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Elected Members Update
for local MPs, MSPs and Councillors

This update is part of our on-going commitment to keep elected members informed of the latest developments at NHS Fife that may be of interest to you and your constituents. For previous issues of the Elected Members Update, including updates on specific topics, please click [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/briefings-for-fife-elected-members-msps-mps-and-councillors/).

To ensure accurate and timely responses from NHS Fife, all enquiries from elected members should be directed to the NHS Fife Chief Executive Office for response and co-ordination at fife.chiefexecutive@nhs.scot.

Members are politely reminded not to approach services or individual members of staff directly for responses.

Main updates

Inspection by Health Improvement Scotland

Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS) carried out an unannounced inspection of several areas of the Victoria Hospital site last week. The visit was part of the Safe Delivery of Care Inspections programme, and the full report will be published on the HIS website in due course.

During the visit, several issues were highlighted relating to general maintenance. While we await the full report, we have brought forward a planned programme of refurbishments has within our ear, nose and throat ward, which has temporarily relocated to another area of the hospital to allow these works are carried out.

Lochgelly and Kincardine Health Centres update

We’ve reiterated our commitment to the development of two new purpose-built Community Health and Wellbeing Centres in Lochgelly and Kincardine. Plans have been developed over several years with partners and local communities to replace these centres and an Initial Agreement Document for their replacement was approved by Scottish Government in January 2020, with outline business cases subsequently presented to the Scottish Government’s Capital Investment Group.

NHS Fife was asked to re-submit the outline business cases with some additional detail, which was done earlier this year. Whilst the full business case is well-progressed, formal approval of the outline business cases is yet to be given. More information is available [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/latest-news/2023/08/project-to-replace-the-existing-health-centres-in-lochgelly-and-kincardine/).

Upcoming changes to the management of Kennoway Medical Practice

NHS Fife and the Fife Health and Social Care Partnership will take over the management of the existing medical practice in Kennoway later this year due to the retirement of a long-serving GP within the practice.

The provision of services for patients registered at Kennoway Medical Group will be managed by NHS Fife and the Fife Health and Social Care Partnership from 01 October 2023. Patients registered to the practice will shortly receive letters to inform them of this development.

Work has already begun on developing robust contingency plans to ensure that all patients registered with the practice will continue to have uninterrupted access to the multi-professional services that the practice currently provides.

It is planned that the remaining members of the well-established staff at Kennoway Medical Group, which includes an existing GP and other members of the multidisciplinary team currently working within the practice, will remain and provide continuity for patients.

A special briefing was issued to all elected members and is available on the NHS Fife website [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/media/39159/special-briefing-kennoway-medical-group-09-aug-23.pdf).

A press release was also issued to local media, and is available [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/latest-news/2023/08/nhs-fife-and-the-fife-health-and-social-care-partnership-to-take-over-running-of-medical-practice-in-kennoway/).

Valleyfield Medical Practice GP recruitment

There has been recent local media coverage of the challenges being faced by Valleyfield Medical Practice in their attempt to recruit GPs. Whilst these challenges are not unique to neither Valleyfield nor Fife, we continue to work closely with all local medical practices to ensure patients continue to receive quality local healthcare.

Whilst most local medical practices are operated by independent contractors responsible for their own recruitment, Valleyfield is currently operated by NHS Fife and the Fife Health and Social Care Partnership after the previous GP contractor terminated their contract.

The contract to provide services from Valleyfield is currently part of a tender process to seek new contractors with the intention to return the practice to independent status with an appropriate level of GP and other clinical cover.

In the meantime, the local community continues to have uninterrupted access to healthcare services including GPs and a wider multi-disciplinary team of healthcare professionals.

Dalgety Bay Dental Practice

Following a Facebook post by Dalgety Bay Dental Practice, where they advised that they were no longer taking on NHS patients we were approached for comment by local media.

Dalgety Bay Dental Practice is an independent dental practice and operates as a private business. Unlike General Medical Services (the range of services provided by GPs), NHS Fife does not have responsibility for delivering routine care for dental patients.

However, we do acknowledge that both nationally and in Fife, there are challenges for patients who wish to register with an NHS dentist, and we are aware of the situation with regards to Dalgety Bay Dental Practice.

Anyone who has an emergency dental issue can contact the NHS Fife dental advice line, which is open from 8:30am to 5 pm, on 01592 226555. In addition, NHS Inform also has useful information on looking after oral health which can be found online.

A&E signage improvements

As part of a suite of improvements to our A&E, we've designed and installed interactive new signage for the walk-up and waiting areas.

The signage keeps patients informed during their A&E journey and provides important information around aspects such as translation, the staff they will encounter, and what can impact waiting times for treatment. More information is available [here](http://www.nhsfife.org/emergency).

