Issue 52 | 19th November 2021

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 & flu vaccination overview**

**Vaccination Scheduling**

[This table](https://www.nhsfife.org/media/36137/nhs-fife-covid-19-vaccination-summary.pdf) provides the latest information on who is being vaccinated, when and where this will be, and how they will be invited. Flu vaccination is being offered at the same appointment as a booster – where appropriate. These appointments are currently invite-only, and not accessible to the public via drop-in clinics unless specified. Further information about the joint Covid booster and flu vaccination programme can be found [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/campaigns-and-projects/coronavirus-information/covid-19-vaccination-programme-in-fife/covid-19-booster-and-flu-vaccination-programme/).

**Covid Booster - Portal**

People in Fife eligible for their COVID-19 vaccine booster and flu jabs are being encouraged to book their vaccination appointments via a new online booking portal. Those aged 50 to 59, unpaid carers who are 16 and over, and those aged 16 and over who are household contacts of immunosuppressed individuals are now able to book their vaccination appointment online, with dates available running from late November and throughout December. Anyone eligible from earlier priority groups who has missed an appointment for whatever reason can also use the portal to book their Autumn/Winter vaccinations.

Those aged 40 to 49 are now also eligible for a COVID-19 booster, and will soon also be able to book their appointment via the portal, once those in the earlier priority groups, who are at greater risk, have been vaccinated.

The online booking portal is available at [www.nhsinform.scot/vaccinebooking](http://www.nhsinform.scot/vaccinebooking) and those without online access can book an appointment through the National Helpline on 0800 030 8013. For more information about Autumn/Winter vaccination programme visit: [www.nhsinform.scot](http://www.nhsinform.scot).

**Child flu vaccination appointments**

We continue to use social media as a platform to encourage parents to schedule flu vaccination for their children who are aged between 2 and 5 years old. Clinics are being provided across Fife, including in the evening from this week. In addition to our scheduled child flu vaccination clinics, the following drop-in clinics will also take place:

* Wonderworld Soft Play Centre – Friday 19 November 2021 (10am to 2.30pm).
* Cupar Scout Hall – Saturday 20 November 2021 (10am to 1pm)
* Rosyth Methodist Church – Saturday 20 November 2021 (10am to 2pm).

For those who would prefer to book a scheduled appointment they can do so by calling 01383 565 456 between 8AM and 5PM.

**Drop-in vaccination clinics**

Drop-in clinics are ongoing. All confirmed clinics, including opening times and criteria, are listed [**here**](http://www.nhsfife.org/dropinclinics).

**Duplicate Appointment Letters**

NHS Fife were approached for comment on the case of a woman from West Fife who received a duplicate appointment for her COVID-19 booster injection and who was concerned that her vaccination had not been recorded. Thousands of people in Fife are receiving COVID-19 booster and third doses appointments each week. It is rare that people would receive duplicate appointments, however, there are clinical systems in place which ensure that any vaccinations that take place are recorded on the individual person’s vaccination record.

**Increase in cases in St Andrews**

NHS Fife had written to attendees of the recent Welly Ball charity dinner near St Andrews urging guests to be especially vigilant of the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 after a cluster cases of the virus linked to the event.

A total of 20 people with links to the dinner had since tested positive for COVID-19, however, as people are mixing more it remains possible that some of those people who have contracted the virus may have done so in other social settings. All positive cases are being followed up by the local contact tracing team and given appropriate public health advice.

With an increasing number of gatherings taking place indoors due to the drop in temperatures, we reminded local people to take the necessary steps to reduce the risk of catching and spreading the virus, such as wearing appropriate face coverings, avoiding crowded places, cleaning hands and surfaces regularly, and self-isolating immediately should anyone develop the signs or symptoms of COVID-19.

**Covid Deaths**

NHS Fife was asked to comment on recently published figures from the National Records of Scotland which showed a greater number of COVID-19 related deaths in Fife than in any other local authority area in Scotland last week. There has been a small rise in the numbers dying in recent weeks after contracting COVID-19 and this reflects the sustained high levels of infection in our communities. Many of those patients who are most unwell, or sadly dying after contracting COVID-19, have not been fully vaccinated. Data on deaths related to COVID-19 in Scotland is published on the National Records of Scotland website. The most recently published data is available at the link below: <https://nrscotland.gov.uk/news/2021/deaths-involving-covid-19-week-45-8-14-november-2021>.

**Vaccine progress data update**

Public Health Scotland publishes [daily statistical data](https://beta.isdscotland.org/find-publications-and-data/population-health/covid-19/covid-19-statistical-report/) on vaccinations in Scotland. The report includes data on; total vaccination – daily count and cumulative total, vaccination by age group, sex, and cohort (including percentage of population to receive first dose), and vaccination by location (health board and local authority area). The [weekly statistical report](https://beta.isdscotland.org/find-publications-and-data/population-health/covid-19/covid-19-statistical-report/17-february-2021/dashboard/) issued by Public Health Scotland includes national-level data on uptake rates by ethnicity and by level of deprivation. We would encourage elected members and media to use these resources as the main source for the latest data on Covid-19 vaccination figures. The Scottish Government’s Covid-19 Vaccine Deployment Plan can be found [here](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-vaccine-deployment-plan-2021/).

**General Covid-19 data**

You can find the latest Covid-19 statistical report [here](https://beta.isdscotland.org/find-publications-and-data/population-health/covid-19/covid-19-statistical-report/). 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/).

