Issue 29 | 3rd June 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 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).

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](mailto:fife.chiefexecutive@nhs.scot) for response and co-ordination.

NHS Fife does not have access to appointments, so individuals are asked not to contact us directly and instead call the National Helpline on 0800 030 8013**.** 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 by calling the National Helpline to have the form filled out over the phone. In circumstances where the National Helpline cannot resolve an appointment issue or find an option for rescheduling there is an agreed process for this to be passed to the local NHS Fife COVID-19 Vaccine Team to investigate and resolve. We continue to work with national colleagues to reinforce and strengthen these pathways.

The latest Scottish Government restrictions can be found [here](https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/advice-and-guidance/2020/10/coronavirus-covid-19-protection-levels/documents/covid-19-protection-levels-summary-information-on-what-you-can-and-cannot-do/covid-19-protection-levels-summary-information-on-what-you-can-and-cannot-do/govscot%3Adocument/COVID-19%2Bprotection%2Blevels%2B-%2Bsummary%2Binformation%2Bon%2Bwhat%2Byou%2Bcan%2Band%2Bcannot%2Bdo.pdf)

## COVID-19 vaccination update

220,000 people in Fife have now been vaccinated with their first dose of protection against COVID-19. Of those that have received their first dose, 161,000 have also received their second vaccine, meaning more than a third of people in Fife are now fully vaccinated.

Vaccination of 30-39-year olds began on Monday and so far over a quarter of all eligible 18-29-year olds (12,000) have pre-registered for a vaccination appointment via the Scottish Government’s registration portal.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Priority order** | **NHS Fife Status** |
| 1. Residents in a care home for older adults and their carers | Second doses provided to all care homes in Fife. |
| 1. All those 80 years of age and over and frontline health and social care workers | Majority of second doses complete. |
| 1. All those 75 years of age and over | Majority of second doses complete. |
| 1. All those 70 years of age and over | Majority of second doses complete. |
| 1. All those 65 years of age and over | Majority of second doses complete. |
| 1. All individuals aged 16 years to 64 years with underlying health conditions which put them at higher risk of serious disease and mortality | 18,000 second doses complete. |
| 1. All those 60 years of age and over | 14,000 second doses administered. |
| 1. All those 55 years of age and over | 13,000 second doses administered. |
| 1. All those 50 years of age and over | 8 ,000 second doses administered. |
| 1. All those aged 40-49 | 10,000 second doses administered. |
| 1. All those aged 30-39 | Appointments started on Monday. |
| 1. All those aged 18-29 | Self-registration underway. |

## B.1.617.2 variant

## A variant of COVID-19, first discovered in India, has been detected in Fife. We have put in place a number of precautionary measures to help restrict and contain any potential future spread (*more details below*); this is due to emerging evidence suggesting that the variant may transmit more quickly than the UK strain. Nationally, the Scottish Government is acting upon the recommendations made by the Joint Committee for Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) and accelerating vaccine promotion and uptake. A key facet of this will be – where supply allows - bringing forward second doses of vaccine from 12 to 8 weeks for priority groups, who are at greatest risk from the B.1.617.2 variant. Emerging evidence suggests that a first dose of vaccine may not offer the same protection against the new variant as against some of the earlier strains – offering second doses more quickly maximises protection.

## Update around Kirkcaldy cluster of variant

While the majority of those who are confirmed positive with the variant currently reside in the Kirkcaldy area, cases are also known to live in other parts of Fife. Significant work has been undertaken to identify those who have been in close contact with these cases, provide them with the appropriate guidance and support, and ensure that testing is readily available to the local communities that are impacted. A key facet of prevention is through testing and we continue to urge locals to get tested as soon as possible to help stop the spread. Local testing arrangements for those with and without symptoms can be found [here](http://www.nhsfife.org/testing).

