Issue 73 |14th April 2022

Elected Members Update

for local MPs, MSPs and
Councillors

This regular 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. We would also encourage you to regularly visit and refer your constituents for the latest news and updates from NHS Fife on our [**website**](http://www.nhsfife.org): or follow us on our social media channels -[**Twitter**](http://www.twitter.com/nhsfife)**,**[**Facebook**](http://www.facebook.com/nhsfife)**,**[**Instagram**](http://www.instagram.com/nhsfife)**.**

**Covid vaccination**

**Local vaccination overview**

The vaccination of people over the age of 75 has continued this week, as well as visiting the homes of those who are classified as housebound and unable to attend a community clinic. A mixture of both dedicated children’s drop-in clinics and regular drop-in clinics are being held this weekend. More information on mobile clinics and drop-in sessions can be found [here](http://www.nhsfife.org/dropin).

**Vaccination during Ramadan**

We are using social media to reach out to local Muslim communities and raise awareness that scholars from this religion have stated that the Covid vaccines used in Scotland are halal complaint and that receiving a vaccine does not break the concept of fast during Ramadan. For those who require a vaccinator of a certain gender, or a private space to be vaccinated, this can also be requested at our clinics. More information about the vaccine is available [here](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cdouglaslin%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CMicrosoft%5CWindows%5CINetCache%5CContent.Outlook%5CHOF2LOV3%5Cnhsinform.scot%5Ccovid19vaccine).

**Getting vaccinated**

We continue to encourage anyone eligible for a first, second or booster dose to book their vaccination appointment via the [online booking portal](https://vacs.nhs.scot/csp) (people who need to recover their username can do so [here](https://vacs.nhs.scot/csp?id=recover_username)) or by calling 0800 030 8013. Alternatively, the latest [drop-in clinics](https://www.nhsfife.org/dropinclinics/) are updated regularly on our website.

**Further information**

You can find out about the numbers of people in Scotland who are vaccinated along with data about case numbers, and hospitalisations by accessing the Scottish Government [Daily Update](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-daily-data-for-scotland/) or by visiting Public Health Scotland’s [Daily Dashboard](https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/phs.covid.19/viz/COVID-19DailyDashboard_15960160643010/Overview)

**Test & Protect**

**Scottish Government Test and Protect Transition Plan**

Scottish Government have published the transition plan for Test and Protect. The plan outlines the transition from population-wide testing to a more targeted approach. The plan also includes a helpful appendix which sets out associated timescales. It is available to view [here](https://www.gov.scot/publications/test-protect-transition-plan/).

These changes will impact the workforce who have delivered Testing and Contact Tracing for the population. They have provided a robust layer of protection for the whole population in Fife and as plans progress, support for support for this workforce during the period of change will be in line with our usual policies and procedures.

**Changes to Community Testing from 18th April 2022**

In line with the Test and Protect transition plan, from 18th April 2022, most people without symptoms will no longer have to test, unless they are:

* a fully vaccinated close contact of a confirmed case
* visiting a care home or hospital
* asked to test before a planned stay in hospital

Individuals in these identified groups will be required to take an LFD test and will be able to order a home testing kit online by visiting [www.nhsinfrom.scot](http://www.nhsinfrom.scot) or calling 119. LFD tests will not be available from Community Testing sites or available to pick up from distribution venues after 17th April 2022.

Anyone who is symptomatic should continue to get tested with a PCR until the end of April.

LFD and PCR testing information can be found [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/testing/).

**Self-Isolation, Close Contact and Testing Guidance**

Up-to-date guidance around isolation periods, rules for close contacts and further testing information, including a walk-through guide, can be found [here](https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19/test-and-protect/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-individuals-with-possible-coronavirus-infection).

**Other news**

**Hospital pressures**

As has been well documented, our hospitals and wider healthcare services are coming under sustained pressure. The Emergency Department at the Victoria Hospital is operating under significant strain and staff absence, paired with increasing demand, means that some people – particularly those who do not require urgent care - are experiencing long waits for treatment or guidance. Our Emergency Department prioritises those who are most acutely unwell and to help make the most of both our patients and clinicians time, we continue to reinforce the importance of dialling NHS 24 on 111 rather than attending the ED by default. To help with this messaging we have [published a video](https://www.facebook.com/nhsfife/videos/1032589800798871/) reinforcing this message featuring one of our ED consultants.

