Issue 1 | 8 December 2020

COVID-19 vaccine update

for Fife’s MPs, MSPs and
local Councillors

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**This special update focuses exclusively on the Covid-19 vaccine, which began to be administered to frontline healthcare workers earlier this morning.**

# Covid-19 vaccine – www.nhsfife.org/covidvaccine

## Vaccination underway in Fife

Earlier today, NHS Fife started to vaccinate healthcare staff against Covid-19. These landmark vaccinations heralded the beginning of the largest ever mass vaccination programme that we have been involved in and marked what we hope to be the beginning of the end of the heartache and restrictions the virus has wrought upon us.

In line with national guidance, the initial supply of the Pfizer/ BioNtech vaccine is currently being offered to frontline health care workers; generally, those who may be working with suspected or confirmed Covid-19 cases. Frontline staff are more likely to be exposed to Covid-19 at work and are at much higher risk of repeated exposure to the infection.

The vaccines are currently being administered to staff at drop-in centres at the Victoria and Queen Margaret Hospitals, and will gradually be extended to other at-risk groups at locations across Fife as part of a tightly managed scheme of prioritisation. Provision of the vaccine is also being extended to other at-risk groups, including staff and residents in care homes, and those over the age of 80, and will be delivered in line with both national guidance and vaccine supply.

## Vaccine safety

NHS Scotland will only use a vaccine if it meets the required standards of safety and effectiveness. All medicines, including vaccines, are tested for safety and effectiveness before they’re allowed to be used. The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) states that the vaccine has been approved for supply in the UK as the expected standards of safety, quality and efficacy have been met.

## How is the Covid-19 vaccine given?

* The vaccine is delivered via an injection in the upper arm.
* Two doses are required, the second between 21 and 28 days after the first.
* During vaccination, strict infection prevention and control measures will be in place.

## Helping us to manage public expectation by sharing information

Given the all-consuming nature of Covid-19 and its impact, we expect that there will significant and extended public interest in the vaccine and when certain demographics can expect to receive it. As such, we would appreciate your support in sharing the new web pages we have created and any upcoming social media messaging.

Our new vaccination web page, which hosts a central resource of local and national Covid-19 vaccine information, can be found [here](http://nhsfife.org/covidvaccine) and features helpful information, guidance and support. We hope to further populate it over the coming days, weeks and months as more information is made available.

We would appreciate the support of Elected Members in initially sharing this webpage on the various platforms you have available. Further national guidance and information about the vaccine can also be found on NHS Inform [here](http://www.nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccine).

## In addition to our new web pages and upcoming social media campaigns, we have also created a dedicated hub for staff to access the information and support they need in relation to the vaccine. The hub will include details around vaccination clinics, information about the scheme of prioritisation, and further clinical guidance around the vaccine itself.

## Continuing to follow public health guidance

Whilst today is a momentous and welcome landmark in the fight back against Covid-19, the vaccination programme is only beginning and will run for a number of months. In the meantime, we must continue to follow the public health guidance that has been designed to keep us safe and, as such we would appreciate the support of Elected Members in appealing to the public to continue to follow the FACTS:



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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). |