## 18-29-year-old registration portal

We are inviting 18-29-year olds in Fife to register for vaccination online or by phone before Friday, 4 June, to get details of their appointment sent to them by email or text. Those not registering will be sent their appointment details by letter later. The drive to encourage online registration coincides with a survey which shows that 90% of 18-29 year olds in Scotland will get the COVID-19 vaccine when offered it, or have had it already, with just under 70% eager to get it. 18-29 year olds can register for the vaccine online [here](nhsinform.scot/under30register)or by calling 0800 030 8013. Registration is particularly important for those who are planning to be away or have different term time addresses to ensure they still get details of their appointment as soon as possible as letters will be sent out to where they are registered with a GP.

Young carer vaccination

We are inviting young people aged 16 and 17 who care for someone due to old age, physical or mental illness, disability, or an addiction to come forward and register for vaccination. They can do this by calling 0800 030 8013 or by joining the [Carers Register.](nhsinform.scot/carersregister)

Fertility reassurance

We are committed to offering a COVID-19 vaccine to everyone who is eligible. We also recognise that this can be a daunting prospect for people, and even more so for those who are trying for a family, or who are considering this in the near future These concerns are not unique to the COVID-19 vaccine and it is therefore important that people get accurate, clinical information:

* There is no evidence to suggest COVID-19 vaccines affect fertility in women or men.
* The JCVI recommend women who are trying to become pregnant do not need to avoid pregnancy after vaccination.
* The evidence remains that the benefits of the vaccine far outweigh the risks.
* You can get seriously ill from the virus or its serious side-effects at any age and the vaccine offers the best protection against this.
* Understanding the benefits and risk is the best way to make an informed choice and you should seek fertility advice from your local Health Care professionals for accurate information and guidance
* The latest evidence shows that the vaccine is safe for those undergoing fertility treatment, although timing around both treatments should be considered and discussed with fertility experts to make sure that you get the treatment and support that is right for you.
* There is no need to delay fertility treatment after having the COVID-19 vaccine.

Further information can be found [here](https://fife.link/1q37).

Enquiries around staff vaccination figures

Over 22,000 health and social care staff have received their first dose and over 11,000 staff have received their second doses. Due to the way that data is collected, we are unable to provide this as a percentage of those eligible, nor are we able to break this down into job roles. NHS Fife is following JCVI and Scottish and UK Government direction regarding the vaccination of healthcare workers, which means that staff vaccination is absorbed into the wider public vaccination campaign. Definitions of eligible health and social care staff, as confirmed by the Chief Medical Officer, are dependent on a number of factors which mean eligibility cannot always be determined by staff groups and in some cases professional judgement is exercised to assess eligibility. Information around uptake rates by cohort are reported by Public Health Scotland and can be found [here](https://public.tableau.com/profile/phs.covid.19#!/vizhome/COVID-19DailyDashboard_15960160643010/Vaccinations.).

Vaccination venues in St Andrews, Dunfermline, and Oakley

The locations of vaccination clinics are continually reviewed to ensure ease of access for those attending, whilst maximising the throughput of people necessary to maintain the considerable pace of the vaccination programme. We have been looking at venues in the west and north-east of Fife to enable us to increase the number of mass vaccination clinics from four to six for the much larger cohorts 11 (age 30-39) and 12 (age 18-29), as well as to deliver 2nd dose appointments. As a result, St Andrews Community Hospital will be used, along with a combination of Dunfermline East Church and Oakley Centre in west Fife, alongside the four large scale venues in Kirkcaldy, Dunfermline, Glenrothes and Methil.

