Issue 21 | 1 April 2021

Elected Members Update

for Fife’s MPs, MSPs and
local Councillors

This weekly 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 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).

We ask that Elected Members do not contact our staff directly with any queries around the national vaccination programme. Instead, please consult the Scottish Government’s [vaccination programme webpage](https://www.gov.scot/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-vaccination/), the national vaccination information phone number on 0800 030 8013, or our own webpage for [local updates](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/campaigns-projects/coronavirus-information/nhs-fife-covid-19-vaccination-programme/). 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, your email should be directed to the NHS Fife Chief Executive Office for response and co-ordination atfife.chiefexecutive@nhs.scot

NHS Fife does not have access to individual appointments, so individuals are asked not to contact us directly and instead call the national helpline on 0800 030 8013**.** NHS Fife also has no local capacity to inform members of the public when their appointment is booked for. Anyone eligible for vaccination under the definition of the national priority cohorts who has not received a letter, or who may have lost their letter, can arrange an appointment by providing details [here](https://invitations.vacs.nhs.scot/). Or, if they phone the national helpline number, the operator can complete this form on their behalf. Those aged 80 and over living in the community should contact their GP Practice.

# Election guidance has been issued in relation to the Scottish Parliament elections on Thursday 6th May. Until then, we will continue to publish our weekly update with information focused solely on our ongoing response to COVID-19.

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# Coronavirus

## Local vaccination update

We have now vaccinated more than 200,000 people with their first dose of protection against COVID-19, with almost 20,000 people having completed their course.

On Tuesday, we also announced that second dose vaccinations have now been administered to residents and staff at all 76 of Fife’s care homes. Care homes were amongst the first to receive the vaccine in December last year, due to the vulnerability of residents. We are indebted to those involved in the local vaccination effort, but also the care homes and their staff, whose flexibility and desire to go the extra mile for their residents helped make this landmark possible.

Members will likely be aware of widespread media coverage of a national shortage in supply of the AstraZeneca vaccine during the month of April, which has impacted an estimated 500,000 first doses throughout Scotland. This means that vaccination activity across NHS Fife will be significantly reduced over the next two to three weeks. However, despite these challenges we are still on course to deliver all first vaccinations to the nine priority cohorts by mid-April and the rest of the adult population by the end of July. During this period of reduced vaccine supply we will continue to prioritise second doses to ensure that everyone who has received their first vaccine receives the same vaccine within a 12-week window. Supplies of the Pfizer vaccine remain unaffected.

Priority vaccination groups

NHS Fife is following the JCVI advice on the order of priority for the coronavirus vaccination:

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| **Priority order** | **NHS Fife Status** |
| 1. Residents in a care home for older adults and their carers
 | First doses complete for over 95% Second doses complete for over 90% |
| 1. All those 80 years of age and over and frontline health and social care workers
 | Second doses for staff began on 1st March over 95% of over 80’s vaccinated with first dose. Second doses commence this week. |
| 1. All those 75 years of age and over
 | Over 9­5% of population vaccinated . |
| 1. All those 70 years of age and over
 | Over 90% of population vaccinated. |
| 1. All those 65 years of age and over
 | Over 85% of population vaccinated. |
| 1. All individuals aged 16 years to 64 years with underlying health conditions which put them at higher risk of serious disease and mortality
 | Over 43,000 vaccinations given. |
| 1. All those 60 years of age and over
 | Appointments started 13th March. Over 12,000 people vaccinated.  |
| 1. All those 55 years of age and over
 | Appointments started 15th March. Over 11,000 people vaccinated.  |
| 1. All those 50 years of age and over
 | Appointments started w/c 22nd March  |

Reduction in clinic activity 2nd -12th April

It is acknowledged that there will be a reduction in appointments at our community clinics over the week commencing 5th - 12th April, including some temporary closures. This short-term step-down is in response to reduced vaccine supply and demand; however, NHS Fife does have enough supply to ensure completion of cohorts 1-9 by mid-April. This window will also provide the vaccination team with the opportunity to prepare for the much larger Cohort 10, in line with national guidance and timescales. More information is available [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/campaigns-and-projects/coronavirus-information/vaccination-programme/).

Military assistance stepped down for fortnight

Due to the temporary reduction in vaccine supply , our military vaccinator support teams will be stood down for a fortnight, with their last working day being 1st April 2021.  The programme is incredibly grateful to the team for their support. An agreement for the option of military support remains in place until the end of the month.

