b><br>University of Aberdeen | <br><b>Tom Scott</b><br>See Me Scotland |

**Special guests and speakers**

### Keeping connected..

This past year we have been able connect and take part in more meetings, training sessions and updates in ways that we couldn't previously. Here is just some of the activity we did last year...

#### Reviews, Training sessions and update meetings in 2020/2021



**71** With Boards in Scotland

With Scottish Government - **24**

Academia, care inspectorate & third sector

**-24**

**44** With Health & Social Care Partnerships



#### New ways to encourage stories



QR Codes

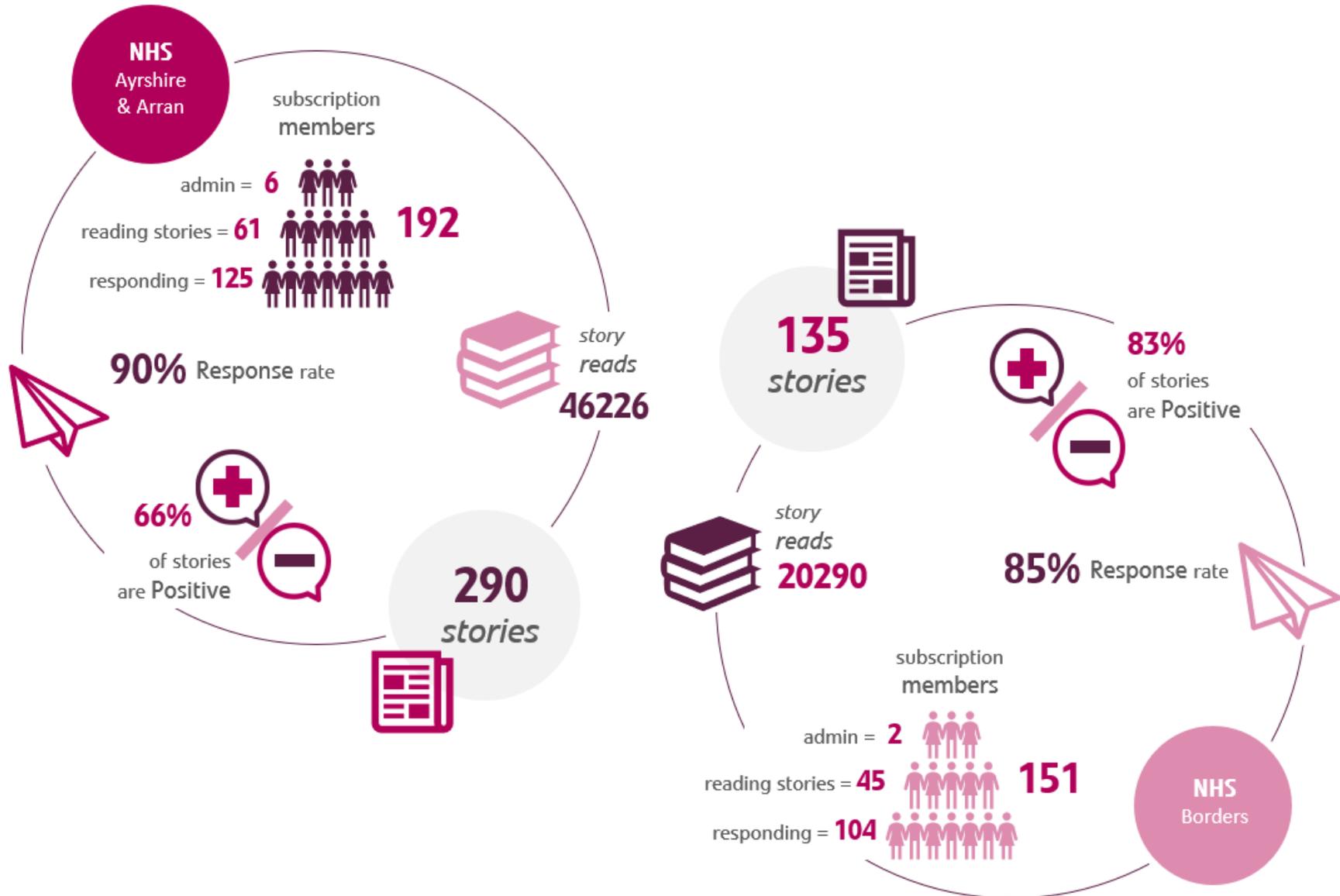
#### Invitation links



Create an invitation link if you want to invite feedback about a specific service, automatically tag new stories, or offer your own online survey after a story is shared.  
[Learn more about invitation links](#)

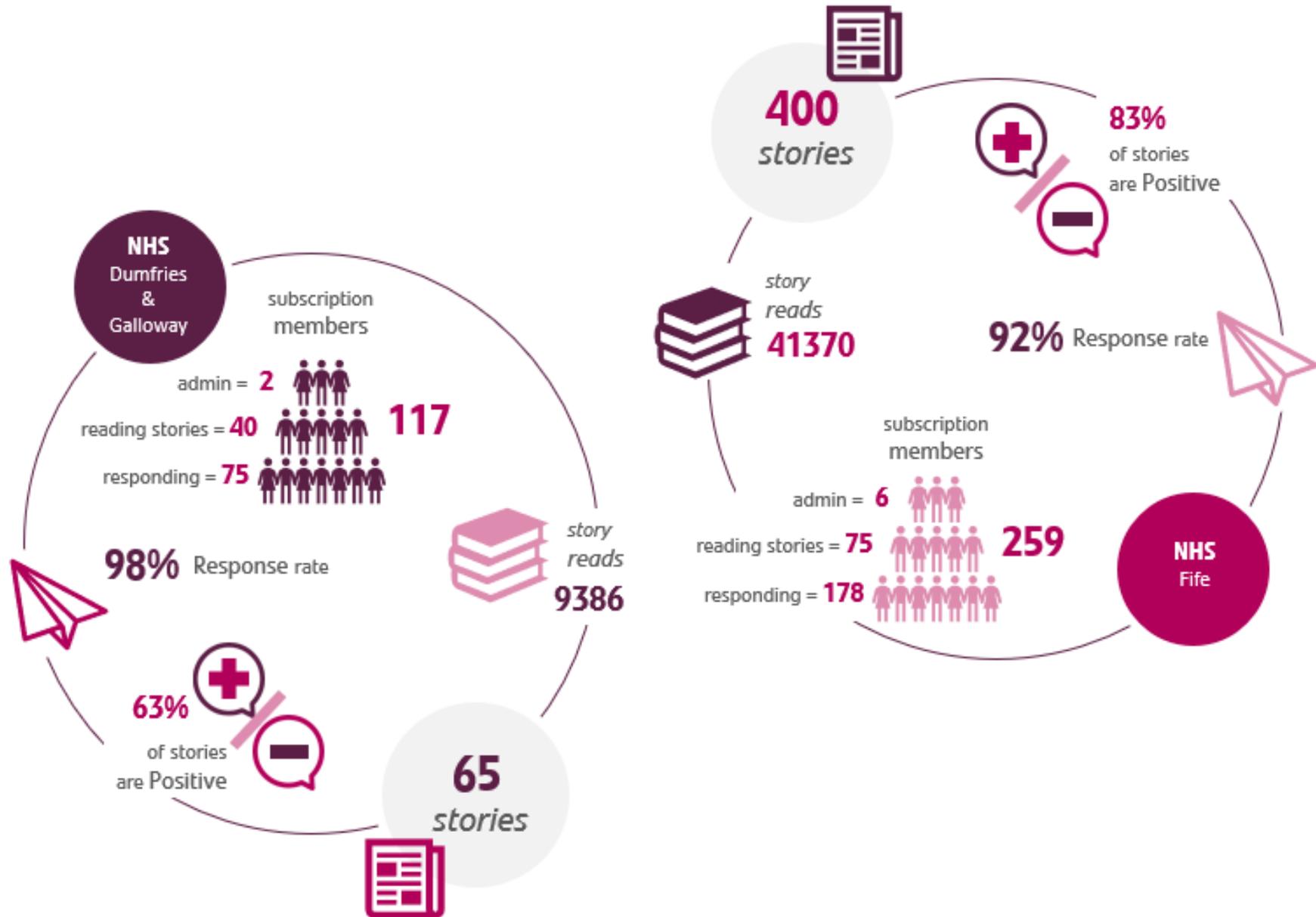
### Dash "Boards"