Anti-social behaviour at vaccination venues

We have been disappointed and concerned to hear reports of anti-social behaviour at some of our vaccination venues, with teams experiencing verbal abuse from a small minority of attendees. NHS Fife takes a zero tolerance approach to this behaviour and to support our staff we have started a local communications campaign, which includes posters at venues, social media and a video recorded [by a member of our vaccination team.](https://youtu.be/aNlxFSVhIYI)

Enquiries around the priority vaccination of teachers

The prioritisation of adults for COVID-19 vaccination is developed at a national level and is then enacted by Health Boards locally. NHS Fife has followed the national guidance in place to ensure those determined to be most clinically in need, and indeed those caring for this group, are vaccinated as quickly as possible. Staff working in Fife’s special schools, therefore, were invited to receive the vaccine to help reduce the risk of transmission for vulnerable young people in their care.

Short notice rescheduling of appointments in St Andrews

A clinical emergency occurred at the vaccination clinic in St Andrews Community Hospital on Friday evening, resulting in the short-term postponement of 15 appointments while this was attended to. Those impacted have been contacted and offered alternate appointments.

Vaccination status scheme

The Scottish Government has launched a scheme, which will provide confirmation of vaccination required for foreign travel. The initiative will allow people travelling abroad to access and [download their record of vaccination status](http://www.nhsinform.scot/covid19status.) via the NHS Inform Patient Portal or – for those not online – request it in the post via the freephone number 0808 196 8565. The scheme will only apply to those planning to travel to a country or territory where record of vaccination is needed as an entry requirement and, whilst there are currently no countries requiring such status, international travel restrictions can change quickly. As Scotland’s vaccination programme progresses, vaccination will be replaced by digital COVID-19 Status Certificates, which will include vaccination and testing data to be used for outbound international travel.

Rescheduling appointments

For those who are unable to attend their assigned vaccination appointment, they can now [reschedule online](https://vacs.nhs.scot/csp?id=csp_registration). We are aware that a small number of people have been experiencing some difficulties accessing appointments within their desired time, however the local project team has been expanding capacity, including implementing additional vaccination stations at venues. The advice to people who are rescheduling their second dose vaccine is to book the next available appointment and that breach of the recommended 12-week period between first and second dose does not mean they have to restart their cycle. More information on rescheduling appointments is available [here](https://www.nhsinform.scot/covid-19-vaccine/invitations-and-appointments/rearrange-or-opt-out-of-your-coronavirus-vaccination-appointment).

## High priority vaccination group call out

We continue our call for people aged over 50 or in a high priority group who have not yet had their COVID-19 vaccine and wish to do so to make an appointment. Although invites are now being issued to those in younger age groups, it is not too late for those in the priority groups to come forward. This reminder applies to four key groups.

* anyone aged 50 or above
* adults on the shielding list
* people aged 16 and over who have an underlying health condition. The list of conditions is available on www.nhsinform.scot
* unpaid carers aged 16-49 who regularly provide vital face-to-face care and support for another person. People in this category can register using the helpline.

Anyone who believes they should have had a letter by now with details of either their first or second dose should call the national helpline on 0800 030 8013 or fill out the missing appointments form on [www.nhsinform.scot](http://www.nhsinform.scot). More information is available [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/latest-news/2021/05/high-priority-groups-vaccination-call-out/).

Mass vaccination sites

The Carnegie Conference Centre in Dunfermline, M&S on Kirkcaldy High Street, the former Argos in the Kingdom Centre, Glenrothes, and the Savoy Sports Centre in Methil are operating as mass COVID-19 vaccination sites. More information on the venues, including directions and parking availability, is available [here](https://fife.link/vaccinationcentres).