Unpaid carers update

More than 3,000 unpaid carers have so far been appointed and we continue to encourage people in this group to self-identify for vaccination. A self-registration service allows people to check their eligibility and register, online or over the phone, as an unpaid carer. This can be done [here](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Ccurnocke%5CDownloads%5Cnhsinform.scot%5Ccarersregister)or by calling the national helpline on 0800 030 8013.

Vaccination of inpatients

We continue to make good progress vaccinating inpatients and have, to date, administered vaccines to around 80% of those who are eligible.

Work to secure large scale vaccination centres

We are now in the final stages of arrangements to secure the use of several mass vaccination venues at locations across Fife. These centres, which will be announced shortly and in line with increased vaccine supply, will be utilised as we move beyond cohort 9 and used alongside a subset of the existing community clinics in remote areas.

# Hard to reach groups

We are awaiting the results of research from national colleagues aimed at identifying the challenges of reaching ‘harder to reach communities’ with vaccination messaging. The Scottish Government is working with a number of groups, including the Ethnic Minority National Resilience Network, the Minority Ethnic Health Inclusion Service, the Minority Ethnic Carers of People Project, and the Scottish Public Health Network to understand how better to reach communities via their trusted voices, such as community leaders, and we await their feedback and associated marketing assets.

# Remobilisation of services

As the number of COVID-19 related admissions to the acute hospital has reduced, the Acute Services Division has been able to gradually remobilise its elective and out-patient programmes. In terms of the elective surgical programme, weekly clinical prioritisation is in place to assess the available theatre capacity and allocate operating time according to strict criteria.  The out-patient programme has also started to remobilise, building on learning from the pandemic that includes the use of planning tools to support physical distancing in clinics as well as the use of technology to support consultations where appropriate.

## Hospital visiting restrictions update

The Scottish Government has announced that some hospital visiting restrictions will be lifted from the 26th of April, dependent on continued suppression of the virus. Visiting is currently limited to essential visits only but may be extended to one visitor per patient. Further information will be available in the coming weeks. Current arrangements, including guidance on essential visiting criteria and FAQS, can be found [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/services/patients-carers-and-visitors/visiting-arrangements-during-covid-19-pandemic/)**.**

# NHS Scotland emergency footing extended

The Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport has confirmed that NHS Scotland will remain on an emergency footing until at least 30th June 2021. The last few months have emphasised the unique nature of the pandemic and the challenges it brings. It also highlights the continued requirement for NHS Scotland and its partners to be agile and collaborative in their response to the new and emergent issues that are faced. Caroline Lamb, Chief Executive of NHS Scotland and Director General of Health and Social Care, has written to Boards noting that while there may be further challenges, experience and lessons learnt will help us respond to any potential future issues. Staff have been thanked for their continued dedication and commitment through the pandemic.

## Vaccine progress data update

Public Health Scotland is now publishing [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 on 24/03/21 included a new section on ‘Equality of COVID-19 vaccination’ this week. This included 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/).

## Local 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/).

## Schools and nurseries updates

During the last school term, NHS Fife and Fife Council jointly published information on COVID-19 cases connected to nurseries and schools. For this new school term NHS Fife and Fife Council will be publishing a weekly update on cases within local schools and nurseries.

More information is available [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/latest-news/2021/03/weekly-reporting-of-covid-19-cases-linked-to-schools-and-nurseries/?fbclid=IwAR3cTD2G_Lj0dyliA1Bn_frxQGDBEA2RajGLgp-9qIXlsdLW9BTz-odMNDY).

## Asymptomatic and symptomatic testing in Fife

Alongside the vaccination programme, testing is an important part of the response to COVID-19. Over the last few weeks, a number of testing sites have opened across Fife providing symptomatic and asymptomatic testing for members of the public. More information, including venue locations and opening times, can be found [here](http://www.nhsfife.org/testing).

## Screening programmes continuing during lockdown

We are using social media to remind people that national screening programmes are still running during the national lockdown. Travelling for a screening appointment is an essential journey. Further information on screening can be found [here](https://bit.ly/3pZ0J4L).

## 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. As such, and in order to help you share our messages with the public in as vibrant a way as possible, we have created a [dedicated campaigns area](https://www.nhsfife.org/campaignresources/) on our website where you will be able to download graphics, videos and any other resources to complement your posts.

## 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 across Fife in a timely manner.

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| Keep in touchElected 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 or Elected Members briefing on a weekly rather than fortnightly basis. This will be emailed directly to you and available to access online at: [www.nhsfife.org/emu](http://www.nhsfife.org/emu)This update will also collate and address any common or shared requests for information from Elected members, received via the Chief Executive's Office, rather than us having to address each individual enquiry.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/).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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