Some summary info graphics by Health Board



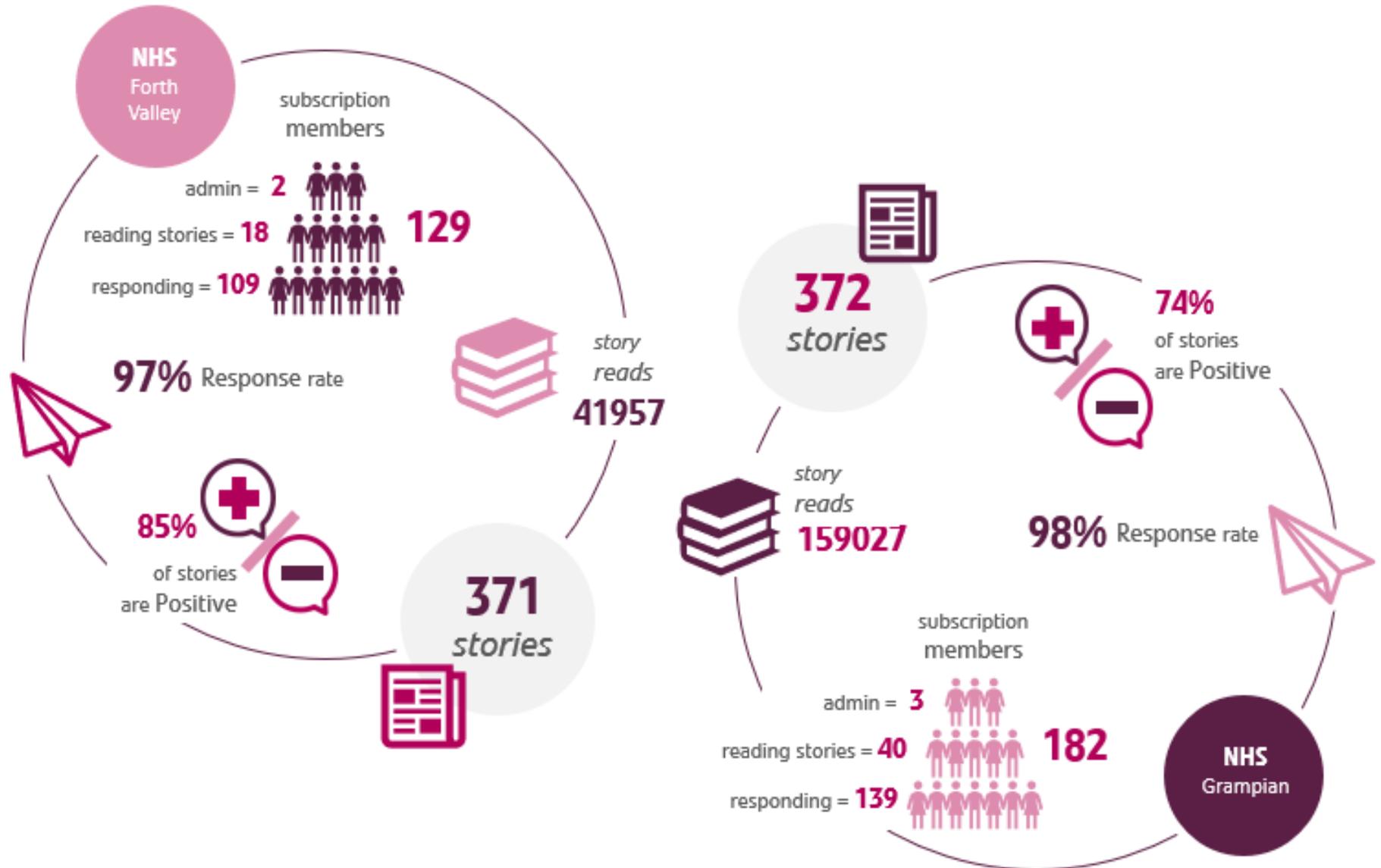
### Dash "Boards"

