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Local update

for Fife’s MPs, MSPs and
local Councillors

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# Introduction

This update is part of our on-going commitment to keep you informed of the latest developments at NHS Fife that may be of interest to you and your constituents, this includes information on our on-going response to the COVID-19 pandemic, remobilisation of our services, service changes and operational updates, along with signposting to the latest media updates issued by NHS Fife. Updates, which we aim to provide weekly, are also issued on our refreshed website [www.nhsfife.org](http://www.nhsfife.org) which provides a hub of information and guidance as well as our established Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages.

# Coronavirus

**Decisions about how vaccines are given, and at what intervals are made by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI).  This is an independent UK-wide committee comprised of expert medical staff.  The UK and devolved nations governments act on decisions and advice from this independent committee.**

## *NHS Fife is engaged in the most significant and extensive programme of mass vaccination in our lifetimes. The logistics of this programme are unprecedented and there are many moving parts that will likely evolve, change and require alteration as we move forward. As such, detailed information around elements of vaccine distribution and availability (who will get it, when they will get it, and where they will get it) may not currently be available and will likely be addressed in forthcoming updates. We appreciate your patience during these challenging times and please be assured that everyone in our health and social care sector is focused on getting life back to normal as early as possible and facilitating the most effective, efficient roll out of this vaccine.*

## Vaccine progress data

Public Health Scotland is publishing weekly statistical data on vaccinations in Scotland. The report will include data on; the numbers of people who have had their first and the numbers of people who have their second dose of the vaccine. The data for the numbers of people who have had the first dose of the vaccine will be broken down by; age group, NHS Board, sex, and eligibility criteria (whether the person receiving the vaccine was a Healthcare worker, a member of staff in a care home, a resident in a care home, social care worker). This data will be updated every week and will be published within the Statistical report on a Wednesday at noon, [here](https://beta.isdscotland.org/find-publications-and-data/population-health/covid-19/covid-19-statistical-report/). Daily uptake at a national level is published daily by the Scottish Government. We would encourage elected members and media to use these resources as the main source for the latest data on COVID-19 vaccination figures. The Scottish Government’s COVID-19 Vaccine Deployment Plan can be found [here](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-vaccine-deployment-plan-2021/).

## Care home residents and staff vaccinated with first dose

We are pleased to have completed the first dose of vaccinations for care home residents and staff, in the care home setting, and we are now making plans for further visits to vaccinate new residents or those who were unable to be vaccinated due to being COVID positive. We remain ahead of the national average in vaccinating this population and we anticipate being able to begin administering the second dose of vaccinations in March.

## AstraZeneca vaccine delivered to GP practices

The first doses of the new Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine were delivered to GP practices last week with all GP practices now in receipt of initial doses. The product is considerably less demanding in its logistical requirements than Pfizer BioNTech, with fridge storage sufficient for up to six months, and we expect to receive around increasing quantities during January. These will be administered to people in line with JCVI guidance, beginning with around 18,000 people over the age of 80.

## Approval of the Moderna vaccine

Following the approval of the Oxford AstraZeneca and Pfizer BioNTech vaccines, a third coronavirus vaccine has now been approved for use. The Moderna vaccine has shown to be 94% effective in trials and has passed regulators safety and quality tests. Supplies will be delivered to the UK from Spring and, as is the case with other approved vaccines, the Moderna vaccine will be made available to people in line with JCVI guidance.

## Vaccination appointments

We have started to contact people to arrange vaccination appointments – initially, in line with JCVI guidance, appointments will be offered to those over the age of 80 by letter or telephone. As this is a significant undertaking, it is important that people do not contact the health board or their local GP practice for a vaccination appointment – they will be contacted in due course. For general information about the coronavirus vaccine and its delivery, people can phone 0800 030 8013 (available 8.00am to 8.00pm, seven days a week) although will not be possible to book or change vaccine appointments via this helpline.

## Asymptomatic testing programme

NHS Fife is one of two Health Boards which has received approval from Scottish Government to roll out an asymptomatic community testing programme, following a successful bid for funds. The programme is time limited and is expected to run for up to six months. The Community Testing Programme is in addition to asymptomatic testing programmes already available in universities and healthcare. The programme will allow us to undertake a targeted response to areas of high prevalence, with the aim of breaking chains of transmission and protecting public health. Asymptomatic testing sites will be placed in fixed locations alongside an ongoing mobile programme, allowing us to target areas with the greatest need based on the most up to date data and intelligence. The programme will also seek to target harder to reach groups and those who may be at higher risk.

