

**Issue 4|30 April 2020**

## **Introduction**

**As part of efforts to keep you informed, NHS Fife is issuing a weekly update dedicated to our response to the Coronavirus pandemic. This weekly briefing is circulated to NHS Fife Board members and Fife’s MPs, MSPs and local Councillors.**

##### This digital update includes information on matters including planning and resilience, operational updates, along with signposting to the latest media updates issued by NHS Fife to ensure clear, consistent and timely sharing of information.

##### Updates are also issued on our new public facing Coronavirus micro site which provides a hub of information and advice as well as our established, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages.

## [**https://coronavirus.nhsfife.org**](https://coronavirus.nhsfife.org/)

## **Hot Topics**

**The NHS is here for you, so don’t ignore the warning signs**

Last week we issued a reminder to patients in Fife that it remains vital that all those with non-coronavirus health concerns still seek help as they would have done before the outbreak and if a hospital appointment has not been cancelled, then they should still attend. COVID-19 patients and those displaying symptoms are being treated separately. Key messages included:

**Cancer -** Don’t delay in getting potential cancer signs and symptoms checked during COVID-19 your GP practice is still here for you. It’s probably nothing serious, but it’s best to get checked, as the earlier cancer is found the easier it is to treat. Information on the common signs and symptoms of cancer can be found at getcheckedearly.org.

**Immunisations -** Immunisations for pregnant women and young children are continuing during this time, as they are an important part of helping protect against serious, preventable diseases. The NHS is still here for you - don’t miss your appointment, or call to rearrange if you or your child are showing signs of COVID-19. Find information at www.nhsinform.scot/immunisation.

**Rapid Deterioration in Health -** If you or anyone in your household notices a rapid deterioration in their health, seek help immediately. Don’t ignore the early warning signs of serious conditions such as heart attacks, strokes, severe asthma, or diabetic collapse. The NHS is still here for you. Call 999 for an emergency or your GP in normal hours and 111 for out of hours support.

**Resuscitation policy**

NHS Fife’s policy on resuscitation (DNA CPR) remains unchanged despite the spread of coronavirus and there are no protocols in place preventing staff from performing resuscitation on patients with COVID-19. The care we provide to all patients is person-centred, with any clinical decisions made based entirely on the individual and their particular circumstances.

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

NHS Fife continues to work round the clock with partners across the public sector to ensure patients and staff in both our acute and community hospitals remain protected and supported throughout this pandemic. We have established a hub to distribute quantities of personal protective equipment to healthcare sites across Fife. This enables NHS Fife to provide supplies of important PPE quickly and efficiently to healthcare staff working in the Kingdom’s communities and in its hospitals. We have also been inundated with donations from the public and have recently produced 3D printing specifications for small plastic clips that are both extremely useful and not subject to the same safety requirements as other items. There is further detail around this in the ‘Media’ section.

**Extending capacity going forward**

While we continue to deliver the most urgent and emergency non COVID-19 patient care during the peak of this pandemic, we are currently working up proposals on how to safely expand this capability, whilst at the same time being mindful of the enhanced infection and prevention measures required as a result of COVID-19. We appreciate that there is a degree of urgency to remobilise some of our services and we are working in collaboration with regional partners and the Scottish Government to ensure this process is clinically led, safe and patient centered.

**Confusion around staff uniforms**

We have received reports from staff – particularly those in community nursing roles – where they are being subject to abuse from members of the public for wearing their uniforms and are being viewed as an infection risk. Whilst it is true that hospital based staff should not wear their uniforms away from hospital grounds, community staff have very different roles and are required to wear their uniforms in the line of duty. None of our staff should be subjected to abuse – physical or verbal – for going about their work in the appropriate manner during this challenging time. We will be recording a video with our Director of Nursing for use on social media next week raising awareness of this and increasing understanding around the role of the community nurse.