Some summary info graphics by Health Board



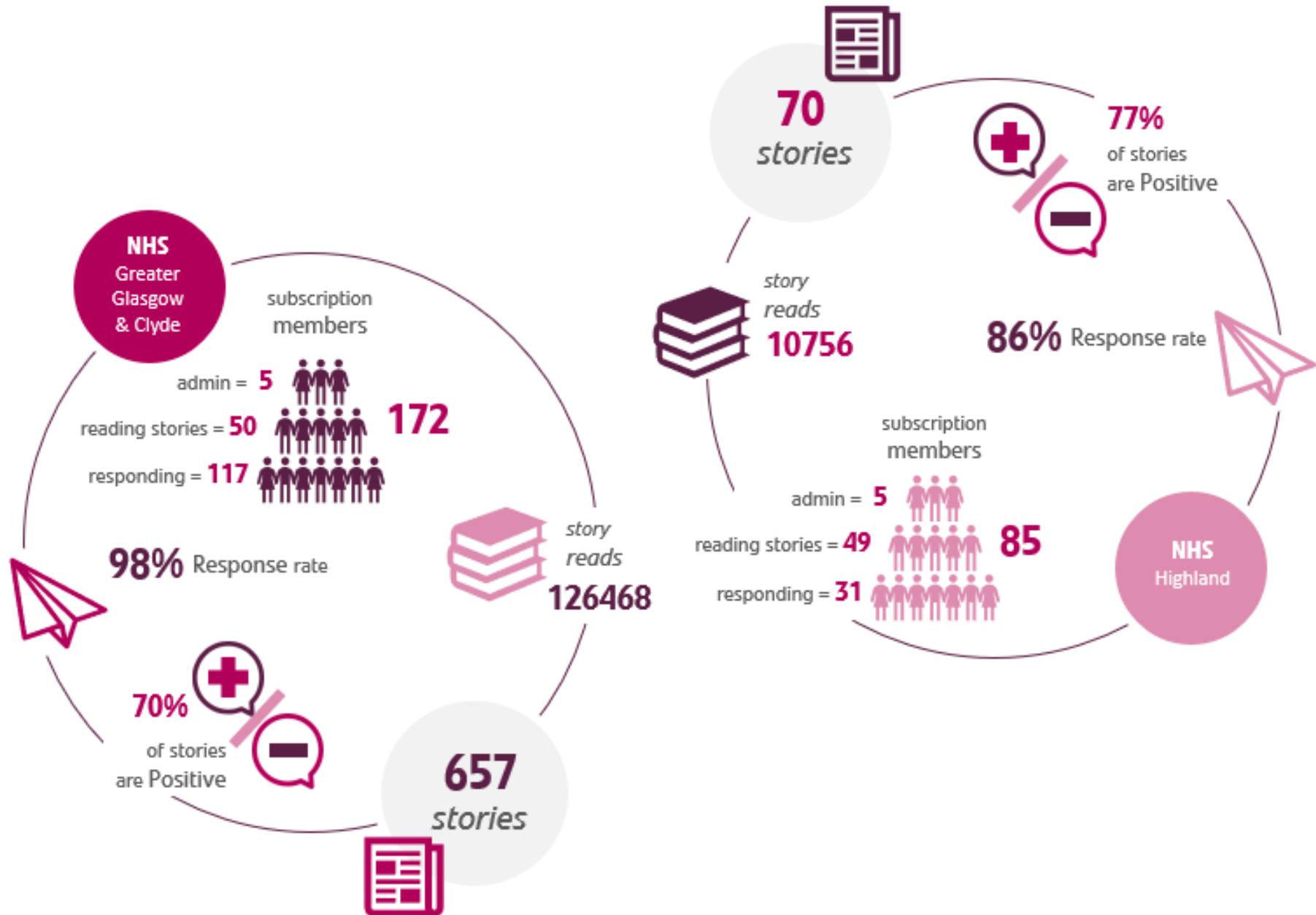
### Dash "Boards"

Some summary info graphics by Health Board



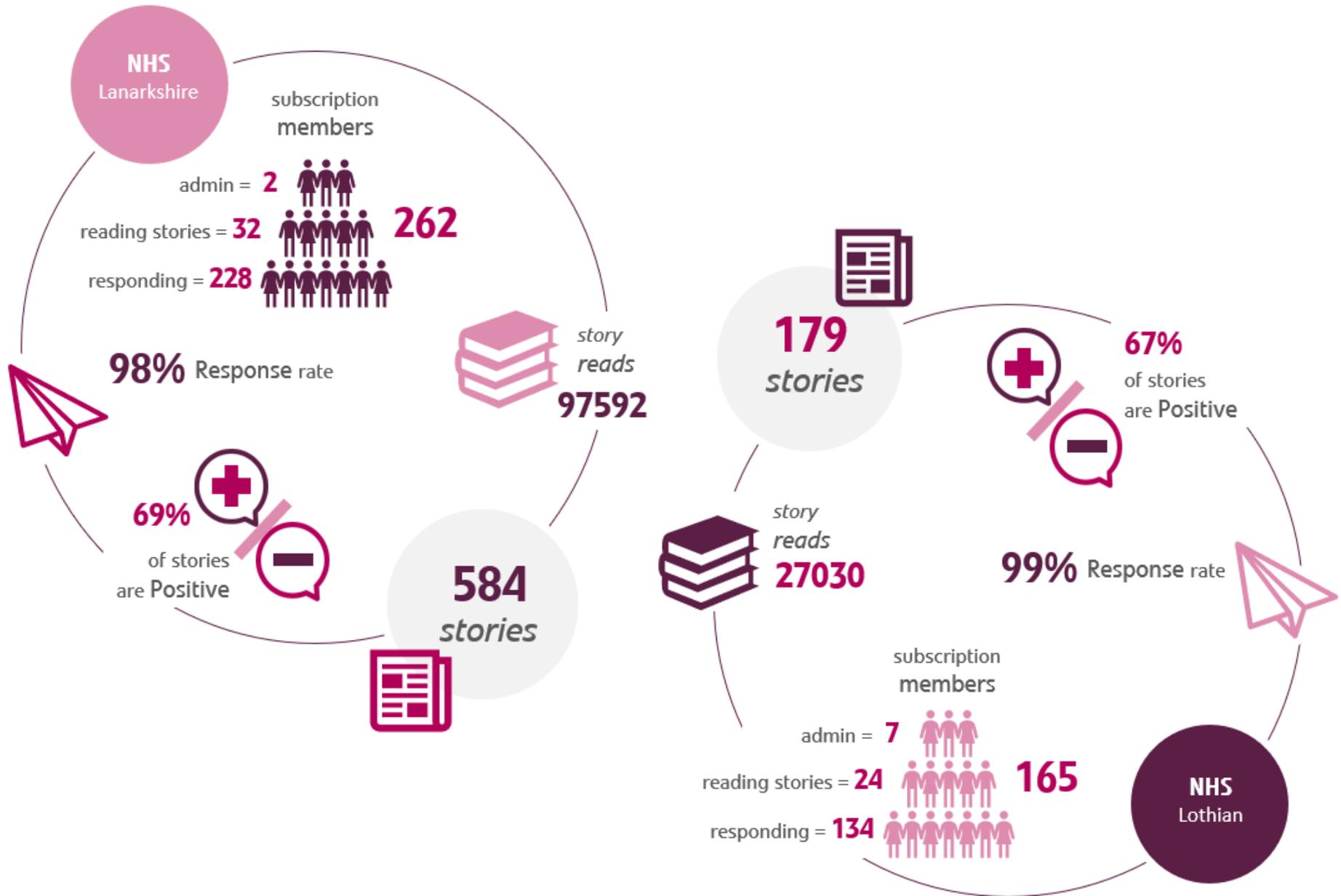
### Dash "Boards"