## 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).

Testing in Fife

Alongside the vaccination programme, testing continues to be an important part of the response to COVID-19. Several testing sites are available across Fife for members of the public with symptoms. Anyone with the symptoms of COVID-19 should book a test at [www.nhsinform.scot](http://www.nhsinform.scot) or call 0800 028 2816. If support is needed with the booking process, call 119. Testing for individuals without symptoms is available through our community testing sites - available to the public on a drop-in basis. Community testing sites are currently available at Glebe Centre, Kirkcaldy; Savoy Centre, Methil; Tryst Centre, Dunfermline, with mobile sites currently in Falkland and Kinghorn. A Scottish Ambulance Service Mobile Unit is currently available in Cowdenbeath providing testing for individuals with and without symptoms, appointments are required at this site. Rapid testing kits for home use are also now available to individuals who do not have symptoms, with members of the public encouraged to test themselves twice weekly. These kits can be ordered online and delivered through the post, alternatively they can be picked up from testing sites at Glebe Centre, Kirkcaldy; Victory Memorial Hall, St Andrews; Overton Community Centre, Kirkcaldy; Regional Drive-Through Centre, Bankhead Car Park, Glenrothes; Glenrothes Miners Charitable Society, Glenrothes and the Dell Farquharson Community Centre, Dunfermline. Further information on testing in Fife can be found [here](http://www.nhsfife.org/testing).

## Seasonal testing of agricultural workers

As Scotland enters its busiest agricultural period, the industry relies on foreign seasonal workers to meet production demands. A testing approach for seasonal workers, which enables farms to operate whilst also reducing the risk of COVID-19 outbreaks has now been agreed. In line with existing public health measures for all international travellers coming to Scotland, people arriving from outside the UK to work on Scottish farms need to go into self-isolation for 10 days. The testing approach agreed with the industry is that all workers will take a Polymerase Chain reaction (PCR) test on days two and eight of self-isolation so that new strains of COVID-19 can be identified quickly and effectively to break any potential chains of transmission. The [Seasonal Workers Testing information document](https://www.nhsfife.org/media/34996/seasonal-agricultural-workers-testing-info.pdf) contains key information about the approach including details for farms and their employees and support channels available to staff who have to self-isolate because they test positive or are identified as a close contact.

## Pharmacy bring your medicines campaign

Our Pharmacy Services have launched a campaign encouraging patients to bring their medicines, pill pouches and compliance aids with them when they attend hospital. Having a patients’ medicine together helps staff know which medicines they take and how they should be prescribed. Patients are less likely to miss any doses of medicines, and if they are moved between wards, their medicines will move with them. More information is available [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/latest-news/2021/05/always-bring-your-medicines-and-compliance-aids-into-hospital-with-you/).

## EU settlement scheme

Our European Union and European Economic Area (EEA) staff remain a highly valued and appreciated group within the team that make-up the hard working and committed workforce that is NHS Fife. We are actively encouraging staff and their families, if they have not already done so, to apply under the EU Settlement Scheme for either Settled Status (indefinite leave to remain) or Pre-Settled Status (limited leave to remain for five years), before the end of the Brexit transition period on 30th June. A detailed guide to making an application under the settlement scheme can be [here](https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families/applying-for-settled-status).

## Hospital visiting restrictions

Everyone in hospital can now receive at least one named visitor. For those visiting a patient in hospital, infection control measures will remain in place, including physical distancing in communal areas, face coverings, hand hygiene stations, restricted movement around the hospital, and a clear instruction that visits should not take place if the visitor has COVID-19 symptoms or is isolating. Current arrangements, including guidance on visiting criteria and FAQS, can be found [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/services/patients-carers-and-visitors/visiting-arrangements-during-covid-19-pandemic/)**.**

# Remobilisation of services

The Board has formally approved our remobilisation plan, following confirmation of approval by Scottish Government. As COVID-19 related admissions to our acute hospital continue to reduce, we are gradually remobilising elective and out-patient programmes. More information is available [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/services/resuming-health-and-care-services-in-fife/).

# Board member recruitment

NHS Fife is looking for three new members to join its Board. As non-executive members of the Board, they will be expected to play a central role in guiding the strategies which address the health priorities and health care needs of communities across Fife. They will also be offered the training they will need to make a strong contribution. More information is available [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/work-with-us/recruitment-spotlight/2021/members-nhs-fife-board/).

## 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.

|  |
| --- |
| 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](mailto: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 online Board 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). |

Issued by NHS Fife Communications