Issue 58 | 23rd December 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 vaccination overview**

This week has seen the local Covid vaccination programme continue to expand at considerable pace once again and, following initial direction from Scottish Government to expand vaccination capacity by around 50%, we have now managed to further increase this to over 70% - a considerable achievement that puts us in a strong position to provide a booster vaccination opportunity - via both scheduled and drop-in appointments - to all those who are eligible over the age of 18 who take up the offer over the next three weeks.

Since the acceleration of the programme was announced, around 80,000 appointments have been made available via the national scheduling system up until the first week of January, and we have been extremely encouraged by the uptake. Many thousands of appointments are being booked each day and our vaccination clinics are consistently operating at or near full capacity. Indeed, on Monday of this week we delivered a record 5,340 vaccinations – well above the daily target of 3,125 and testament to the incredible work that has been going on at pace and under significant timescale pressure.

Whilst we are aiming to vaccinate an additional 47,000 people by the end of this month, there continues to be many thousands of appointments available between now and early January. We are urging anyone eligible for a first, second or booster dose to book their vaccination appointment by logging on to 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, there are [drop-in clinics](https://www.nhsfife.org/dropinclinics/) available across Fife where no appointment is necessary.

Elsewhere, the programme is aiming to have all boosters delivered to those who are considered severely immunosuppressed by 28th of December. Second doses for people aged between 12 and 15 are being rolled out the week commencing 10th January, in line with national guidance and this cohort will receive a letter inviting them to attend a clinic.

**Avoiding queues at vaccination venues**

Health Boards across Scotland have been reporting queues at vaccination venues, which are being caused by people turning up to their scheduled appointments too early. We have used social media to encourage people to turn up for their appointment at their allotted time and help us manage demand. While there have been some reports of queues at clinics, the team have developed processes to ensure people are supported when attending should they have to queue. This week despite the huge number of vaccinations delivered instances of queue have been minimal in Fife.

**Vaccination of pregnant women as at-risk group**

The JCVI recently advised that pregnant women should now be considered a clinical risk group and, therefore, a priority target group within the vaccination programme. Nationally, uptake of the vaccine amongst pregnant women is below that of the general female population in the same age groups. To help increase vaccinations we are adopting a policy of ‘making every contact count’, where healthcare workers are strongly encouraged to recommend vaccination in pregnancy and outline the risks of remaining unvaccinated, whilst also promoting the benefits of vaccination via regular social media posts.

**Seriously ill Fife man endorses vaccination**

This week we were asked by local and national media to comment on 32-year-old local man, Adam Sharp, who recently recovered from coronavirus and wanted to use his experiences to encourage others to get vaccinated. Adam was previously sceptical about vaccination but since his stay in our Intensive Care Unit he has become a vocal advocate for the vaccine. In our response, we stated that there is clear evidence that vaccination greatly reduces the risk of becoming seriously unwell, and indeed of dying from the effects of COVID. In Fife there are numerous examples of people who have been unvaccinated, some in their twenties or thirties, who were otherwise well and who have required admission to hospital after contracting the virus. Very many of these people could have avoided becoming seriously unwell by taking up the offer of vaccination when it was offered. STV’s coverage of the story can be viewed [here](https://news.stv.tv/east-central/young-dad-left-in-coma-after-catching-covid-urges-people-to-get-jab?fbclid=IwAR2UThEdoSZ8evR1S-stvVs00bqqF_DlXodfreEs2LVcB_2l1YiH3YbqbNg).

**Booster doses for those who have received vaccinations in another country**

To support flexibility and help anyone who is eligible for their booster, those who may be experiencing difficulties booking their booster can visit one of our drop-in clinics. This includes people who have received their initial vaccination or vaccinations in another country. These people should bring evidence of any initial vaccinations to the drop-in clinic and make sure that they are aware of the recommended timing between doses before travelling. Full information on eligibility and criteria can be found on the NHS Inform website.

**Vaccination drop-in clinics**

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

**Inaccurate information on Covid status app**

People experiencing difficulties accessing their vaccination certificate using the national Covid status app, or where they believe the information recorded on the app to be inaccurate, should consult [these FAQs](https://www.nhsinform.scot/nhs-scotland-covid-status/covid-status-common-questions/covid-status-guidance-common-questions) in the first instance, and, should the issue still not be resolved, email the national team using the address provided.