**Continued reports of staff being abused**

We have been disappointed to hear continued reports of staff across healthcare services being subjected to verbal and physical abuse. Our staff are working incredibly hard in challenging circumstances to provide people in Fife with safe, high-quality care.Whilst the overwhelming majority of people show staff the respect they deserve, a small but vocal minority have not, and we have been disappointed to receive reports that this continues to be the case. To help promote the message that any form of abuse is unacceptable, we have [published a video](https://www.facebook.com/nhsfife/videos/760234121590007/) on our social media pages, urging people to show respect during difficult times.

**Legionnaire’s disease death**

We are aware of the recent death of an individual from Legionnaires Disease – a relatively rare but severe form of pneumonia. People can catch this infection when they breathe in water droplets containing bacteria. Whenever a case occurs, we follow up possible sources of infection to make sure there is no risk to the wider population.We are working closely with colleagues across partner agencies – including environmental health, to investigate potential sources of exposure.There is no indication of a wider risk to the community at this time.

**New GP webpages**

Whilst GP Practices in Fife remain open and continue to schedule face-to-face appointments, we appreciate that there continues to frustration around access at some practices. The rate of in-person consultations is now broadly in line with what it was pre-pandemic, but a mixture of staff absence, backlogged appointments, recruitment and retention challenges, and the impact of ongoing infection prevention and control protections within healthcare sites, has contributed to an unprecedented demand for care. Our [new GP webpages](http://www.nhsfife.org/gp) have been created as an overarching resource to support patients by providing a variety of information , including which practices are running a reduced service, context around new working practices, alternative avenues for healthcare support, and how to register with a doctor. Whilst we recognise that the experiences of patients waiting for an appointment or a response can be frustrating, our GPs are doing everything in their power to provide patients with access to the highest standards of care when they are required.

**Single sex spaces**

NHS Fife has been asked by numerous media outlets to comment on the recent guidance published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission around the provision of single sex spaces. Our position is that we are committed to maintaining the dignity and respect of everyone who accesses healthcare services, and we will carefully consider the contents of the EHRC report to see where we may be able to build on this commitment.

**Pharmacy opening times over the Easter holiday**

We have published a live page detailing local pharmacy opening times over the Easter holiday period. The page can be accessed [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/latest-news/2022/04/local-pharmacies-easter-opening-times/?fbclid=IwAR2vYhpKRGKRufgMNyjDAVQwU5KG7WQzAQuiKYSKi77P-UFJwXhRqYzYnHo).

**Neonatal virtual tour**

To support the patients and families of children who are being cared for in our neonatal unit, we have published a virtual tour. The video outlines where to go, what to expect when you arrive, and showcases some of the sights and sounds of life on the unit. The video can be seen [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/services/all-services/maternity/neonatal-unit/neonatal-unit-virtual-tour/).

**Recruitment of new Board members**

NHS Fife is looking for three new members to join its Board. As a non-executive member of the Board, members will be expected to play a central role in guiding the strategies which address the health priorities and health care needs of our population.  More information is available [here](https://t.co/VZVJdnvv9i).

**Launch of new Sexual Assault Response Co-ordination Service**

The Sexual Assault Response Coordination Service (SARCS) is a dedicated NHS service which can offer healthcare and support following rape or sexual assault if people aren’t ready or are unsure about reporting to the police. SARCS is a self-referral service, meaning that a GP or other healthcare professional referral is not needed; anyone over the age of 16 can self-refer. Across Scotland SARCS will help people with their immediate healthcare needs and can potentially gather forensic evidence (which will be kept for 26 months) in case they want to tell the police later. See the NHS Fife [SARCS](https://www.nhsfife.org/services/all-services/sarcs-sexual-assault-response-coordination-service/) page for more information.

**Hospital visiting**

The current hospital visiting arrangements in Fife are that patients can receive at least one visitor per day. This position remains under regular review and the latest provisions can be found [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/visiting/).

We have used our social media platforms to remind those who are visiting patients in our hospitals to ensure they are up to date with the latest arrangements for that ward by [calling in advance.](https://fife.link/97e8)

Sharing our messages

We appreciate the support of elected members in sharing our health messages and note that you have already been engaging with the topics we have suggested on social media - we are grateful for your support.

Help us to help you keep your constituents informed

NHS Fife would ask our elective representatives to share our regular updates and guidance via their own channels of communications with their constituents. By supporting us you can help to ensure that we can reach as many people as possible across Fife in a timely manner.

Accessible information and translation

NHS Fife continues to provide interpreting and translation services for patients despite there being no face-to-face interpretation currently. These assets and further information can be found [here](https://coronavirus.nhsfife.org/accessible-informationtranslation/).

All Information correct at time of publishing. Issued by:

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