

**Issue 10|09 July 2020**

## **Introduction**

**As part of efforts to keep you informed, NHS Fife is issuing updates dedicated to our response to the coronavirus pandemic. This briefing is circulated to NHS Fife Board members and Fife’s MPs, MSPs and local Councillors. Updates are currently made available on a fortnightly basis.**

##### This 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.

## **Hot Topics**

**Reintroduction of services**

NHS Fife recently published a remobilisation plan, which outlines how both hospital and community-based healthcare services in Fife will be safely and incrementally resumed in the coming months. This is available in full at: <https://coronavirus.nhsfife.org/mobilisation>

In line with all other boards in Scotland, NHS Fife had to postpone all non-urgent operations as part of our response to managing the Covid-19 pandemic. Throughout lockdown we have continued to carry out emergency, urgent and cancer operations. As we continue to see the easing of lockdown restrictions, we are now working to safely reinstate elective procedures and have been working proactively over recent months to ensure that we can maximise the capacity we have available once these services are resumed. Restart plans are already in place for a number of key specialities, with plans to be agreed for all remaining services in the coming weeks. Waiting lists are reviewed regularly by our clinical teams to ensure that as routine elective surgery restarts the most clinically urgent cases are prioritised. Patient safety remains our number one priority and we are currently putting additional infection and prevention measures in place to ensure the safety of staff and patients during any planned procedures. The team at NHS Fife have been working tirelessly throughout this pandemic and will continue to do so to ensure we deliver the safest and best possible care to the communities we serve across Fife. We have been asked by the Scottish Government to develop further plans for the restart and remobilisation of services, including planning for winter, with a submission due at the end of July. This work is clinically led through our Medical Director and Director of Nursing. During this next stage of planning we are committed to joint working with all partners across health and social care, including our staff side and professional bodies; the third and independent sector; and primary care providers.

**Face coverings in hospitals**

The Scottish Government has issued guidance that will require members of the public to wear face coverings when visiting adult hospitals.  These are the same coverings that are required to be worn on public transport. A face covering does not have to be a surgical or other medical grade mask but must be a facial covering of the mouth and nose. Face coverings worn over the mouth and nose may include a scarf, face mask, protective visor, or any other type of appropriate covering. It will not be acceptable to pull a shirt, blouse, jumper or coat up to try and cover the nose and mouth. If a person chooses to wear a face visor it must cover the nose and mouth completely. In clinical areas, surgical masks will require to be worn and will be provided.

**Visiting restrictions being eased from 13 July**

Hospitals will be able to receive visitors again from 13 July. Hospital visiting was suspended in Fife on 26 March as part of a series of measures to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading in healthcare sites. With the numbers of people contracting COVID-19 now greatly reduced from the peak in March and April, these restrictions are now being gradually relaxed. From 13 July, patients in the non-coronavirus areas of Fife’s hospitals will be allowed visits from one named person at a time. The visits must be agreed in advance with the ward where the patient is being treated and visitors must wear a face covering at all times whilst in any communal areas of the hospital. Those visiting any 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. Within areas where patients may be treated whilst positive for COVID-19, only essential visitors will be allowed, such as in cases where a person is receiving end of life care, to accompany children or adults with mental health issues, or to support women during childbirth. Importantly, visitors must not attend if they have any possible symptoms of the virus, such as a new cough; 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.

**Cervical screening in process of being resumed**

The Scottish Government has announced that anyone who was invited for cervical screening before the pause, and was yet to make an appointment or had their appointment cancelled, will be able to contact their GP practice with a view to making an appointment. However, it may take some time before local GP practice can offer appointments as they continue to ready their practice to keep patients and staff safe. More information can be found [here](https://www.gov.scot/news/resuming-cervical-screening/).

**Test and Protect – helping to reduce the spread of COVID-19**

We are urging people in Fife with any symptoms of coronavirus to access testing as part of the effort to reduce the spread of the virus. The Scottish Government ‘Test and Protect’ programme, enables anyone in Scotland who developed symptoms of coronavirus to be tested.