**Further information**

[This table](https://www.nhsfife.org/media/36300/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. 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/). The current number of confirmed cases, people in hospital and intensive care in Fife can be viewed [here](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-daily-data-for-scotland/).

**Other news**

**Managed retraction of non-urgent services**

With the ongoing spread of the omicron Covid variant likely to contribute additional pressure to healthcare services already under strain, we are taking vital steps to retract non-urgent services to protect emergency and cancer care in the coming weeks. Healthcare services in Fife remain under considerable strain due to a sustained and significant rise in the number of patients requiring care for both Covid-related and non-Covid related conditions. Despite these pressures, throughout 2021 NHS Fife has continued with much of its outpatient and non-urgent surgical programme to reduce the number of patients waiting for treatment. Omicron, however, has quickly become the dominant variant in Scotland with case numbers rising rapidly and likely to continue to do so for several weeks. With this sudden increase in cases very likely to lead to a sharp rise in hospitalisations and potentially impact on the availability of our own workforce, NHS Fife is moving quickly to mitigate the impact of this new variant on already stretched services and help safeguard urgent care and cancer services. We are taking the following steps:

* Postponing all non-urgent surgical procedures – emergency procedures, trauma and cancer procedures will continue.
* Postponing non-urgent outpatient appointments – patients affected will be contacted directly to advise of the postponement. Those who are not contacted should attend their appointment as arranged.
* Visiting restrictions to continue – limited to one individual. More detail on existing visiting arrangements are available [here](http://www.nhsfife.org/visiting.).

Further information on the managed retraction of non-urgent services is available [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/latest-news/2021/12/protecting-healthcare-services-in-response-to-omicron-variant/).

**Pharmacy opening times over the festive period**

NHS Inform provides an interactive [pharmacy opening times](https://www.nhsinform.scot/scotlands-service-directory/pharmacies/?hb=s08000018&locpt=56.2082078%2c-3.1495175&q=&sortby=_distance&sortdir=Asc) table which allows searching by area, to find out which pharmacies are open in real time.

**Diabetes pilot**

We are working as part of the East of Scotland Type 2 Diabetes Programme Board to pilot a public awareness campaign around Type 2 diabetes, its associated risk factors, and the support that is available locally to minimise that risk. The campaign, which is being delivered by the Leith Agency, will target high risks groups across Fife, with particular focus on the Dunfermline and Cowdenbeath areas, including those who are overweight, over 40 years old, male, and who live in areas of deprivation. The campaign aims to encourage positive, active changes and will run between January and March next year. It uses the creative concept ‘walking away from Type 2 diabetes’ which features local imagery of people walking away from some of the modern-day habits that contribute to the condition – such as bad diet and a sedentary lifestyle.

**Test & Protect**

**Symptomatic cases**

Anyone with the symptoms of COVID-19 or who has been advised to take a test should book a PCR test [here](https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test). If support is needed with the booking process, call 119.

**Community testing and local campaign**

1 in 3 people with COVID-19 don’t have symptoms but can still pass the virus on. Vaccination provides very good levels of protection; however, it is still possible to catch the virus. By testing regularly, members of the public can help to protect those around them. A local campaign has been developed highlighting the role of community testing and encouraging members of the public to test regularly. The supporting toolkit is available to download [here](http://www.nhsfife.org/campaignresources/).

Community testing sites operate across Fife, operating seven days a week. Members of the public can drop-in at any time during opening hours, no booking is necessary. LFD home testing kits are also available to pick up from testing sites across Fife, participating community pharmacies and can be ordered for home delivery. Further information on community testing and LFD home testing kits is available [here](http://www.nhsfife.org/communitytesting).

## 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.

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| **Keep in touch**We endeavor 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. 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 meetings for 2022 are:  Friday 18th March  Friday 17th June  Friday 23rd September  Friday 16th December 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](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 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/). Covid-19 statisticsVaccine 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 can be found [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/).  General statistical publications The latest local health and social care performance statistics, including emergency department, cancer, and delayed discharge, are published [here](https://publichealthscotland.scot/publications/). |
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