

[jobs](#)
[property](#)
[motors](#)
[find it](#)

NEWS.scotsman.com

Site
 Web

[Search](#)

Saturday, 28th May 2011



HOLYROOD ELECTION 2011 ON SCOTSMAN.COM
COMPREHENSIVE NEWS, ANALYSIS AND COMMENT

**Nurses will
replace**

police surgeons in bid to save cash

Published Date: 27 May 2011

By Gareth Rose

Home Affairs Correspondent

DOCTORS called out to police stations to deal with new arrests could be replaced with nurses as part of a drive to cut costs.

The nurses would be based in police stations to deal with prisoners when they arrive - reducing the amount spent on costly expensive call-out charges.

Strathclyde, Scotland's largest police force, said it had already shaved money off its annual co

ADVERTISEMENT

sts by cutting senior officer numbers, slashing overtime bills and implementing a programme of voluntary redundancies - but said it wanted to make further savings in areas such as the £4 million spent on medical care of detainees and a £350,000 cost paid out to the SSPCA to home stray dogs.

The force says it is facing a real terms cut of 5.4 per cent a year - but intends to maintain the number of officers on the street.

"We can certainly maintain officer numbers this year, next year will be more of a challenge, but we will do our best - because I believe officer numbers are important," said Chief Constable Stephen House.

Strathclyde has already saved about £800,000 by making sure detainees do not abuse the system and only receive medical care when it is necessary. It hopes to reduce the bill to about £1m eventually.

"What we do is say, 'When was the last time you saw a doctor?' If it's 10 years ago, do they really need to see one now?" added Mr House.

"We're working with the NHS. Do we have to have doctors, or can we use nurses? At present we call doctors out from home. At 3am, that costs, naturally. If we have a rota of nurses that could cost a lot less. We have to be careful, we do have a duty of a care to people."

Margaret Watt, chairwoman of the Scotland Patients Association, warned the force would need to have "top quality nurses" to maintain standards.

"It sounds good and it's something they should look at if there are savings to be made - but the key thing is quality of service because there are lives at stake here," she said.

A spokeswoman for NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde said it had had initial discussions on the issue with Strathclyde Police. "Provision of nurses is an option used elsewhere but it will be a decision for the police how they wish to proceed," she said.

The force, which currently shares responsibility for looking after stray dogs with the council, is keen to reduce the amount it spends on the service.

The £13.50 a night charged by the SSPCA is paid for by forces if the dog is picked up out of hours.

Page 1 of 2

[Next Page »](#)

- **Last Updated:** 26 May 2011 9:29 PM
- **Source:** The Scotsman
- **Location:** Edinburgh

Medical Negligence

Get Medical Negligence Compensation Ask a Solicitor - Fast Free Service

www.rightsolicitor.co.uk

Professional Shoes

For those who work on their feet all day. Scholl Professional Shoes.

www.scholl.com/footcare

Maternity Nurse Experts

Experienced Newborn Nurses From Leading Maternity Agency in UK

www.Eden-Nannies.co.uk

Locum Jobs For Doctors

We provide locum jobs in your area. Top rates, NHS approved. Apply now!

www.medecho.com



This website and its associated newspaper adheres to the Press Complaints Commission's Code of Practice. If you have a complaint about editorial content which relates to inaccuracy or intrusion, then contact the Editor by clicking [here](#).

If you remain dissatisfied with the response provided then you can contact the PCC by clicking [here](#).