## Postponed procedures

During the second wave of this pandemic we have continued to perform much of our elective programme, however, given the rising numbers of patients admitted with COVID-19 we have had to make the difficult decision to postpone some non-urgent procedures so that we can prioritise clinical services for those who patients who are most unwell. Those procedures postponed are being rescheduled as soon as is practical and safe to do so.

## Vaccination sites

Over recent weeks, we have been assessing a wide range of potential venues for their suitability to host COVID-19 vaccination clinics. This process is almost complete, and the details of these venues will be confirmed as soon as possible. A list of provisional vaccination sites can be found [here](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-update-on-vaccinations/).

## Vaccination Delivery Director

Former Chief Executive of NHS Fife, Paul Hawkins, has been appointed as COVID-19 Vaccination Delivery Director for Scotland.

## Appeal for registrant vaccine support

Towards the end of last year, we appealed for registrants to assist with the roll-out of the COVID-19 vaccine. Our appeal was a great success and we were overwhelmed by the response we received. We are now in the process of contacting individuals with the specific skill sets required and have thanked all of those who expressed an interest.

## Temporary lockdown

Like the rest of mainland Scotland, Fife moved into temporary lockdown on Tuesday the 5th of January until at least the end of this month. For more details on lockdown protection measures click [here](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-protection-levels/pages/protection-level-4/).

## Statements on specific coronavirus cases (including care homes)

There continues to be significant media coverage of coronavirus cases across Fife. Statements relating to specific incidents, information on how best to reduce the chances of contracting the virus, and what you should do if someone develops symptoms, can be found on [our website](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/campaigns/coronavirus-information/). Please note that we will only release statements related to care home outbreaks after residents and relatives have been informed and if it is in the public interest to do so.

## Local data

You can find the latest COVID-19 statistical report [here](https://beta.isdscotland.org/find-publications-and-data/population-health/covid-19/covid-19-statistical-report/). The number of confirmed cases, people in hospital and ICU in Fife [here](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-daily-data-for-scotland/). Local information around deaths is published weekly by National Records Scotland at 12 noon on a Wednesday; this includes a breakdown by setting and is sourced from all death registrations. This data can be found [here](https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/covid19stats). We have also produced a handy info graphic that we publish every week on the Know Fife website summarising the above data – this can be accessed [here](https://know.fife.scot/).

# Service updates

## Helping people get the right care, in the right place

The Scottish Government has redesigned the way that urgent healthcare services are accessed across Scotland, supporting the public to access the right care, in the right place, at the right time, and keeping people and the NHS safe this winter. Under the arrangements, people with non-life-threatening conditions, who would usually attend A&E, are asked to call NHS 24 first, during the day or at night. NHS 24 will assess people by telephone and refer them to the right care by the right healthcare professional as close to home as possible. This could include self-care, a GP practice or primary care, Pharmacy, Minor Injuries or referral into a flow and navigation hub within their NHS board for a clinical assessment.  Following this assessment, if the patient still needs to attend A&E the flow and navigation hub will schedule an appointment. Emergency 999 calls will continue to be transferred to the Scottish Ambulance Service as normal. Further information about the redesign of urgent care services is available [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/services/right/) and complements a national awareness raising campaign, which started this week.

## Hospital visiting restrictions

**Visiting is limited to essential visits only. Further information on arrangements, including guidance on essential visiting criteria and FAQS on services we frequently receive enquiries around, such as maternity and children’s, can be found** [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/services/patients-carers-and-visitors/visiting-arrangements-during-covid-19-pandemic/)**.**

# In the media

## COVID-19 impacts New Park Medical Practice

Earlier this week, New Park Medical Practice in Dunfermline temporarily took the decision to operate with a reduced service after cases of COVID-19 were confirmed amongst practice staff. A small number of practice staff were also asked to isolate after contact with the confirmed cases. The latest update can be found [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/news-and-updates/2021/new-park-medical-practice-operating-reduced-service-following-covid-19-cases/).

## First injections of Buvidal administered

Our Addictions Service has administered the first injections of Buvidal, which is a long-acting buprenorphine. Buvidal is a new treatment and is administered bi- weekly or monthly to remove the need for patients to attend for pharmacy dispensing, which is often on a daily or supervised basis. Buvidal allows the addictions service to improve its ability to engage patients who have commitments, such as working or childcare, allowing them to remain in treatment with only one appointment monthly.