Some summary info graphics by Health Board



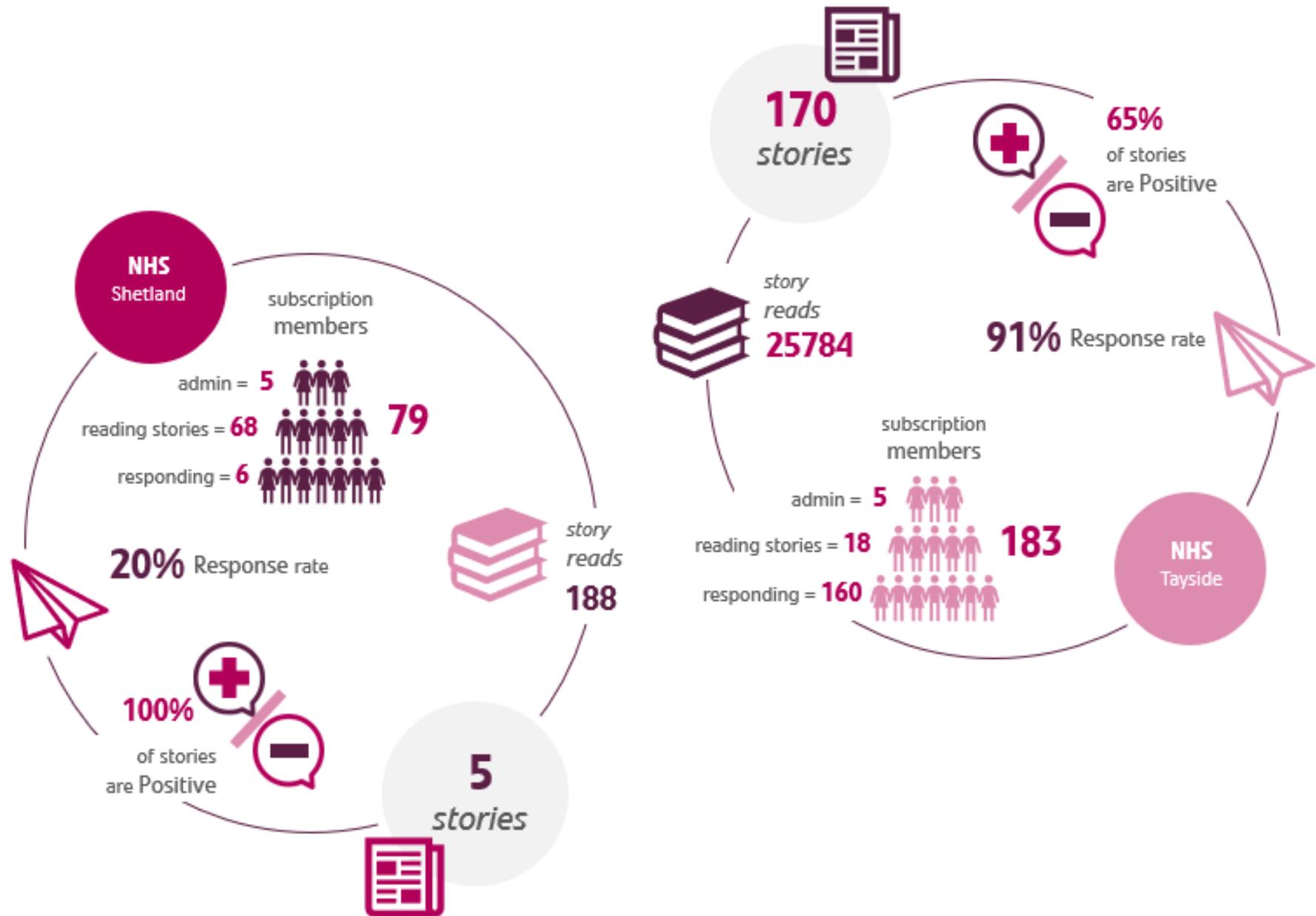
### Dash "Boards"

Some summary info graphics by Health Board



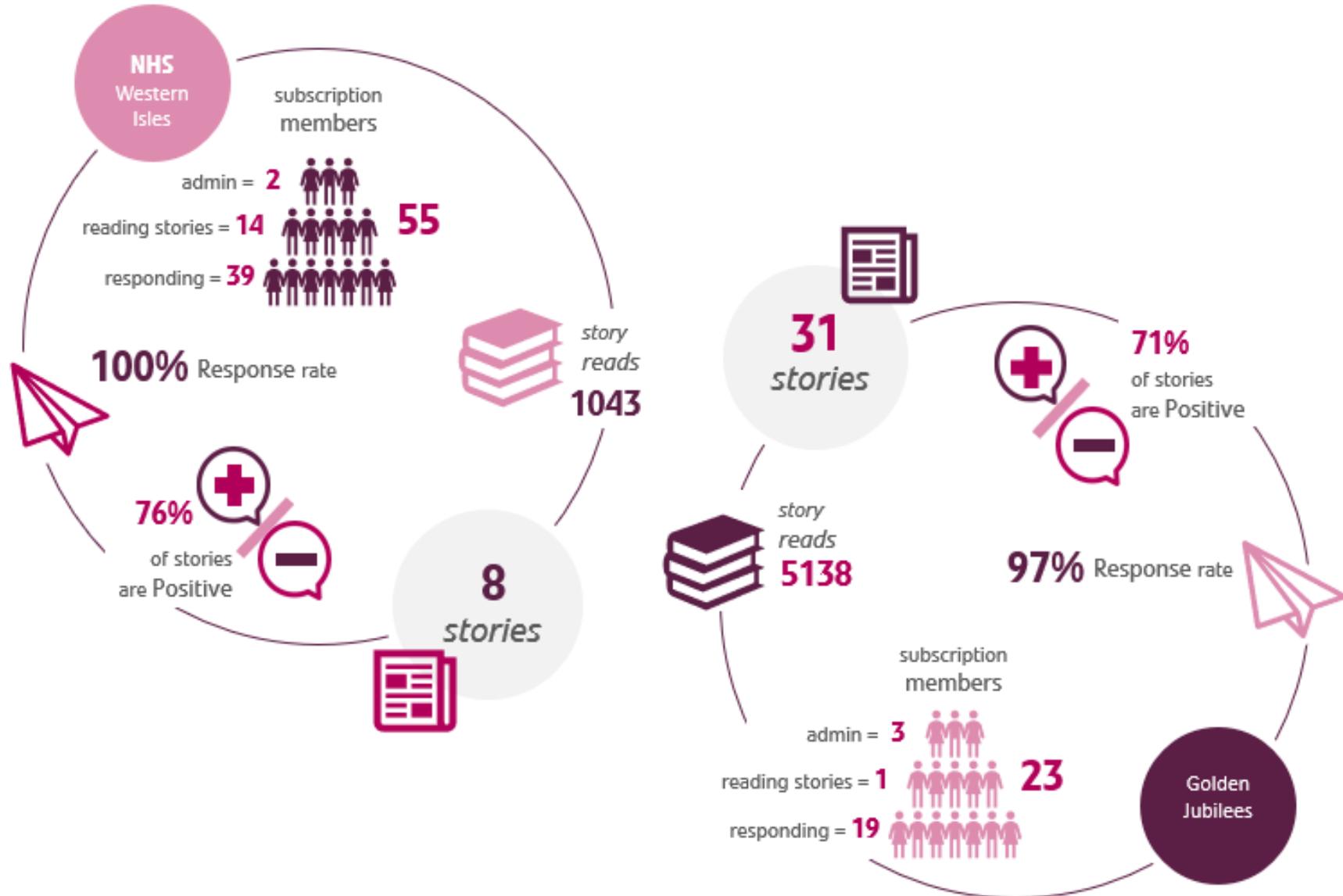
### Dash "Boards"