## **Media**

**Local community thanked for efforts protecting healthcare staff and patients**

We continue to be overwhelmed by the support offered by local communities and businesses across Fife, particularly with regards to personal protective equipment (PPE). NHS Fife is receiving regular supplies of PPE through the national procurement arrangements and a number of local businesses have kindly donated certified FFP3 masks and other items to support us in responding to COVID-19. A number of people have also offered donations of items made using 3D printers, including small plastic clips to improve the comfort of the masks worn by healthcare staff. These clips have proven to be particularly useful and are not subject to the same medical device regulations as face masks and visors as they are not considered personal protective equipment. These clips might seem insignificant but make a world of difference to staff using masks in our clinical areas - the masks can become uncomfortable as they have to be tightly fitted in order to provide the necessary levels of protection, with many of those wearing them doing so for much of the day. If your constituents have a 3D printer and wish to help us with this, the style and dimensions of these items are available on our dedicated coronavirus website: <https://coronavirus.nhsfife.org/>. We have had a variety of donations of visors made locally using 3D printers – these are crucial pieces of protective equipment for staff and must meet the safety requirements of official medical device regulations. Importantly, we continue to have sufficient supplies of face visors for all healthcare staff that require them.

**Reminder of blue-green algae risks during lockdown walks**

NHS Fife has issued a reminder to people to be on the lookout for blooms of potentially hazardous blue-green algae (also known as Cyanobacteria) in the region’s waterways. Blue-green algae are tiny organisms which develop naturally in lochs, ponds, reservoirs, rivers and in the sea. People and animals can be affected as a result of direct contact with water affected by blue-green algae and NHS Fife is advising the public, especially dog owners taking their animals for a local walk during the lockdown, to be alert to the blooms as temperatures rise. Those who accidentally swallow affected water can suffer from complaints such as skin rashes, eye irritation, vomiting, diarrhoea, or pains in muscles and joints. These symptoms are usually mild, but in some cases, can be severe.

**Message of thanks from Hollywood actor**

Star of Trainspotting and Grey’s Anatomy, Kevin McKidd, took to Instagram to praise the new medics who graduated early to help bolster COVID-19 resilience efforts in Fife. The Elgin born actor sent his thanks after more than 30 medical school graduates had their registrations accelerated to take up roles in local hospitals around 10 weeks early.

**Donations and offers of support**

An updated section of the NHS Fife Coronavirus micro site has been launched to outline the process for members of the general public and organisations wanting to assist NHS Fife’s response to the Coronavirus pandemic in relation to donations and offers of help - including supplying PPE. For more information, visit: [**https://coronavirus.nhsfife.org/donations-and-offers-of-help/**](https://coronavirus.nhsfife.org/donations-and-offers-of-help/)

## **Clinical updates**

**Changes to services/visiting arrangements**

The latest information around changes to services, access and visiting can be found in a new area of our new micro site: <https://coronavirus.nhsfife.org/changes-to-services/>

**Updated guidance around visiting for vulnerable patients**

The Scottish Government has updated its principles for restricting visitors to patients across NHS Scotland during COVID-19 outbreak to essential visits only. The following visits are deemed essential:

* A birth partner during childbirth
* For a person receiving end-of-life care
* To support someone with a mental health issue such as dementia, a learning disability or autism where not being present would cause the patient to be distressed
* To accompany a child in hospital.

**One stop baby health clinics**

One stop baby health clinics are being introduced in Fife. The clinics will see doctors join immunisation teams in community based clinics to ensure any emerging concerns are identified and managed as early as possible. The doctors will carry out the child's six to eight week health check at the same time as they receive their eight week routine vaccine. The health check is a screening that will check your baby’s hips, heart, eyes and - for boys – testicles. It is important to have this check to manage any concern at an early age. If your baby is older than eight weeks and they haven’t had this check, we can still see them at one of our catch-up sessions. From the 21st May, all babies born at the start of the lockdown period will also have the opportunity to have their hearing checked at the eight week vaccine appointment. Specialist staff from the audiology department will carry out these checks. Vaccines for babies and young children are important medical reasons to leave home and our immunisation team continues to deliver routine vaccines for babies at eight, twelve and 16 weeks, and at one year - with booster vaccines for children at around three years and four months. It is important that we keep vaccination rates as high as possible or we may see children becoming ill with diseases such as whooping cough and measles. Constituents with any questions or who need more information should contact the immunisation team on:

**Phone**: 01383 565456

**Text**: 07900161671  
**Email**: [Fife-uhb.immunisationqueries@nhs.net](mailto:Fife-uhb.immunisationqueries@nhs.net)

**Baby hip clinics continuing at the Victoria Hospital**

Baby hip clinics have been classed as essential, meaning that they continue to operate in the Children's Unit at the Victoria Hospital. Identification and treatment of newborn hip problems should take place before the age of 12 weeks for successful outcomes. Appointments should be rescheduled if any member of the household has symptoms of COVID-19. Access to the Baby Hip clinic is via the main door of the Maternity Unit, Victoria Hospital. One parent only should attend with their baby.

**Palliative care support lines**

A number of palliative care support phone lines have been launched to support patients, families and carers and health and care professionals in Fife during COVID-19. These phone lines will augment existing arrangements for palliative care provision where care is community-based:

**24 hr Fife Palliative Care Support Line** (for rapid access to nursing or medical support) – contact details provided to patients on an individual basis.

**24 hr Fife Specialist Palliative Care Service** (for advice, assessments, reviews and the coordination of hospice admissions) – 01592 729246

**Hearing aid visual guides**

With hearing aid users unable to access Audiology Services in person, the department has posted helpful visual guides online.  Here, users can find advice on getting to grips with their hearing aid at home.  These short videos cover all aspects of hearing aid care, from basic functions to cleaning and maintenance. Find the videos on our website at [Hearing Aid Video guides](https://nhsfife.org/nhs/index.cfm?fuseaction=nhs.pagedisplay&p2sid=A6509050-B1C1-6F02-1446FEF67933F1B2&themeid=3B984BF2-65BF-00F7-D42941481355468F)

Local audiology contacts:

**Phone** - 01592 643355 ext 28355

**Text** - 07984356580

**Email** - audiologyfife@nhs.net

**SMS** – 07984356580

## **Workforce updates**

**StaffLink – the new NHS Fife Staff App**

NHS Fife has launched its new staff app – StaffLink. StaffLink ensures our workforce have the important news and information they need at their fingertips, whether they are at work or at home. They can also access key guidance and documents quickly and easily to help them in their daily roles. Secure and free to use, the app is easily accessible on their work or personal smartphone, tablet and desktop, and has been downloaded by over 3,000 staff since Monday. We are extremely encouraged by the level of engagement on the app and view it as a cornerstone of the way that we will communicate with our workforce going forward.

**Staff support hubs now open across Fife**

Staff Support Hubs have opened across Fife, providing calm and welcoming spaces for all staff to take time out from work. Staff are encouraged to use them quiet spaces with no need for interaction, however, a variety of easily accessible resources are also available for use, with colleagues on hand to provide support. Refreshments are also available. They are available at:

* Maggie’s Centre, Kirkcaldy
* Forthview Day Hospital, Queen Margaret Hospital
* Lynebank Hospital (Room 4, Therapies Corridor)
* Westfield Day Hospital, Whyteman’s Brae
* Ceres Centre, Stratheden
* Chaplaincy Centre, Stratheden

Staff spaces are being rolled out at Glenrothes, Cameron and Randolph Wemyss, with further healthcare sites also looked at.

**Mobile testing for staff**

Mobile testing, where the testing team visits a staff member at home to take a sample, is available Monday to Friday. A mobile testing appointment will only be considered if:

* They meet the testing criteria set out in protocol, **and**;
* They live within Fife, **and**;
* The staff member / household member has no access to their own transport, **and**;
* They do not have a household member living with them that can drive them to a drive-through appointment

The mobile testing service will be subject to review depending on demand and capacity of the testing team.

