Issue 5 | 2 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

## 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/).

## Coronavirus microsite absorbed into general NHS Fife website

With our refreshed website now well established, we have taken the decision to move the contents of our coronavirus micro site – including guidance, advice and school and nursery updates – onto it. The coronavirus area of our site can now be accessed [here](http://www.nhsfife.org/coronavirus).

## Schools and nurseries updates

As a new school term commences, the way we are reporting positive coronavirus cases directly associated with schools and nurseries in Fife is changing. We are committed to ensuring local people are kept informed of positive cases in our schools and nurseries and, to assist this, we will be publishing regular updates on confirmed cases locally.  These updates, which are being made available on our social media channels, 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, with anyone who may have been exposed being given appropriate advice. 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.

## Listen Up Fife/Stick with It campaign continues

We continue to promote our social media campaign – Listen Up/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. The last fortnight has seen the promotion of a variety of campaign assets including the release of a [video from our Medical Director](https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=344486820190924), Dr Chris McKenna, where he talks to staff at the Victoria Hospital about their experiences of rising numbers of coronavirus presentations, and a range of graphics [encouraging people to refrain from going door to door guising](https://www.facebook.com/nhsfife/photos/a.10150168443112246/10158841246507246/?type=3&av=398905387245&eav=AfarWaBa2esbIZ2lmXTb-c-3qJYHx03asbkPBQ2PQCzjs1QUWhATKuK0ewL_9m-feqI&notif_id=1603962631661866&notif_t=page_post_reaction&ref=notif) this Halloween.

## 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 will be episodically edited and made available on our social media channels, see Jessica ask Dona some of the burning questions that a six year old may have in relation to COVID-19. The first video can be viewed [here](https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=2731062153777374).

## What exactly is two metres?

Our new social media campaign 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. Our first graphic can be viewed [here](https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=353339485751588).

## Remembrance Sunday

We are asking members of the public to following Scottish Government Guidance in relation to Remembrance Sunday this year and to adhere to the restrictions in place around outdoor events and public gatherings. Despite these changes, we are encouraging the public to ensure Remembrance Sunday is still marked by watching the service on television or pausing for reflection during the Two Minute Silence in their home, or on their doorsteps.

## 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 being made in vaccination appointment scheduling

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. However, the measures we introduced to help deal with the unprecedented demand for vaccination has 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. We encourage people to remain patient when contacting us and are pleased that the call waiting time is now less than five minutes, with many callers getting through on the first attempt.

*Vaccination appointments - at a glance:*

* Over **65,000** vaccination appointments booked.
* Over **51,000** 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 **975**.
* Email and text message backlog now clear.
* 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* *information correct as of 30th October 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, 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 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 will commence in the coming weeks and letters advising of eligibility have been sent out. Further information is available on [nhsinform.scot/flu](https://www.nhsinform.scot/flu%22%20%5Ct%20%22_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 to be 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.

## 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).

## Step on stress remote sessions

Our Step on Stress team is now delivering their free stress management courses remotely via the online video platform Zoom. The course is based on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and is delivered by the NHS Fife Psychology Service. It has three 1.5-hour sessions, which focus on learning evidence-based methods of dealing with stress. The course is designed to be an informative class rather than a group therapy session; those participating will not be asked to discuss any personal problems. Further information can be found [here](https://www.accesstherapiesfife.scot.nhs.uk).

## Visiting arrangements

The latest visiting arrangements, along with details of measures that have been put in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in our hospitals, can be found [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/services/patients-carers-and-visitors/visiting-information/#covid19).

# In the media

## Tricia Marwick reappointed NHS Fife Chair

The Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport, Jeane Freeman MSP, has announced the reappointment of the Rt Hon Tricia Marwick as Chair of Fife NHS Board. This reappointment will be for two years, running from 1st January 2021 until 31st December 2022. Tricia, who was appointed as Chair of NHS Fife in January 2017, was born and brought up in Fife where she has her home. She was elected as an MSP to the Scottish Parliament in 1999 and served until 2016. Tricia was elected Presiding Officer of the Scottish Parliament in May 2011, and stood down from Parliament in May 2016. This reappointment is regulated by the Ethical Standards Commissioner.

## Balcurvie Ward closed to new admissions following COVID-19 cluster

## Balcurvie Ward at Cameron Hospital in Windygates has been closed to new admissions following a cluster of confirmed cases of COVID-19. Our latest statement can be found [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/news-and-updates/2020/10/balcurvie-ward-at-cameron-hospital-closed-to-new-admissions-following-cluster-of-covid-19-cases/).

## Pupils and parents reminded to follow guidelines as schools return

With the return of schools after the October holidays, NHS Fife has taken the opportunity to remind pupils and parents of the importance of continuing to follow Scottish Government guidelines to reduce the spread of Covid-19, and for children not to come to school with symptoms or if they have not yet completed a period of isolation if required following a holiday during the October break. This reminder can be accessed [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/news-and-updates/2020/10/covid-19-advice-following-return-of-schools/).

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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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