Some summary info graphics by Health Board



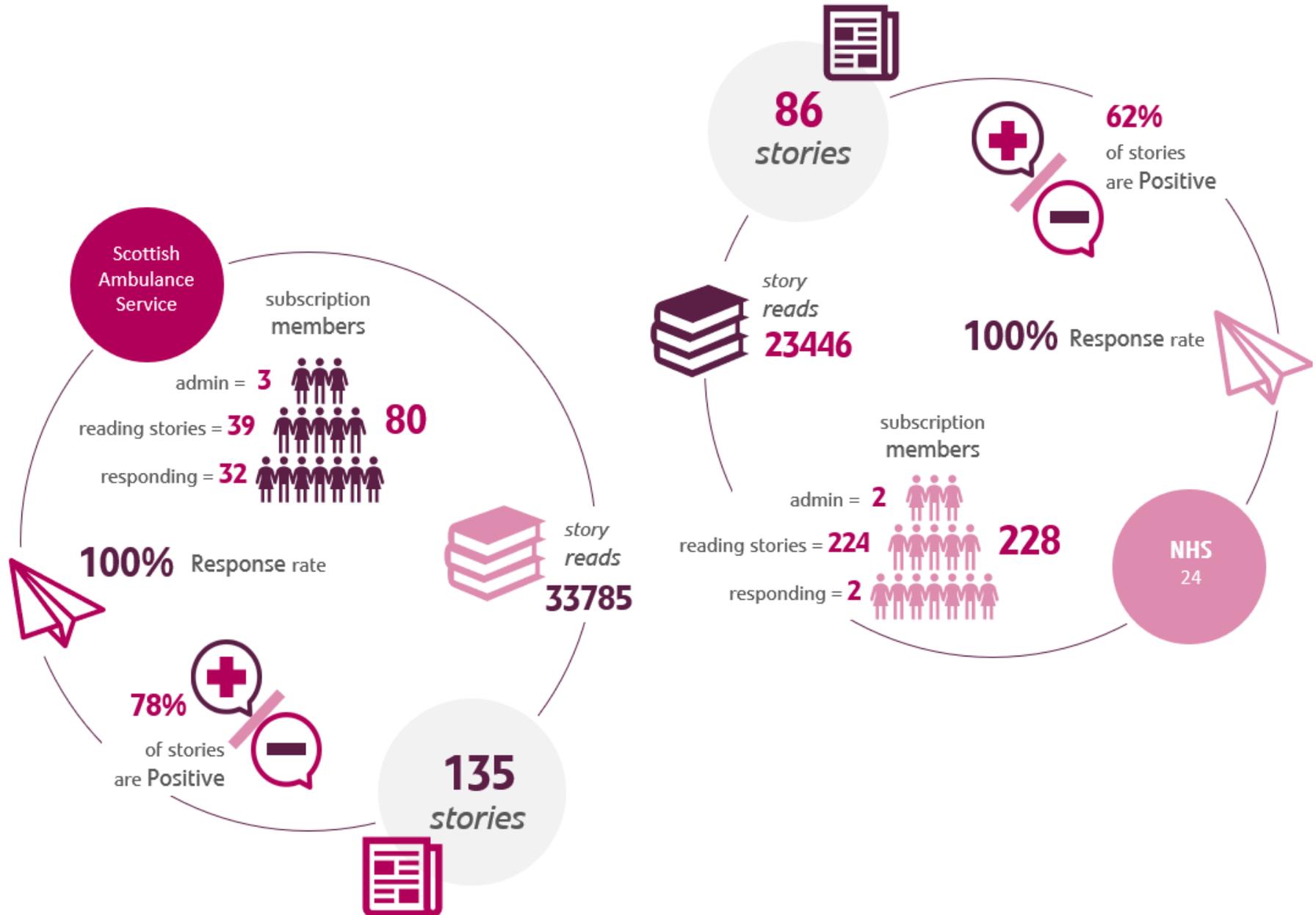
### Dash "Boards"

Some summary info graphics by Health Board



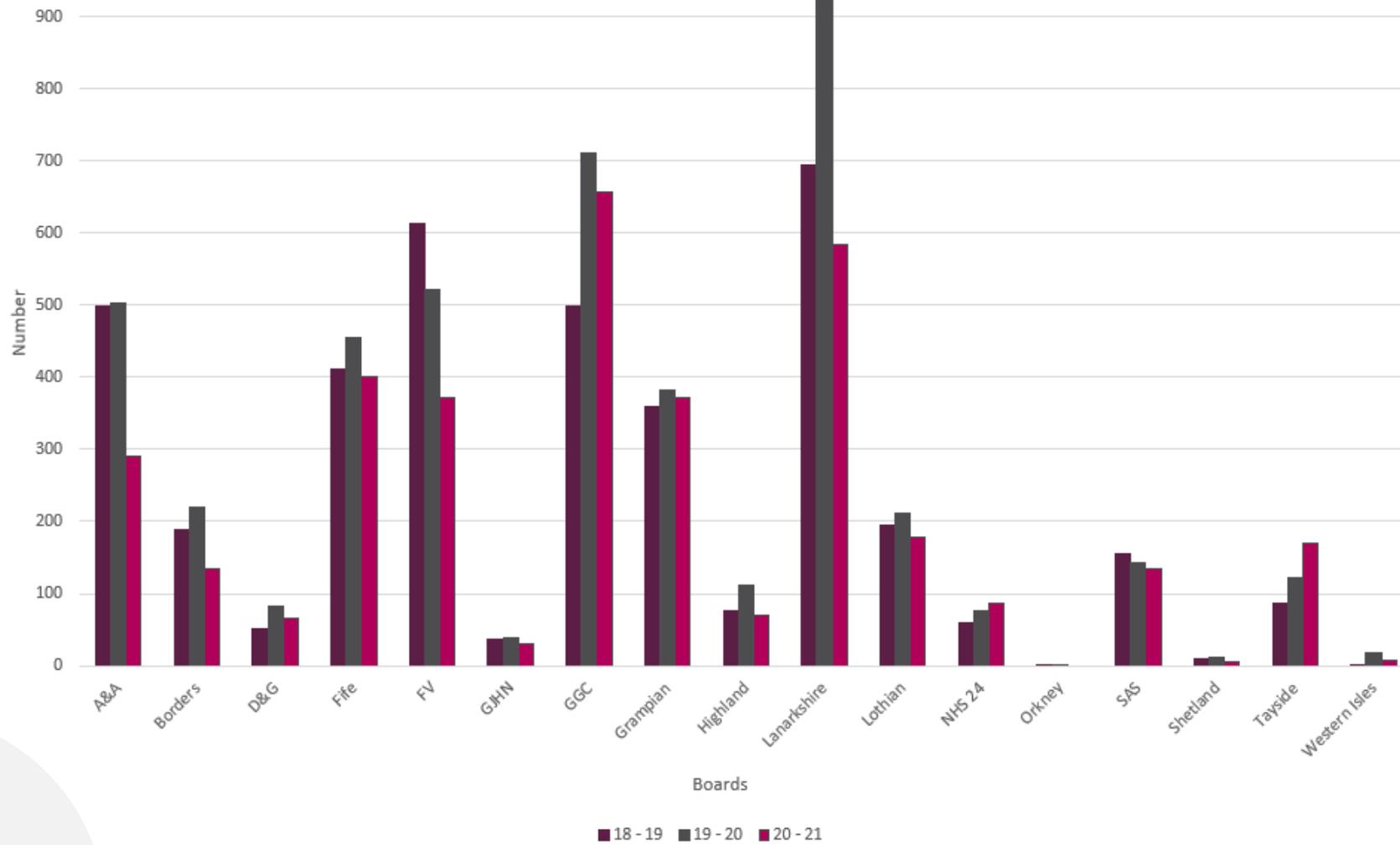
### Dash "Boards"

