Issue 6 | 13 November 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

## Hospital visiting restrictions

Following an increase in coronavirus transmission rates across Fife, the difficult decision has been taken to restrict hospital visiting. It is hoped that these additional restrictions, which came into force on the 6th of November, will help to limit the spread of coronavirus and protect vulnerable patients. **Visiting is now limited to essential visits only and will be reviewed regularly. Further information on the new arrangements, including guidance on essential visiting criteria and FAQS on some of the services that 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/)**.**

## Fife moves up to Level 3 of COVID-19 framework

On Tuesday afternoon, the First Minister announced that from Friday 13th November, Fife will move into Level 3 of the Scottish Government’s COVID-19 Framework. The shift means increased local restrictions to help reduce the transmission of the virus, most notably around hospitality, exercise and travel. We have been using local and social media platforms to communicate the change and its implications, using the opportunity to reemphasise the importance of continuing to follow public health guidance. National information around Level 3 restrictions can be found [here](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-protection-levels/pages/protection-level-3/), further insight into the science and data behind the decision can be accessed [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/news-and-updates/2020/11/nhs-fife-and-fife-council-provide-more-information-on-the-move-to-covid-19-level-3/), and comments around the change from our Chair, Tricia Marwick, can be found [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/news-and-updates/2020/11/fife-moves-to-level-3-of-covid-19-framework/).

## Vaccination planning underway

With the prospect of an approved COVID-19 vaccine on the horizon, significant local logistical planning is now underway as part of a national approach, to ensure that NHS Fife is prepared to begin a programme of vaccination as soon as possible. A dedicated Silver Command Group as been established to oversee the roll out of the vaccination programme within Fife, which is likely to take the form of a targeted roll-out, beginning as soon as a vaccine is available and approved for use.

## Schools and nurseries updates

We continue to report positive coronavirus cases directly associated with schools and nurseries on our social media pages. We are committed to ensuring local people are kept informed of positive cases in our schools and nurseries and, to assist this, we have been publishing regular updates on confirmed cases locally.  These updates provide figures for positive cases along with a cumulative number of cases from the start of this new school term. This update does not replace the Group Call messages issued by Fife Council directly to parents/carers/staff at affected schools or nurseries and our Test and Protect team continues to perform a vital role in contacting those who we believe to be close contacts of confirmed cases, We will continue to issue further updates and statements in relation to specific schools and nurseries if additional Public Health guidance or advice is required.

## 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 website](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/campaigns/coronavirus-information/).

## People in Fife urged to be aware of test and protect scam

We have been made aware of a text message scam circulating, where people posing as Fife Test and Protect contact tracers are getting in touch with people and asking them to reply to the message and self-isolate immediately. This is not a genuine message from our Test and Protect team. If people receive a text claiming to be from Test and Protect team and have any doubts around its authenticity, we are encouraging them to contact the national advice centre on 0800 030 8012 and report the potential scam to Advice Direct Scotland on 0808 800 9060 . A useful list of things that a contact tracer would never ask for can be found [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/news-and-updates/2020/11/some-disruption-to-services-at-north-glen-medical-practice-following-covid-19-case/).

## Translation services supporting non-English speakers

We are working closely with colleagues in Fife Council to ensure that non-English language speakers are able to access the appropriate guidance and support around COVID-19. Various resources have been translated into a number of the most common non-English languages that are spoken in Fife, such as Romanian, Polish and Hungarian, and have been made available on platforms including social media, via posters and through local community outreach teams. Arrangements are also in place to provide translation services to patients in the hospital environment as and when required, as well as out of hours translation and British Sign Language services for corporate communications.

## Jessica Gardner interviews Director of Public Health

Our Director of Public Health, Dona Milne, recently sat down for a Zoom video call with local YouTube star Jessica Gardner. The videos, which were episodically edited and made available on our social media channels, have now all been released but can still be accessed [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/jessicainvestigates/). In the videos, Jessica asks Dona some of the burning questions that a six year old may have in relation to COVID-19.

## What exactly is two metres?

Our new social media campaign #2metresis aims to raise awareness of the importance of physical distancing by showcasing exactly how long a two metre distance is, as there is evidence that some people may be underestimating the length. The short, sharp video graphics equate two metres to various objects - such as a double bed or a giraffe’s neck - in order to help people visualise two metres more easily.

## Self isolation awareness messaging

NHS Fife is seeking the support of Elected Members to raise awareness of the importance of self-isolation, what this means, and when people should isolate. We are keen to reemphasise in particular that:

* Self-isolation means you must stay at home and not leave the house for 14 days.
* It is very important that you follow this advice even if you feel well, as symptoms can take up to 14 days to appear from your last contact with the person who has tested positive.
* You should isolate immediately and request a test if you develop the symptoms of coronavirus.
* If you have taken a test you should isolate immediately and until the results of a test come back negative.
* That there is financial support available in the form of self isolation support grant – more information is available [here](https://www.fife.gov.uk/services/form-pages/apply-for-a-covid-19-self-isolation-support-grant).