## Screening programmes continuing during lockdown

We are using social media to remind people that national screening programmes are still running during the national lockdown. Travelling for a screening appointment is an essential journey. Further information on screening can be found [here](https://bit.ly/3pZ0J4L).

## Hospital capacity challenges

Whilst winter is traditionally the most challenging time of year for our NHS, the prevalence of COVID-19 and subsequent admissions to hospital due to the virus has compounded this. Our hospitals are under significant pressure at the minute and we are asking for the support of elected members to help us alleviate this by using their social media presence to promote winter readiness and changes to the way that people are accessing urgent care. Assets can be accessed on our online campaigns area [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/campaignresources/).

## Ice and Snow, Take it Slow

## With the recent cold snap, we have been using social media to provide people with a series of hints and tips around staying safe from trips and falls. Our hospitals have seeing an increased number of people attending with breaks strains and other injuries related to accidents on the ice. The campaign is aimed at keeping people safe and reducing the number of people coming through our doors. More information around staying safe this winter can be found [here](https://www.nhsinform.scot/winter).

## MRI scanner replacement

Work commenced earlier this week to replace the MRI scanner at Queen Margaret Hospital in Dunfermline. The project is being funded by Scottish Government and will see the existing scanner replaced with a new state-of-the-art equivalent. The installation of the unit will take a number of weeks, with the new scanner becoming operational by April 2021. Diagnostic imaging is a critical component of modern and effective healthcare, with more than 14,000 MRI scans carried out in Fife last year alone.

## Show you care, prepare

This winter, NHS Fife is linking in with the Scottish Government’s national campaign to encourage people and their loved ones to stay healthy as the temperature drops - ‘Show you care, prepare’. The campaign, which is aimed at alleviating some of the pressures faced by our NHS during a period where there is traditionally significant challenges for our services, raises awareness of some of the simple steps that people can take to make sure they are as prepared as possible in the event of ill health. Reminders to check prescriptions are ordered and in plenty of time, to use your local pharmacy for advice about winter health and medicines, and that there are a wide range of health advice and support available online all form part of the campaign. More information can be found [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/campaigns-projects/show-you-care-prepare/).

## Sharing our messages

We appreciate the support of elected members in sharing our health messages and note that you have already been engaging with the topics we have suggested on social media - we are grateful for your support. As such, and in order to help you share our messages with the public in as vibrant a way as possible, we have created a [dedicated campaigns area](https://www.nhsfife.org/campaignresources/) on our website where you will be able to download graphics, videos and any other resources to complement your posts.

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| Keep in touchElected members enquiries NHS Fife is committed to responding to elected member enquires in a timely manner. However, we need to manage enquiries to ensure that our urgent frontline delivery is not disrupted. To help you and to help us we are asking that all emails for updates and information or to address constituents' enquiries are directed to our central email address. All emails should be directed to the NHS Fife Chief Executive Office for response and co-ordination at: fife.chiefexecutive@nhs.scot The Chief Executives’ Office will formally acknowledge receipt of all correspondence and coordinate a response from services to ensure that all enquiries are responded to in good time. Elected members are politely asked not to approach services directly for responses and instead direct all enquiries to the Chief Executive’s Office.  Also, during this busy period can we ask that you make use of the excellent public information available on the NHS Fife Website, NHS Inform and the Scottish Government website and only come to us if the request relates specifically to Fife and not covered by local or national updates or guidance.  To aid the sharing of information and updates with Fife's elected representatives we will now be issuing or Elected Members briefing on a weekly rather than fortnightly basis. This will be emailed directly to you and available to access online at: [**www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/briefings-for-fife-elected-members-msps-mps-and-councillors/**](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/briefings-for-fife-elected-members-msps-mps-and-councillors/)This update will also collate and address any common or shared requests for information from Elected members, received via the Chief Executive's Office, rather than us having to address each individual enquiry.Accessible information and translation NHS Fife continues to provide interpreting and translation services for patients despite there being no face to face interpretation currently. These assets and further information can be found [here](https://coronavirus.nhsfife.org/accessible-informationtranslation/).Board papers accessible onlineBoard papers from previous meetings can be accessed online [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/nhs/index.cfm?fuseaction=nhs.pagegroup&p2sid=E44DBB1B-5056-8C6F-C013BB57547CE2B1&themeid=E44C37C3-5056-8C6F-C003CD63C15D8FF0&GroupOrg=270004AD-BB72-8519-4F4524B7837B36DD). |

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