Issue 27 | 20th May 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 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**.** 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 by calling the National Helpline to have the form filled out over the phone.

The current timescale given by the national team for investigation can be up to three weeks. These submissions require to be investigated locally and nationally prior to an appointment being allocated. Those aged 80 and over living in the community should contact their GP Practice.

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

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| **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
 | 45,000 first doses. 8,000 second doses. |
| 1. All those 60 years of age and over
 | 13,000 first doses. 4,000 second doses. |
| 1. All those 55 years of age and over
 | 12,000 first doses. 3,000 second doses. |
| 1. All those 50 years of age and over
 | 13,000 first doses. 2,000 second doses. |
| 1. All those aged 40-49
 | 28,000 first doses. 4,000 second doses. |
| 1. All those aged 30-39
 | Being scheduled. |

## B.1.617.2 variant

## A variant of COVID-19, first discovered in India, has been detected in Fife. Whilst we are aware of a small number of people contracting this B.1.617.2 variant, we have put in place a number of localised 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.

## Kirkcaldy cluster of variant

Due to detection of small numbers of the B.1.617.2 variant in Kirkcaldy, we are encouraging people in the Bennochy, Templehall, Smeaton, Hayfield, and Valley areas of the town to come forward for testing. The known contacts have already been traced and asked to self-isolate, but it’s important that everyone in the local community stays alert to the potential of spreading the virus. Not everyone with COVID-19 has symptoms, but they can still pass the virus on to loved ones and their community without knowing it. Community Testing is one of the best ways to help stop the spread. As well as the fixed Community Testing site at the Glebe Centre, there are now another two mobile testing units at the YMCA car park in Hendry Crescent and at Victoria Road car park. More than 500 people have presented for local testing over the course of the last week. To help get the message out and encourage uptake, we have set up a dedicated web-page, which contains information about the Kirkcaldy cluster, a [video](https://youtu.be/N1VfMqZvv5E) from our Director of Public Health, Dona Milne, directions to testing centres, and other information. The page can be accessed [here](http://www.nhsfife.org/communitytestingkirkcaldy) and the video can be seen and shared on our social media pages.

Additional vaccination venues

Throughout our planning and delivery of the vaccination programme in Fife, we have kept our venue locations under review. This is to ensure we can get access to and safely staff a range of appropriately sized venues that meet the needs of the local population and each priority cohort appointment allocation. For the larger Cohort 11 (starting 31st May) we are considering extending our first dose vaccination venues from 4 to 6 and hope to confirm these additional venue locations over the coming week.

Vaccination status scheme

The Scottish Government has launched a new 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 is working to expand 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).

Non-attendance at clinics

For those who do not attend their appointments, the national scheduling team will write to them in the coming weeks offering them the opportunity to book another appointment. Over recent weeks we have seen an increase in the proportion of people who have failed to attend their appointment for COVID-19 vaccination. While this fluctuates from day-to-day, the vast majority of people who have been invited for vaccination have attended. General information around uptake rates by cohort are reported by Public Health Scotland [here](https://public.tableau.com/profile/phs.covid.19#!/vizhome/COVID-19DailyDashboard_15960160643010/Vaccinations.).

New self-registration portal

The Scottish Government is due to launch its new self-registration online portal for people aged 18-29 years old, in the coming days. The portal will see a move away from people being auto appointed and allow them to choose the location and time of their own appointments, based on availability at our larger vaccination venues.

## Vaccination of people with a learning disability

Appointment letters for adults with learning disabilities who have not already been vaccinated have started being sent out by GP surgeries, and vaccination began last week. If patients require someone to consent on their behalf, they should bring evidence that they are able to do this, such as an Adults with Incapacity Certificate. Most people will be given an appointment at one of our community venues, but if they cannot access a community venue, they can speak to their GP who will be able to refer them to the Learning Disabilities pathway team to make a bespoke arrangement.

## JCVI guidance for those aged 30-39

The JCVI has made clear that the new advice for those aged 30-39 age group is based on the current low prevalence of the virus and the availability of alternatives to the Astra-Zeneca vaccine. If the situation changes the advice is that vaccination of adults aged 30-39 years with any of the UK authorised vaccines is always better than no vaccination, except where there are specific contraindications. The clear scientific evidence and advice continues to be that the benefits of receiving the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine far outweigh the risks for most age groups because it provides protection against the harm from COVID-19. It remains crucial that everyone who is offered a vaccination takes up the offer. Everyone who has received their first dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine safely should receive their second dose as this gives greater and longer lasting protection against the virus.

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 Rosyth and High Valleyfield. A Scottish Ambulance Service Mobile Unit is currently available in Dalgety Bay 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 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. Sites are open from 3.30pm to 8pm for the collection of kits and no appointment is necessary. Further information on testing in Fife can be found [here](http://www.nhsfife.org/testing).

## Connectivity issues at testing sites

We were approached by local media around reported internet connectivity issues at COVID-19 test centres in Fife – particularly the Glebe Centre and Overton Road in Kirkcaldy and the site at Victoria Memorial Hall in St Andrews. The testing sites at Overton Road and Victoria Memorial Hall are not operated by NHS Fife and are instead managed by the UK Government. The community testing site at Glebe Park Neighbourhood Centre is operated jointly by NHS Fife and Fife Council, however there have been no significant issues with internet connectivity at our sites and venues continue to operate as normal.  In a very small number of isolated instances, we have seen short-term interruptions in connectivity and measures are in place to ensure the venues can continue to operate whilst minimising any potential delay in result notification.  The experience of the majority of local people presenting for community COVID-19 testing in Fife appears to be very good, with attendees asked to complete a satisfaction survey and results so far are overwhelmingly positive.

## Authority to discharge report

The Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland has [published its report](https://www.mwcscot.org.uk/sites/default/files/2021-05/AuthorityToDischarge-Report_May2021.pdf) into decision making for people in hospital who lack capacity, which addresses concerns over unlawfully moving patients from hospitals to care homes during the early days of the pandemic. The report makes a number of recommendations` and is based on information submitted by Health and Social Care Partnerships across Scotland.

## Hospital visiting restrictions

Everyone in hospital can now receive at least one named visitor – in some areas this has been extended following the move into Level 2 on Monday. 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 latest version of our remobilisation plan is currently with the Scottish Government and is expected to be presented to the NHS Fife Board this month. 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/).

## 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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