**Recruitment area on coronavirus micro site**

As part of ongoing Covid-19 resilience, NHS Fife is recruiting additional staff to complement its existing workforce. Details on how we are recruiting to these additional roles can be found on our dedicated Coronavirus micro site at [**https://coronavirus.nhsfife.org/opportunities/**](https://coronavirus.nhsfife.org/opportunities/)

**Public Health Update**

**Shielding support**

Almost 9000 people on Fife’s shielding list (formerly known as the vulnerable persons list) have now been telephoned to make sure they are getting the support they need. 216 who couldn’t be reached are being written to and, if there is no response, a home visit will be made. A further 2000 have been added to the shielding list and contact with them has begun.

**Covid-19 local data**

There have been a lot of enquiries about Covid-19 data and what is available at a Fife level. Most of the data published on Covid-19 is published at a Scottish level, but there is some local data published and updated daily.  You can find 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/>

Importantly, NHS Fife does not directly collect data relating to Covid-19 deaths that occur in a care home setting. NHS Fife only collates and reports hospital deaths.  Deaths in care homes are reported to the Care Inspectorate and recorded directly by the registrar of births and deaths through death registrations. 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 at: <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/covid19stats>

**Covid-19 surveillance work**

In order to help us understand more about COVID-19, NHS Fife is participating in a Health Protection Scotland (HPS) strategy to gather information. This will enable HPS to measure how effective public health interventions are, such as lock down, social distancing and shielding. It will also help HPS understand how well Scotland is flattening the curve of the pandemic. This will help prevent illness and save lives. There are several programmes coming on stream to help HPS gather information. The first to launch is the Community Programme, which is an adaptation of the routine GP Influenza surveillance scheme. This will gather 1000 samples every week from across Scotland from people who have COVID-19 like illness. HPS aims to gather 500 samples from people who have attended clinical assessment centres, and 500 samples from people who have been triaged by the COVID-19 telephone triage hubs.

## **National Guidance**

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| **Health Protection Scotland Guidance**  Available at:  [www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/a-to-z-of-topics/covid-19](http://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/a-to-z-of-topics/covid-19) |
| **Information and Guidance for Non-Healthcare Settings**  <https://hpspubsrepo.blob.core.windows.net/hps-website/nss/2973/documents/1_COVID-19-Guidance-for-non-healthcare-settings.pdf> |
| **Information and guidance for social or community care residential settings**  [www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/web-resources-container/covid-19-information-and-guidance-for-social-or-community-care-residential-settings/](http://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/web-resources-container/covid-19-information-and-guidance-for-social-or-community-care-residential-settings/) |
| **Ready Scotland Information**  <https://www.readyscotland.org/coronavirus/> |
| **NHS Inform**  [www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19](http://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19) |
| **NHS Inform Covid-19 translated materials**  NHS Inform has created a toolkit of accessible versions and translated Coronavirus information.  [Download the Coronavirus (COVID-19) communication toolkit (ZIP, 20 MB)](https://www.nhsinform.scot/media/3011/coronavirus-communication-toolkit-18032020.zip)  [Download translated versions of our COVID-19 posters (ZIP, 22MB)](https://www.nhsinform.scot/media/3021/coronavirus-covid-19-posters_-7_-languages19032020.zip) |
| **Free Helpline for those who do not have symptoms**  A free helpline has been set up for those who do not have symptoms but are looking for general health advice Tel: 0800 028 2816. |
| **Helpline for small businesses**  A helpline providing businesses across Scotland with advice and guidance on COVID-19 is open Monday to Friday, between 8.30am to 5.30pm.  Tel: 0300 303 0660. |

*Issued by NHS Fife Communications, information correct at: 30/04/2020*