

**Issue 5|7 May 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 ([*http://coronavirus.nhsfife.org*](http://coronavirus.nhsfife.org)) which provides a hub of information and advice as well as our established, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages.

## **Stay in touch**

##### NHS Fife is committed at all times to be open and transparent with elected members. We need to manage enquiries to ensure that urgent work is not disrupted, and so to help you and to help us we are asking that all emails are directed to a single point of contact. To ensure accurate and timely responses all political enquiries - letters and emails - should be directed to the NHS Fife Chief Executive Office for response and co-ordination. Enquiries should be emailed to a dedicated email address:

##### **fife-uhb.chiefexecutive@nhs.net**

The Chief Executives’ Office will formally acknowledge receipt of all letters and emails and coordinate a response from services to ensure that all enquiries are responded to in a timely manner. Elected members are politely asked not to approach services directly for responses and instead direct all enquiries to the Chief Executive’s Office at the above email address.

Also, during this busy period can we ask that you make use of the excellent public information available on NHS Inform and the Scottish Government website and only come to us if the request relates to Fife specifically. Letters/Emails sent from MPs, MSPs and Councillors or others making a complaint on behalf of an individual constituent are dealt with separately through the formal complaints procedure via Patient Relations and should be emailed to: **Patientrelations.fife@nhs.net**

## **Hot Topics**

**Enhanced support put in place for care homes in Fife**

A new multi-agency group is bringing a range of services together to provide enhanced support to care homes in Fife. In the face of the unprecedented challenge of COVID-19, a range of agencies are working together to provide enhanced support to care homes in Fife. As has been widely reported, care homes across the UK have been affected by outbreaks of coronavirus, and Fife is no different. Sadly, there have been 54 COVID-19 related deaths in our care homes since the start of the pandemic. To support care homes to reduce the spread of the virus, a range of measures have been introduced:

* A new Care Home Oversight Group has been established to oversee the provision of additional resources such as personal protective equipment (PPE), provide rapid testing where it is needed, and offer expert guidance and support to Fife’s care homes. There is more information on this in the Public Health section.
* The testing of individuals for COVID-19 has been extended to support care homes in limiting the spread of the virus. All of those admitted to a care home from their own home will now be tested before or on admission to a care home and will be cared for in isolation for 14 days thereafter.
* All consenting staff and residents in care homes where COVID-19 is known to be present will be tested regardless of whether or not they are displaying symptoms. A mobile COVID-19 testing team is supporting this effort and providing additional testing capacity for residents and staff.
* The Health and Social Care Partnership’s District Nursing team is visiting residential care homes as part of their clinical duties. In addition to assessing whether homes need any additional resources such as PPE or staffing, district nurses are also supporting homes with infection prevention and control.
* Care Homes with outbreaks receive additional regular support from the Health Protection Team in Fife, often through daily contact

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

We continue to issue reminders 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 include:

**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.

**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. Further information from the Interim Chief Executive of NHS Scotland is expected in the coming days and this will help to inform the development of our local remobilisation plans.

**Community staff abuse**

We have received numerous reports that nurses, particularly those working in the community, have been on the receiving end of abuse in their normal line of duty. The source of this abuse is likely to emanate from a misunderstanding around their uniforms, which are NHS Scotland standard issue and identical to the uniforms worn by nurses working in our acute hospital. For infection control reasons, acute hospital nursing staff are subject to strict requirements around their uniforms and not permitted to wear them out with the acute hospital environment. Community nursing staff are not subject to the same infection control measures as their duties are very different and, as such, are required to wear their uniforms in the line of duty. The duties carried out by a community nurse may include going to the local supermarket or pharmacy for patients at this challenging time, some of whom are vulnerable and having to self isolate, and this is likely why you will see them out and about. All of our nurses are very well versed in infection control precautions and it is extremely rare that you would see a nurse from our acute hospital in uniform outside of that setting.

## **Media**

**Cluster of COVID-19 at the Victoria Hospice**

A number of staff and patients have tested positive for coronavirus within the Victoria Hospice. Since the start of the current pandemic the Victoria Hospice has been operating well below its normal capacity, with greater numbers of patients cared for in the community supported by our clinical teams. This was part of a proactive effort to help protect those most at risk of the effects of the virus. For reasons of patient confidentiality we cannot confirm the exact number of patients being cared for in the Hospice presently, however, this number is fewer than five. Over the last week a number of staff in the Victoria Hospice were tested for covid-19 after displaying symptoms consistent with the virus. As part of our enhanced screening all inpatient staff were subsequently tested and some additional asymptomatic staff were found to be carrying the virus. A total of 19 staff who work within the Hospice have tested positive for covid-19 and are isolating at home.

**Midwifery students bolstering resilience efforts in maternity**

To bolster COVID-19 resilience in maternity, 10 midwifery students have volunteered to return to the clinical area at the Victoria Hospital as part of changes made to the final six months of their studies. These changes were made to support our NHS and keep patients safe. As a demonstration of the positive impact they are making, these volunteers have all been offered full-time posts with NHS Fife when they finish their studies. A short video showcased these new students and was published on our social media channels as part of our International Day of the Midwife celebrations.