Some summary info graphics by Health Board



## Graphs

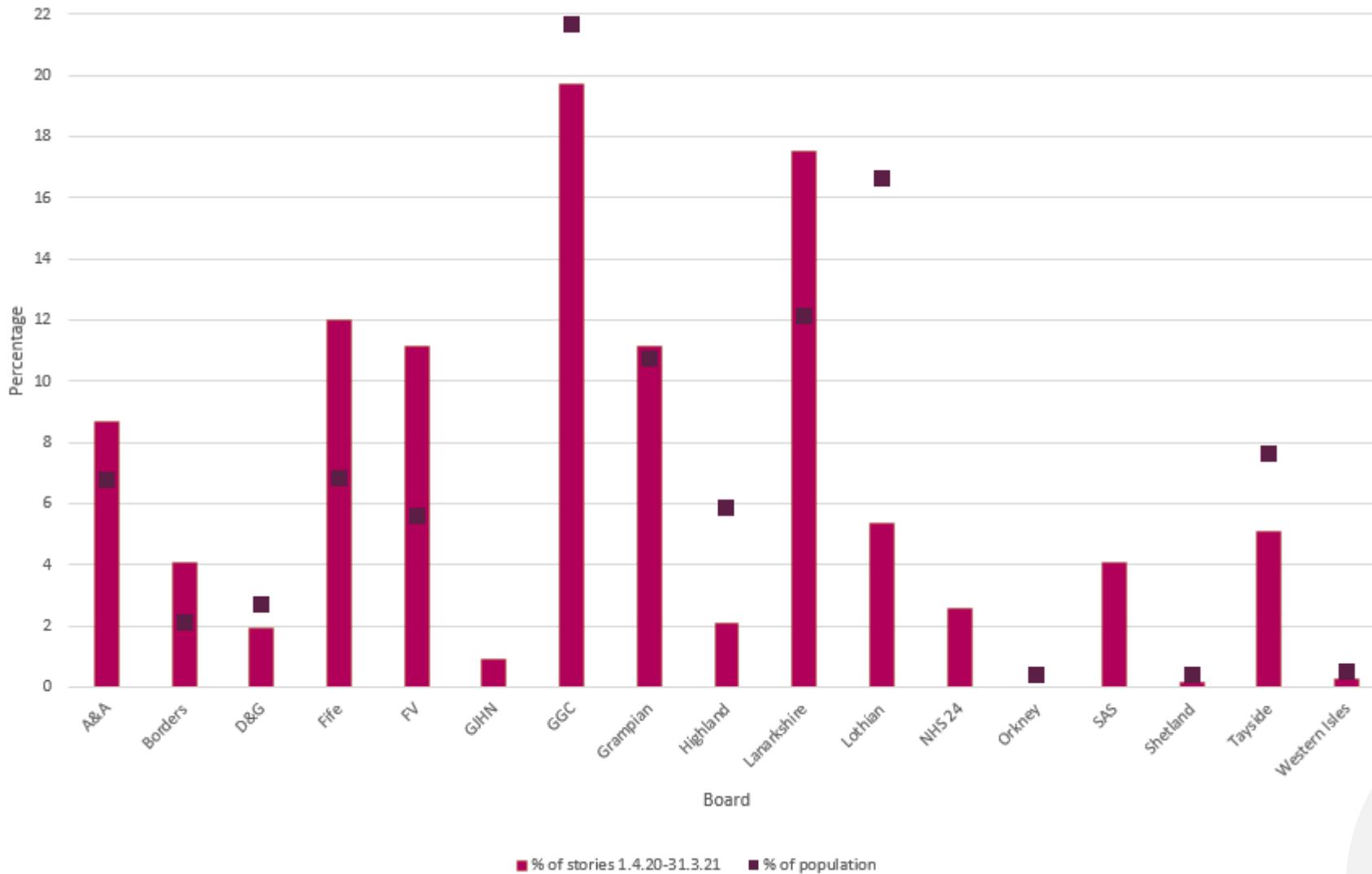
At a glance by Health Board



No of stories  
by board

## Graphs

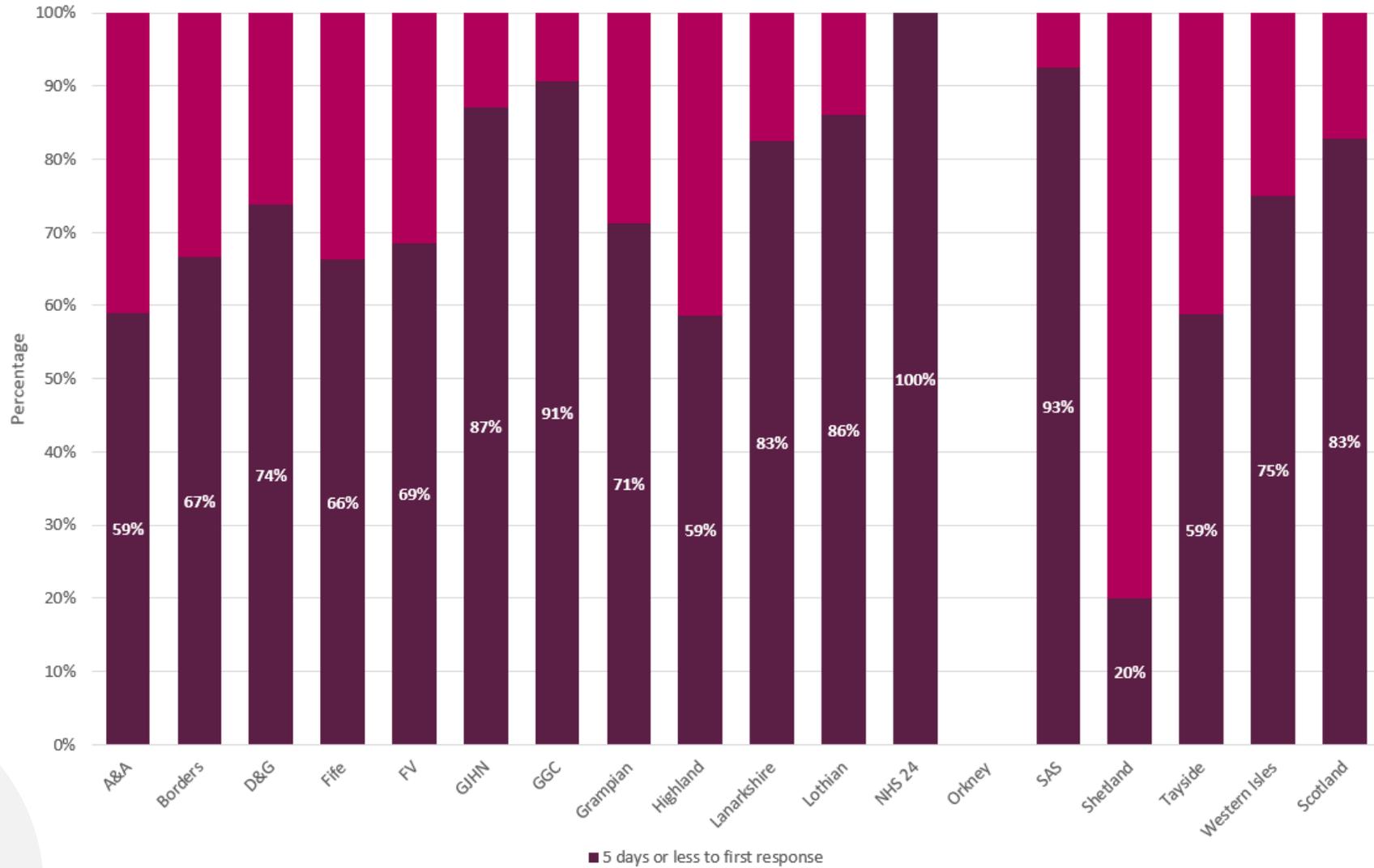
At a glance by Health Board



**% of stories  
vs  
% of total  
population**

