Issue 70 | 24th March 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 [spring booster](https://scottish-my.sharepoint.com/personal/hamiltoncr_fife_nhs_scot/Documents/nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccinebooster) vaccination campaign has continued to gather pace over the last week, and this week’s activity has focussed upon vaccinating residents living in local care homes, the provision of scheduled evening appointments for children aged 5-11, and some visits to those who are housebound.

In addition to scheduled appointments for children aged 5-11, child-only drop-in sessions are scheduled to commence from the 11th of April; these are dedicated clinics for young people where parents and carers can attend without an appointment. These clinics will be advertised in advance to help drive uptake.

For those who are aged 75 and over, as well as those aged 12 and over who are immunosuppressed, they will shortly be sent appointment letters inviting them for their spring booster; they do not need to do anything proactively. letters inviting people over the age of 75, and those aged 12 and over who are immunosuppressed, to attend a suitable clinic.

Drop-in sessions and [outreach work](http://www.nhsfife.org/dropin) have continued this week, including scheduled visits to the Fife Leisure Park in Dunfermline on Saturday, which will be repeated over the coming weekends due to sustained uptake of vaccination at the site, and the Lomond Centre in Glenrothes.

**5–11-year-old eligibility for vaccine following positive Covid test**

Following enquiries from the constituents of Elected Members, we would like to take this opportunity to clarify vaccination eligibility for children aged 5-11 years who have tested positive for Covid-19. Currently, children aged 5-11 years should wait 12 weeks from their positive test before vaccination, unless they are considered at higher risk from the virus, where this interval can be reduced to four weeks. More information is available [here](https://www.nhsinform.scot/covid-19-vaccine/the-vaccines/vaccinating-children-aged-5-to-11-years/).

**Covid sense campaign**

We have started promoting the national Covid Sense campaign on our social media channels, which highlights the importance of continuing safety behaviours, whilst reflecting the changes in regulations taking place. As part of the campaign, we have made editable signage and posters available to wards to reinforce the impact that visitors and our staff can have by maintaining some behaviours including:

* Wearing a face covering when visiting others in healthcare settings
* Staying at home when you feel unwell to protect others
* Not visiting healthcare settings when feeling unwell

**Community and workplace resource**

We have developed an [online resource](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/campaigns-and-projects/coronavirus-information/covid-resources-for-local-workplaces-and-community-organisations/) that is being made available to local businesses, hospitality, and other community organisations to help them promote the benefits of vaccination and testing to clients and staff. The resource includes social media graphics, posters, videos, and other helpful assets to outline the importance of maintaining good practice and playing a role in keeping both individuals and businesses safe from the effects of the virus.

**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/).

**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).

**Community Testing**

Alongside UK Government symptomatic testing, our community testing sites continue to operate across Fife, seven days a week, providing LFD tests, and PCRs where needed. Members of the public can drop-in at any time during opening hours to access testing and a variety of support. A targeted approach is also now being taken to distribute LFD home testing kits directly to members of the public at selected venues including food banks, supermarkets, and local shops, with staff on hand to signpost to further support. As well as these targeted distribution sites, home LFD kits continue to be available to pick up from testing sites and can be ordered online for home delivery.

As part of the transition plan, there will be no home testing kit distribution from participating community pharmacies beyond 31st March 2022. Since the start of the 'Pharmacy LFD Collect' service in June 2021, 286,838 kits have been distributed from community pharmacies in Fife. Further information on testing is available [here](http://www.nhsfife.org/communitytesting).

**Contact tracing staff**

The changes announced within the Transitional Plan published by Scottish Government mean that the role of contact tracing and testing will shift over the coming weeks and months. We continue to work closely with Scottish Government as they clarify the ambitions set out within their plan and we will provide the necessary support to staff in response to the information we receive.

**Other news**

**Healthcare services under extreme pressure**

Healthcare services continue to come under extreme pressure. This has been caused by an increasing number of people presenting with Covid and a range of other conditions, coupled with a rise in staff absence through Covid. The rise in demand is affecting hospitals, particularly within our Emergency Department and admissions wards, and is also having a significant impact on local GP practices. We have asked people to use healthcare services responsibly and make use of the full range of services available, including local pharmacy, dentist surgery or high street optometrist.

**Emergency sanitary products for NHS Fife staff and visitors**

Many of our staff, along with members of the public may have required an emergency period product whilst at work or in a public place. To ensure easy access to these essential items for both staff and visitors, we are currently rolling out stocks of sanitary items to bathrooms in wards, departments, and main public areas across NHS Fife sites. Products will be held in a container which meets Infection Prevention and Control requirements. A poster campaign is also being undertaken on our sites to highlight availability of these products. Stocks will be replenished on a regular basis.

**National Day of Reflection**

On Wednesday, we joined others across the country in observing the National Day of Reflection, which marked two years since the first lockdown. The day provided a valuable opportunity for connection, support, and remember the family, friends, neighbours, and colleagues that have been lost during the pandemic. We published two videos on the day. [The first](https://youtu.be/45CKhhYU3IY) featured our healthcare chaplain, Gordon Strang, reflecting on the last two years and introducing a poem read by intensive care nurse, Moira Duncan. [The second](https://youtu.be/YvkIRe_AXdE) was our Chief Executive, Carol Potter, reading 'When great trees fall' by Maya Angelou; a poem that recognises loss and its traumatic impact as a tragic yet inevitable part of the human experience.

**New pregnancy self-referral system launched**

Women in Fife who discover that they are pregnant can now self-refer to maternity services to start their pregnancy journey. The first step is for them to complete our online referral form to register with a midwife, or find out more about the options available to them [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/.../youre-pregnant-what-happens-now/). Alternatively, women can also call 01592 643355 (extension 28374) Monday to Friday between 10am–12 noon. Once they have registered, a midwife will be in touch to provide them with all the information and support they need to guide them through their pregnancy.

**General Practice lost appointments**

Earlier this week we were asked to respond to a Facebook post, where Oakley Health Centre had stated they had lost six hours of appointments as people had not turned up .It is well-known that GPs in Fife, like their colleagues elsewhere in the country, are seeing a much-increased demand for their services and so it is more important than ever that people attend their appointment as arranged. Most people do use GP services responsibly, however, the small number of those who do not put unnecessary and additional pressure on GP practices and cause others to have to wait longer as a result. It is vital that those who have arranged to be seen by their GP or practice nurse attend the appointment as scheduled or cancel that appointment if it is no longer required. It is also worth noting that GPs are one part of a wider network of healthcare support available, with some conditions that would have traditionally required a consultation with a GP now able to be assessed and treated by other services like local high street pharmacists and optometrists.

**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 provision s can be found [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/visiting/)

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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