**Other news**

**The latest emergency access statistics and the continuing impact of delayed discharge.**

NHS Fife is still seeing significant pressure across the whole healthcare system, and this continues to impact on performance within our Emergency Department. In addition to seeing greater of numbers of people presenting to the Emergency Department, we are also seeing a high number of people who are very acutely unwell. Patients who present must be thoroughly assessed and either discharged or transferred to an appropriate ward. The strain on other areas, and particularly within social care where delayed discharge remains a significant issue, is affecting the flow of patients out of the Emergency Department into other parts healthcare system.

The majority patients attending our Emergency Department continue to be treated within four hours with those patients who are acutely unwell seen much quicker.

**New national guidance for Emergency Departments**

The Scottish Government has published new guidance for emergency department teams to ensure people are being seen by the right person in the right place for their healthcare need. The guidance has been developed in response to a request from NHS Boards to support hospitals to safely refer people to the most appropriate place for treatment if they do not need emergency care. With the level of people self-referring to hospital emergency departments returning to pre-Covid levels, hospitals are seeing more patients whose needs can be better met closer to home by local pharmacies or GP practices. The new guidance can be accessed [here](https://bit.ly/EDguidance).

**GP- Face to Face Appointments**

The proportion of face-to-face appointments available to patients in Fife continues to increase with many thousands of face-to-face consultations provided each week.

Medical practices across Fife continue to follow national guidance on infection prevention and control, as they have done throughout the response to the pandemic. Such measures are in place to minimise the risks for the many vulnerable patients attending GP surgeries, and indeed for the staff working in these areas.

While some of the guidance for clinical areas has been eased in recent months, the necessity for enhanced infection control measures and physical distancing within waiting areas remain. Medical practices must continually manage the number of patients attending at any one time, which can reduce the number of in-person appointments practices can make available to patients.

We recognise, however, that patients at a number of practices are having difficulty accessing appointments, whether face-to-face or otherwise. Like very many other areas of the healthcare system, general practice is experiencing significant and sustained pressure, with the demand for healthcare at present unlike anything we have ever seen. Such pressures are made significantly more challenging due to the UK-wide shortage of general practitioners, which in many areas is reducing the numbers of appointments practices can offer to appointments.

We are working in partnership with medical practices, particularly those facing difficulties in recruiting to vacant GP positions, to ensure that they are supported by a wider multi-disciplinary clinical team in order to maximise capacity and ensure that those patients who most urgently need to be assessed can continue to do so.

**Test & Protect**

**Community Testing Campaign**

1 in 3 people with COVID-19 don’t have symptoms but can still pass the virus on. By taking part in routine testing members of the public can help to protect those around them. In the run-up to the festive season, a local campaign has been developed highlighting the role of community testing and encouraging members of the public to test twice weekly as part of their normal routine.

A range of channels will be utilised over the coming weeks and a supporting toolkit has been developed to support partners and community organisations to further promote the messaging.

Community testing sites are available at the Glebe Centre, Kirkcaldy; Leys Park Car Park, Dunfermline; Maxwell Centre, Cowdenbeath and Parkgate Centre Car Park, Rosyth. In addition, five mobile units are deployed across Fife taking testing into the very heart of communities, and providing responsive, localised testing based on the latest Public Health data.

**Community Testing sites**

Testing sites are available across Fife for members of the public with and without symptoms. Anyone with symptoms of Covid-19 or who has been advised to take a test should book a test via [www.nhsinform.scot](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Chamiltoncr%5CDesktop%5Cwww.nhsinform.scot). If support is needed with the booking process, call 119. More information and current locations can be found [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/campaigns-and-projects/coronavirus-information/coronavirus-testing-in-fife/testing-for-those-without-symptoms/).

**Universal lateral flow testing kits**

Covid-19 rapid home testing kits are now available to anyone in Scotland who does not have symptoms, with members of the public encouraged to test themselves twice weekly. These free kits can be ordered and delivered through the post by calling 119 or [ordering online](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested/pages/no-covid-symptoms/). They are also available from any of Fife’s 85 pharmacies or can be picked up through our community testing programme. Further information on testing in Fife can be found [here](http://www.nhsfife.org/testing).

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| **Keep in touch**We endeavour to cover as much as possible in these updates, however if you believe that there is something that has not been addressed in this or previous editions, or is not available publicly from other sources, please let us know.**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. **Elected member meetings**NHS Fife facilitates regular informal group meetings with our elected representatives on a quarterly basis, via TEAMS. These meetings are open to all Fife’s MP’s and MSP’s to ensure parity and consistency of feedback. The date for the next meeting is **Friday 10 December** at **9.30 am****Elected members enquiries** NHS Fife is committed to responding to elected member enquires in a timely manner. However, we need to manage enquiries to ensure that our urgent frontline delivery is not disrupted. To help you and to help us we are asking that all emails for updates and information or to address constituents' enquiries are directed to our central email address. All emails should be directed to the NHS Fife Chief Executive Office for response and co-ordination at: fife.chiefexecutive@nhs.scot The Chief Executives’ Office will formally acknowledge receipt of all correspondence and coordinate a response from services to ensure that all enquiries are responded to in good time. 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 the NHS Fife Website, NHS Inform and the Scottish Government website and only come to us if the request relates specifically to Fife and not covered by local or national updates or guidance. To aid the sharing of information and updates with Fife's elected representatives we will now be issuing an Elected Members Update (EMU) on a weekly basis. This will be emailed directly to you and available to access online at: [www.nhsfife.org/emu](http://www.nhsfife.org/emu)**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/). |

Issued by NHS Fife Communications, all information correct at time of publishing.