## Graphs

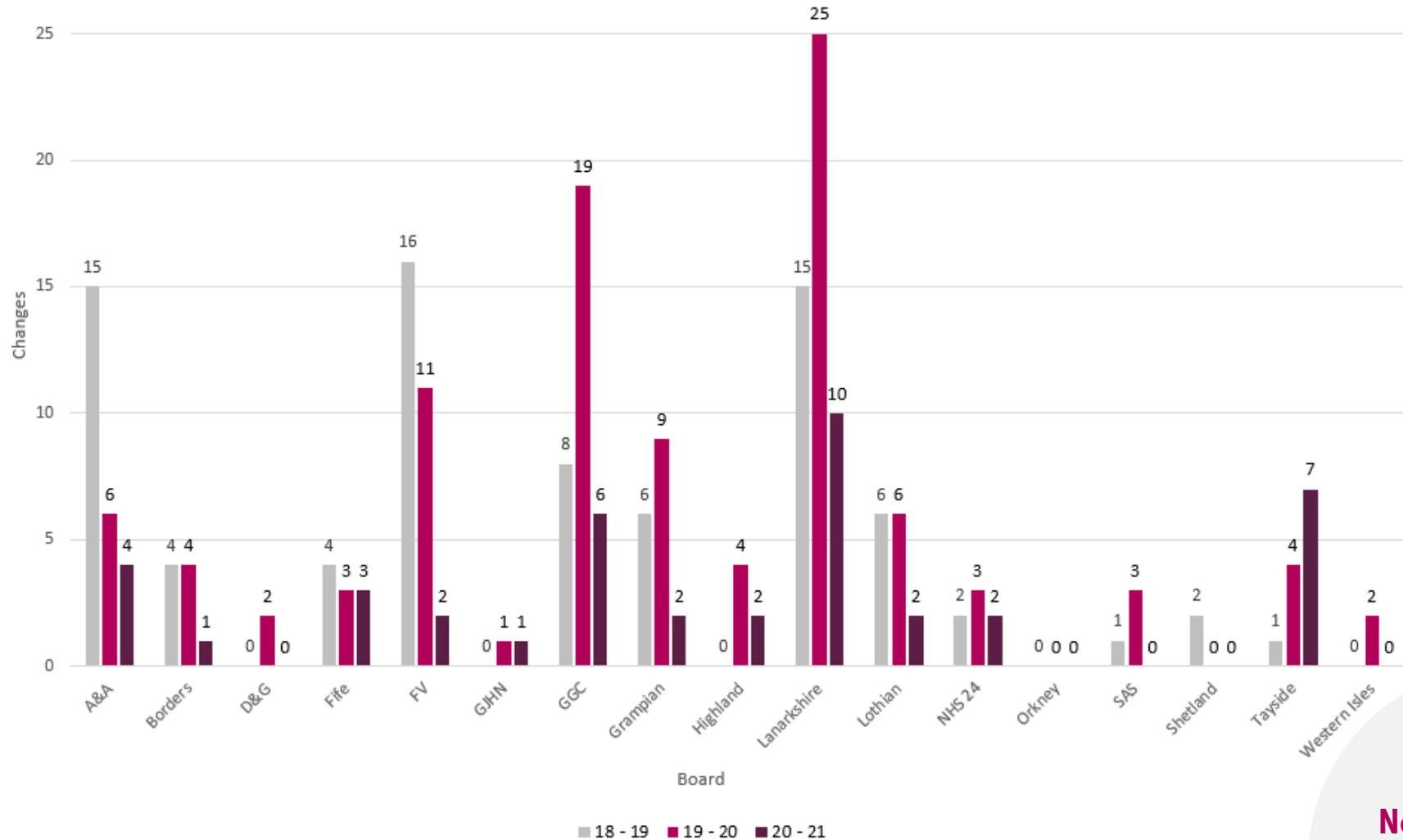
At a glance by Health Board



**Responsiveness**

## Graphs

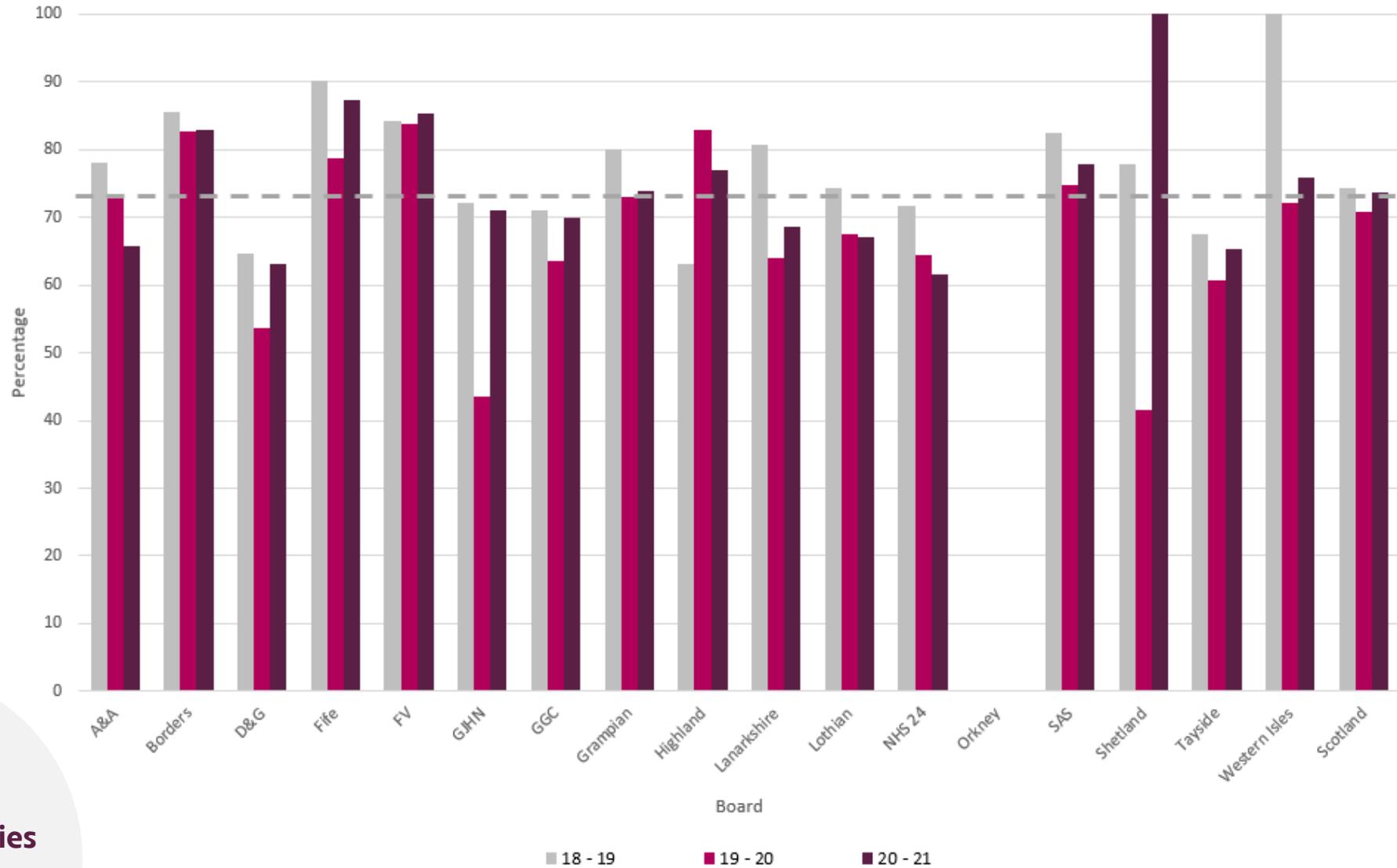
At a glance by Health Board



No of changes made or planned

## Graphs

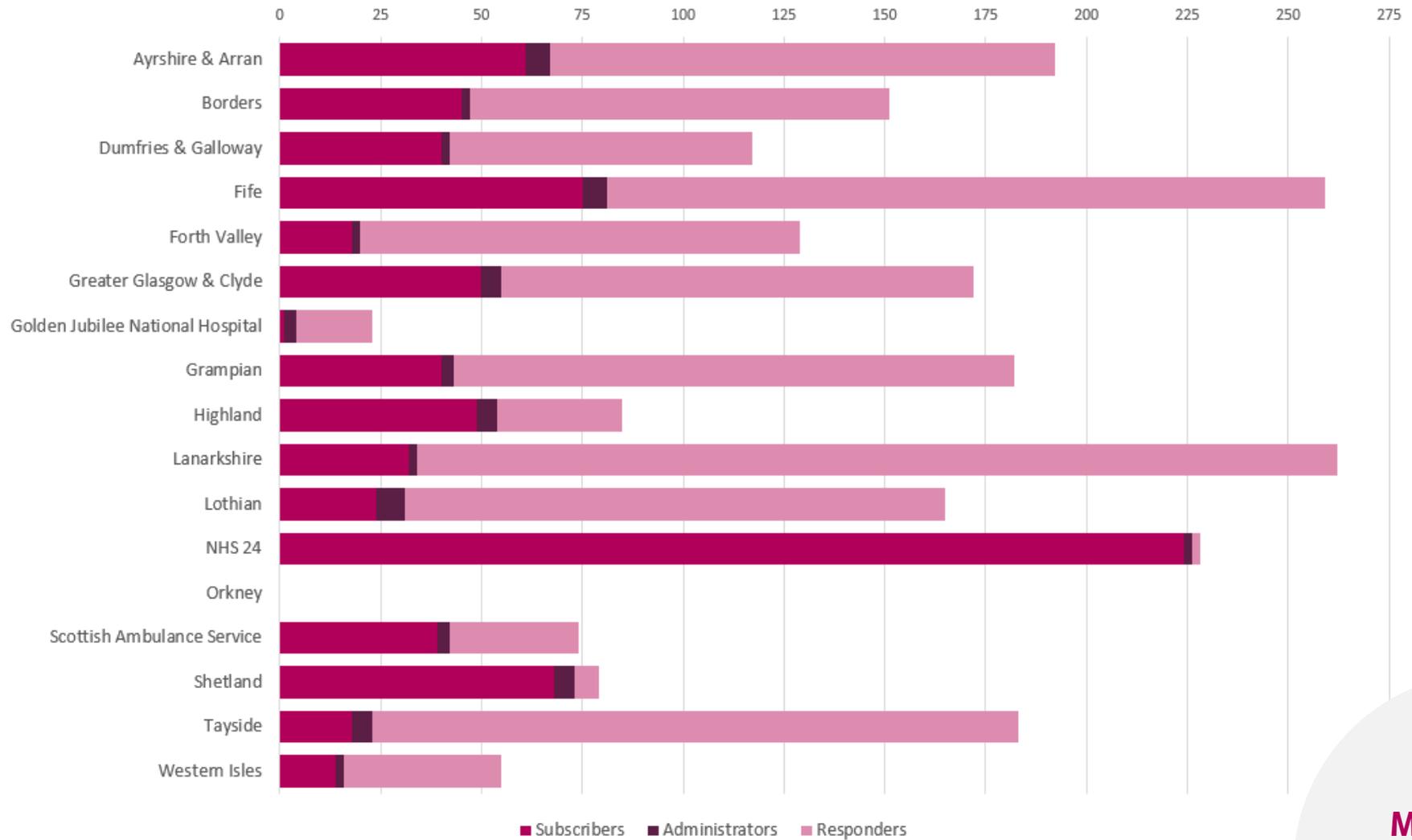
At a glance by Health Board



**% of non-critical stories (Criticality 0-1)**

### Graphs

At a glance by Health Board



Members on subscription

Get in touch to find out more  
about Care Opinion

[info@careopinion.org.uk](mailto:info@careopinion.org.uk)

[careopinion.org.uk](https://careopinion.org.uk)