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are a high temperature; a new, continuous cough; or a loss or change to sense of smell or taste. Those with symptoms must get tested as soon as possible and this can be requested using the UK Government Citizens’ Portal at: <https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test>  or by calling 0800 028 2816. Individuals can choose whether to attend one of the UK Government testing sites or request a home testing kit to be delivered to their home. The lockdown has helped contribute to a reduction in the transmission of infection. The easing of lockdown measures may to lead to a gradual increase in the numbers of those developing the virus. The close contacts of those who contract the virus will then require to be traced in order to limit onward transmission. Contact tracing is an established method of reducing transmission of communicable disease and NHS Fife’s Public Health Team is well-versed in carrying out the process. Public Health Scotland’s weekly COVID-19 Statistical Report, published each Wednesday at noon, now includes Board level data and is available to view [here](https://beta.isdscotland.org/find-publications-and-data/population-health/covid-19/covid-19-statistical-report/).

**Care home support**

There has been a considerable multi-agency effort since the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic to put a network of support in place for local care homes and assist in the prevention and management of any local outbreaks. A Care Home Oversight Group was established made up of representatives from NHS Fife’s Public Health, the Fife Health and Social Care Partnership, Primary Care, Scottish Care and the Care Inspectorate, and this continues to operate. This group has overseen the provision of any additional resources - such as staffing or personal protective equipment (PPE) - while facilitating rapid testing and specialist guidance as required. District Nursing teams continue to visit residential care homes as part of their clinical duties and assess whether any additional resources are required, whilst also supporting homes with infection prevention and control measures. NHS Fife’s specialist team has been undertaking the testing of residents and staff across many of Fife’s care homes over recent months. Where a resident has displayed symptoms, a sample has been taken the same day or next day after the suspected case is reported, and results are usually available within 24 hours.  Where there are confirmed COVID-19 cases in either staff or residents, enhanced testing is carried out - meaning that the testing of all care home staff and residents is initiated regardless of whether they are symptomatic or not. The UK Government testing portal, which was launched last month, enables local care homes to request weekly COVID-19 testing for staff. NHS Fife is allocated testing slots using this portal and has sufficient capacity to provide weekly testing for all care home staff in Fife.

## **Updates**

**New videos highlighting changes to health services in light of COVID-19**

NHS Fife is in the process of releasing a series of new videos on social media, aimed raising awareness of the changes to healthcare services brought about by COVID-19. The videos look to educate the public about what to expect when they come into a hospital setting and how this may look different from what they have previously experienced. So far we have published videos on changes to [dental](https://youtu.be/RLAazIcjlqc) and [outpatient](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hXrXbLMrdiE&t=3s) services, which can be viewed by clicking the links, and we plan to release further videos focussing on other services including General Practice, the children’s ward, and pharmacy.

**NHS Fife marks Armed Forces Day**

To mark Armed Forces Day, we highlighted the role played by our military in supporting the local response to COVID-19. Armed Forces Day celebrated the brave Armed Forces personnel who have given service to the country. Since the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the British Army has provided expert logistical, supply and relief planning support to support Health Boards across the country. Following a Military Aid to the Civilian Authorities (MACA) request from the Scottish Government, Major Ali Maclaurin of the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards, and Major Craig Burns, 7th Battalion of The Royal Regiment of Scotland, have been based at the Victoria Hospital in Kirkcaldy, where they have worked alongside senior executives throughout. Their support has been wide-ranging; however, perhaps their most valuable contribution was in the development of supply routes for enabling crucial personal protective equipment (PPE) to get to all healthcare staff that needed it.

**Maternity notes app**

We are encouraging parents-to-be who are not already registered to sign up to the Maternity Notes app at their next midwife appointment. NHS Fife offers all pregnant women and new mothers access to Maternity Notes, which allows secure, real-time access to their maternity records online. Maternity Notes also provides access to local and national information regarding the pregnancy and childbirth journey, all in the one place. Maternity Notes also provides weekly updates of pregnancy, relevant leaflets, and video links. Our Maternity Notes Project Midwife, Elizabeth Cameron, has recorded a video about the app and how it works [here](https://youtu.be/2NCPZevHpTQ).

## **Visiting & Service Update**

**Changes to services/visiting**

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

## **Public Health Update**

**Covid-19 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/>

## **General Information**

**Stay in touch**

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-uhb.chiefexecutive@nhs.net**](mailto: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. 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. 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 [here](https://coronavirus.nhsfife.org/accessible-informationtranslation/).

**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/)

**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).

**Helping us to spread messages on social media**

We appreciate the support of elected representatives in helping us ensure as many people as possible are aware of key messages and guidance around COVID-19 and its impact on our services. As such, please feel free to use any of the national or locally produced assets that we use on our social media channels.

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| **National Guidance**  **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*