**£10,000 donation from Stuarts the Baker**

Local firm Stuarts the Bakers has announced it will donate £10,000 to NHS Fife after selling NHS branded Empire biscuits. Stuarts announced they had reached their fundraising target in a Facebook post on Wednesday morning.

**Endowment fund donates £10,000 to support Maggie’s Centre**

The Fife Health Board Endowment fund announced a donation of £10,000 to the Kirkcaldy Maggie’s Centre located at the Victoria Hospital. The donation was made in recognition of the charities support in offering the centre as a NHS Fife staff wellbeing hub to provide 24/7 support to staff working on the front line in the battle against Covid-19. The gift was made possible thanks to a £500,000 donation from an anonymous benefactor to the Fife Health Board Endowment Fund.

**Gender based violence team working to raise awareness**

To be in a domestically abusive relationship, or to have endured a rape or sexual assault, can leave people feeling isolated, particularly in the current circumstances. On average there are approximately 12 reported incidents of domestic abuse each day in Fife, however, we have seen fewer people requesting our support during the current pandemic. NHS Fife’s Gender-based Violence Team has been working with its partners to raise awareness of all types of violence and remind people that our services are still open to provide support. No-one should feel like they have to suffer in silence, and there is a wide range of support available to those who need it.

**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/>

**Guidance around positive pregnancy tests**

People in Fife who have a positive pregnancy test and want to continue with their pregnancy should make contact with their community midwife via their GP practice. If they have a positive pregnancy test and do not want to continue with the pregnancy, they can speak with someone and self-refer to the termination of pregnancy service. If they wish to self-refer they should call 01592 643355 and enter extension 25445 when asked. This number is open between the hours of 8am and 4pm Monday to Friday.

**Health visiting services reminder**

Health visiting teams may be working differently but they are still continuing to support families and some home visits continue to take place. Health Visitors will be wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) if they are home visiting to protect themselves and the families they are supporting. We are encouraging families to contact their Health Visitor to discuss any questions or worries they may have. The number will be in their child's red book. Information can also be found on the ParentClub website [www.parentclub.scot](http://www.parentclub.scot/?fbclid=IwAR19N-mtnOB5mz_2rP4W7_EjwJHMz8Yw4QqLwZmhPRpqzHp97lZNUvJzlUc)

**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

**Accessible information and translation**

NHS Fife continues to provide interpreting and translation services for patients despite there being no face to face interpretation at this time. Along with nationally allocated assets, we have published a suite of COVID-19 resources in a number of formats, including:

* British Sign Language
* Easy Read translation
* Foreign language leaflets
* SMS text service for those who may be deaf, hard of hearing, or are unable to speak in the phone due to impairment.

These assets and further information can be found at <https://coronavirus.nhsfife.org/accessible-informationtranslation/>

## **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 already been downloaded by around half of our workforce. 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
* Wemyss Room, Randolph Wemyss Memorial Hospital
* Letham Ward 1, Cameron Hospital

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.

**Staff listening service**

Our Staff Listening Service was launched two weeks ago offering a 1:1 telephone listening service, offering support and the space for staff to talk about their fears, worries and concerns. Since then there have been a steady number of referrals received to the Service. Managers who are concerned about individual staff or students can, with the individual’s permission, make referrals to the service. This may be a member of a team who they are concerned about; for example a member of staff who is isolating/shielding, a member of staff who is currently off work, new staff or students. The issue/reason for support does not have to be about COVID-19.  The service is for any and all staff / students who may require some additional support and someone to speak to.

**New downloadable wellbeing resource**

We have launched a new health and wellbeing resource for staff during COVID-19, which is available to download. ‘Staff Wellbeing During COVID-19’ provides comprehensive information on a wide range of local and national support, advice and information including simple techniques to support wellbeing, advice on self care, practical advice, and other FAQs.

**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**

**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.

**Test trace isolate support (TTIS) programme**

In line with Scottish Government guidance, NHS Fife is in preparation to deliver a Test-Trace-Isolate-Support programme of active case-finding commencing mid-May. This programme will initially involve Public Health staff contacting Fife residents whose COVID-19 tests report as positive, identifying those with whom they have been in close contact and then following up those named contacts to advise them to self isolate. The programme will increase in scope over following weeks.

**Care home oversight group**

A new Fife multi-agency Care Home Oversight Group has been formed to co-ordinate the response to COVID-19 in care homes. The group is led by Public Health, and membership includes the Fife Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP), Care Inspectorate, Primary Care and Scottish Care. A rapid initial assessment of the local care home sector in Fife was undertaken by Fife HSCP through a telephone survey with providers over 22nd & 23rd April.  The findings of the rapid assessment, along with existing knowledge and experience from within the oversight group, have been used to inform the Fife Care Home Action Plan. The Care Home Action Plan focuses on the provision of a systematic, coordinated multi-agency approach to prevention and response to the COVID-19 situation in Fife’s care homes. A full brief was sent to elected members on 6 May.

## **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: 07/05/2020*