Issue 4 | 19 October 2020

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 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 (coronavirus.nhsfife.org)

## Statements on specific coronavirus cases

We are aware that there continues to be significant media coverage of coronavirus cases across Fife. Any 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 coronavirus micro site [here](https://coronavirus.nhsfife.org/changes-to-services/).  We are also producing updates related to local schools and nurseries, when required, which can be found on our social media pages.

## People in Fife urged to ‘Stick With It’

We continue to promote our social media campaign - Stick With It Fife. The campaign urges Fifers to follow the national control measures in place to reduce the numbers of those contracting the virus. In light of increasing numbers of positive cases, the campaign uses both frontline members of staff and senior figures to empathise with the difficulties that following the guidance can bring – and encourage people to stick with them to protect themselves and others from the virus. The content, which is also being promoted by colleagues at Fife Council, is available on our social media platforms and most recently features a message from our [Medical Director, Dr Chris McKenna.](https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1765973260244712)

## Local data

You can find the number of confirmed cases, people in hospital and ICU in Fife at: <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 at: <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/covid19stats>

We have produced a handy info graphic that we publish every week on the Know Fife website summarising the above data: <https://know.fife.scot/>

# Flu Vaccination

Measures in place to improve flu vaccination appointment systems

There has been widespread reporting of the challenges our flu vaccination programme has faced and the difficulties that people have faced trying to book an appointment. We recognise that the systems we initially implemented to manage the booking of flu vaccination appointments were not adequate enough to deal with the unprecedented demand for vaccination in a very short period of time.   We have put in place a number of measures and actions in place to increase the capacity we have available to arrange flu vaccine appointments. While this has helped us to tackle the backlog of calls and correspondence, we appreciate that some people continue to experience difficulties making an appointment and we have [apologised unreservedly](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/news-and-updates/2020/10/update-on-nhs-fife-seasonal-flue-vaccination-programme-appointments-for-the-over-65s/) for anxiety that this is causing.

Our call handlers are working extremely hard in difficult circumstances and, while we appreciate the frustration of those trying to get through, we are asking that callers continue to be polite and courteous to those arranging their appointment.

*Vaccination appointments - at a glance:*

* Over **42,000** vaccination appointments booked.
* **30,000** vaccines have been delivered to date.
* The volume of calls has dropped from **120,000** to **5,000.**
* The number of Individual callers has dropped from **14,000** to less than **3,000**.
* The number of appointment booking staff has increased from **8** to **80** since week one.
* Governance has been strengthened with daily oversight at Director Level. Internal review commences next week.

All care home residents vaccinated against flu

All residential care home residents in Fife have now been vaccinated against flu. 943 people living across Fife’s 32 residential care homes have been immunised, which is a great achievement and brings not only protection from flu, but also the associated risks that flu infection and a lowered immune system can bring.  We are grateful to Fife’s care homes for making this possible and providing the access and support we needed to provide early protection. It is important that people in residential care homes are vaccinated as early as possible as they are generally at a higher risk of infection due to their age and other underlying health conditions.

Community drop-in clinics for over 65s and at-risk groups beginning

As part of efforts to make the flu vaccine as accessible as possible to those who need it most, NHS Fife is hosting a series of drop-in vaccination clinics across the region. These clinics, which are being promoted by local GP practices for their practice population only, are available to those who have received a letter advising them of their eligibility for the vaccine – appointments are not required but those attending must bring their eligibility letter with them. The clinics, which are taking place in Burntisland, Kennoway, Valleyfield, and Rosyth this week, will be staffed by our Immunisation Team and will adhere to strict infection control procedures.

Under 65s with eligible health conditions

The flu vaccination programme for for under 65’s living in Fife with an eligible health condition will commence in the coming weeks. Further information is available on [nhsinform.scot/flu](https://www.nhsinform.scot/flu) and the 'How to get the flu vaccine in your area' guide on this site.. These appointments will be available throughout late October, and into November and December. Please be reassured there is no shortage of appointments.

Enhanced advice and flu guidance online

We have enhanced our [online information](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/campaigns/seasonal-flu-vaccination-programme/#faqs) to assist those eligible for a flu vaccination. This includes a detailed FAQ section to address many of the questions that our call handlers have been answering. This section is updated on a regular basis and we hope that it will also assist our elected members in addressing any questions that your constituents may ask.

# Service updates

## Resumption of bowel screening

Bowel screening kits are now being issued. For those that have received a kit in the post before the programme was paused they should complete it and return it now. For those due to have a colonoscopy, these will continue even when local or national restrictions are in place and NHS Fife will be in touch with those who have an upcoming appointment. A national bowel screening helpline has also been set up to answer any questions – this can be reached on 0800 0121 833. More information is available [here](https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19/healthy-living/coronavirus-covid-19-immunisation-and-screening#bowel-screening-resumes).

## New joint replacement app

Our Physiotherapy team has developed a new app to support those who are waiting on a new hip or knee joint. The Joint Replacement App is available to download now and provides all the relevant information to prepare patients for upcoming joint replacement and can also be used to guide recovery after surgery. The app can be downloaded on Google Play and the Apple App Store by searching for 'Health Zone UK' and selecting 'NHS Fife Joint Replacement App'.

## Visiting arrangements unchanged

There are currently no changes to visiting arrangements at our hospitals. Visiting remains open to one named visitor per patient, who has been agreed in advance with a ward. If people have any questions around visiting we would encourage them to speak to staff on the ward who can talk them through the process.

The following measures also remain in place:

* Visitors must wear a face covering whilst in any communal areas of the hospital.
* Those visiting clinical areas, such as wards, will be asked to remove their face covering when entering and will instead be issued with a surgical face mask, which must be worn in its place. When leaving these areas, the surgical face mask must be removed and the face covering worn again.
* Visitors must not attend if they have any possible symptoms of the virus, such as a new, continuous cough, a high temperature, a sore throat, or a loss of taste or smell.
* Strict social-distancing and hygiene measures will be in place to limit the risk of the virus spreading within our hospitals. These include visitors being prevented from bringing presents such as flowers, food parcels or balloons into the hospital.

# In the media

## FLAMINGO Study looking to hear experiences of parents and carers

Parents and carers of children in Fife who have had a short, unplanned stay in hospital are being asked to share their experiences and help shape the future of sick kids’ services across Scotland. The FLAMINGO Study research team is keen to hear the experiences of parents and carers in Fife whose child has required an unplanned short-stay admission within the last five years. The project is being led by Professor Steve Turner, a child healthcare expert at the University of Aberdeen and a consultant paediatrician with NHS Grampian. A multi-disciplinary team made up of nursing and medical staff from the Universities of Aberdeen, Stirling, and Edinburgh Napier, are interviewing families whose child has experienced a short stay in hospital to understand more about their experiences and how they would like to see paediatrics services develop in future. In addition to learning from parents and carers, the study is also keen to learn from the experiences of healthcare workers involved in providing short-stay emergency care for children and young people. Those wishing to participate and express their views can do so [here](http://www.nhsfife.org/flamingostudy).

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| Keep in touchElected members enquiries NHS Fife tries at all times to be open and transparent with elected members. However, we need to manage enquiries to ensure that urgent work is not disrupted. To help you and to help us we are asking that all emails are directed in the first instance to a central email address. 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.chiefexecutive@nhs.scotThe 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. 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 specifically to Fife.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. 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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