Self-isolating will help protect your family, friends, the wider community and the NHS, and we would appreciate your support promoting these messages.

## Local data

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/). 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/).

# Flu Vaccination

Significant progress made in vaccination appointment scheduling

There has been widespread reporting of the challenges our flu vaccination programme has faced and the difficulties that people faced trying to book an appointment. However, the measures we introduced to help deal with the unprecedented demand for vaccination have helped us to tackle the backlog of calls and correspondence. Our call handlers have been working extremely hard in difficult circumstances and, while we appreciate the frustration of those trying to get through, we are pleased to report that significant progress has been made both in terms of our ability to schedule vaccinations and tackling the backlog that developed. Despite the initial issues with our booking, our systems are operating well and those who are eligible are being urged to call our flu line to get protected ahead of flu season. If people have received a letter inviting them to arrange their flu jab then they can call us on: 01383 674111, or email us at: fife.vaccinesinfife@nhs.scot.

*Vaccination appointments - at a glance:*

* Over **70,000** vaccination appointments booked.
* Over **64,000** vaccines have been delivered to date.
* The volume of calls has dropped from **120,000** to **1,100.**
* The number of Individual callers per day has dropped from **14,000** to less than **300**.
* Email and text message backlog now clear.
* The number of appointment booking staff has increased from **8** to **80** since week one.
* (*All* *information correct as of 12th November 2020*)

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

As part of efforts to make the flu vaccine as accessible as possible to those who need it most, we continue to host drop-in vaccination clinics across the region. These clinics, which are 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 are staffed by our Immunisation Team and 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 is commencing and letters advising of eligibility have been sent out. Further information is available on [nhsinform.scot/flu](https://www.nhsinform.scot/flu" \t "_blank) and the 'How to get the flu vaccine in your area' guide on this site. These appointments will cover November and December. Please be reassured that 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

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

## Changes to the way that people access emergency departments are being tested in NHS Ayrshire and Arran ahead of a proposed national roll out in December. Further detail can be found [here](https://www.gov.scot/news/helping-people-get-the-right-care-in-the-right-place/) and there will be no change to urgent care or emergency services in Fife until December.

## Breast screening reminder

We are reminding people that as long as they or any member of their household are not displaying symptoms of coronavirus or self-isolating, breast screening appointments should be attended as normal. Enhanced infection control measures are in place to ensure that screening can be delivered safely and all women attending are asked to wear a face covering at their appointment, unless there is a reason that they cannot do so. Mobile units are currently screening in Dalgety Bay and Burntisland and women aged between 50 and 70 who are registered with a GP in these areas will receive a letter through the post inviting them to attend a mammogram. The mammogram itself takes around ten minutes and can help pick up tiny cancers that can’t be seen or felt, often when they are less advanced. Breast screening saves around 130 lives in Scotland every year. Further information can be found here.

## Community health and wellbeing centres in Kincardine and Lochgelly

We are encouraging local communities to share their views on plans for new Community Health and Wellbeing Centres in Kincardine and Lochgelly. It is recognised that the current centres are no longer fit for purpose and new centres are intended to flexibly meet the needs of the local population, providing a range of services including those provided by GPs, social care and the voluntary sector.  The Initial Agreement Document (IAD) was approved by Scottish Government in January and involved working closely with communities and staff in both areas.

NHS Fife is now in the process of completing the Outline Business Cases (OBCs), part of the process to support decisions on how public funding is allocated.  As part of that work it is important that we continue to work closely with local communities and services to look further at how the centres could support the health and wellbeing of the populations of Lochgelly and Kincardine. A number of engagement activities will be held over the next month, providing the communities with the opportunity to have their say and help shape the new centres.  With Covid-19 restrictions in place, activities will be conducted mainly via online forums including Practice websites, through voluntary organisations and discussion and engagement with interested groups. In addition an online survey will launch on Monday, 16th November and run until Monday 14th December. The following links can be used:

Kincardine Survey - <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/Kincardinecentre/>

Lochgelly Survey - <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/Lochgellycentre/>

# In the media

## Disruption to services at North Glen Medical Practice

There has been some disruption to services at North Glen Medical Practice in Glenrothes after a number of practice staff were required to isolate following contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19.  Our latest statement on the services have that been impacted can be found [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/news-and-updates/2020/11/some-disruption-to-services-at-north-glen-medical-practice-following-covid-19-case/).

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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.scot](mailto:fife.chiefexecutive@nhs.scot)  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. 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 online Board 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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