Our A&E remains extremely busy, and we would appreciate the support of elected members in sharing any messaging that we put out around the most appropriate use of our services.

Where someone’s care is not a critical emergency, they may face long waits or be redirected safely elsewhere. If someone thinks they need urgent care, but it’s not a critical emergency, they should call NHS 24 on 111 or contact their GP. In an emergency they should always call 999.

Pharmacy application appeals

Following on from an appeal on a recent application for a new pharmacy in Saline, our Primary Care Contracts Team has provided an overview of the application and appeals process, for the information of elected members:

* regulations governing pharmacy applications in Scotland are set out in [legislation](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2009/183/contents/made).
* those wishing to provide NHS pharmaceutical services need the permission of NHS Fife to apply to join the Pharmaceutical List.
* NHS Fife does not proactively seek applications.
* there are detailed stages to be completed with strict timescales attached (including a 90-working day public consultation).
* if an applicant makes a formal application after that, they have a 90-day period to do so. At that stage, another consultation process, this time lasting 30 days, is carried out, which includes seeking the views of existing pharmacy contractors in the area, the area medical committee, area pharmaceutical committee, and a nominated community representative. The application is then considered by NHS Fife’s Pharmacy Practices Committee (PPC). The PPC membership includes lay members of the health board and is chaired by a non-executive director of NHS Fife.
* The decision of the PPC can be appealed within 21 days by those consulted and who responded during the second consultation exercise. Any appeals received are referred to the National Appeals Panel (NAP) for consideration.
* Following the retirement of the NAP Chairperson, the Scottish Government is looking to appoint a replacement. Currently, no appeals are currently being considered by NAP and we await a timescale for this work to restart.

Antenatal education survey

Our maternity service has launched a survey into the future of antenatal education. The confidential evaluation is a way for people to share their opinions and help shape the way support is provided. The survey can be accessed [here](http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/63YOWN/).

Access Therapies Fife support

1 in 4 people in Scotland will experience a mental health issue this year and people of all ages can be impacted. Access Therapies Fife provides a range of online courses to help people deal with mental health problems and understand the challenges faced by others. Our programmes allow people to work at their own pace at a time and in a place that suits them. Some of the latest upcoming sessions can be found [here](https://www.facebook.com/nhsfife/posts/pfbid07y4MvZxzZPwtS7JgwJ6Pacb22QReBwj35mgXWnqCzrpb3vK7cbYbdqkxH17pMVgnl).

Diabetic retinopathy

We have launched a social media campaign encouraging people to attend diabetic retinopathy screening when invited. Diabetic retinopathy is a condition with no early symptoms and can lead to partial sight loss and even complete blindness if left undiagnosed and untreated. 1 in 5 eligible people in Fife aren’t taking up their diabetic eye screening invite. More information and details about how to book an appointment can be found [here.](https://www.nhsfife.org/services/all-services/diabetes/diabetic-retinopathy/)

Vaccination

Plans are being finalised for the roll out of Scotland’s winter vaccination programme. This year’s programme has an increased focus on protecting those at highest risk of becoming seriously ill from flu and COVID-19. There will also be changes to call-up dates to ensure maximum protection over the winter months. Key points:

* everyone over 50 and those with certain conditions will be offered a flu vaccination.
* people aged 50-64 with no underlying health conditions, are now being called forward.
* the expansion of the flu programme to include secondary school pupils continues this winter, with all school age pupils, children aged 2-5 and children aged 6 months to under 2 years at risk being eligible.
* both flu and COVID-19 vaccines will be offered to people most vulnerable to illness and, where possible, administered at the same time. Clinical advice and evidence show that administration of both vaccines together is a safe and efficient way to deliver maximum protection.
* protection is highest in the three months following vaccination, so vaccinating those at highest risk of COVID-19 later provides greater protection over the peak winter period and into the new year.
* invitations to people aged 65-74 years of age with no underlying conditions and those aged 12-64 years in a clinical risk group (excluding those with a weakened immune system) that leaves them at greater risk from COVID-19 will be the first to receive invitations, with appointments starting from 18 September.
* invitations for all other priority groups receiving both flu and COVID-19 vaccines will follow as the programme progresses. This includes people in care homes and those aged 75 and over who will receive invitations for appointments starting from mid-October. Both groups were offered vaccination during the spring COVID-19 programme, so their immunity has received a recent boost.

People should wait for the NHS to contact them with details of their appointment, or prompt to book. Depending on their selected communication preferences, this will be by email, text, or by post in a white, NHS Scotland branded envelope, which replaces the blue envelopes used previously.

Sharing our messages

We appreciate the support of elected members in sharing our health messages with constituents and on social media.

*All Information correct at time of publishing. Issued by the corporate communications service.*