Issue 72 |8th April 2022

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**

**Local vaccination overview**

Covid vaccination continues this week, with a firm emphasis being placed upon offering renewed protection to priority groups, including those over the age of 75 and those who are housebound, via Spring Boosters.

The first dedicated drop-in clinics for children in the [5-11 age group](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/campaigns-and-projects/coronavirus-information/covid-19-vaccination-programme-in-fife/children-and-young-people-5-11/child-vaccination-clinics-drop-ins/) were held last weekend and there are more scheduled this [weekend](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/campaigns-and-projects/coronavirus-information/covid-19-vaccination-programme-in-fife/children-and-young-people-5-11/child-vaccination-clinics-drop-ins/). Uptake was relatively low for these clinics, but we continue to use tools such as social media to try and raise awareness of both the clinics and the benefits of vaccination.

Elsewhere, [Drop-in clinics](https://www.nhsfife.org/dropinclinics/) are ongoing and mobile clinics will also visit Bayview Stadium in Methil, as well as Lochore Meadows, Lochgelly, this week.

Planning for the upcoming extension of vaccination eligibility to those aged 12 and over who are immunosuppressed, which is likely to begin in June, is ongoing.

**Promoting vaccination in pregnancy**

Given the risks of Covid to mother and baby during pregnancy, we continue to look at ways to drive uptake of the vaccine in pregnant women. The vaccine is recommended for pregnant women and can be administered safely at any stage of pregnancy. Over the last few days we have released two videos, which promoted the benefits of vaccination and gave further information as to why it is important. The [first video](https://youtu.be/QQUhNVEfNLE) featured one of our midwives, who is currently pregnant, and [the other](https://youtu.be/MnosmIm1T_U) featured consultant in obstetrics and gynaecology, Dr Carolyn Ford.

**Getting vaccinated**

We continue to encourage anyone eligible for a first, second or booster dose to book their vaccination appointment via 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, the latest [drop-in clinics](https://www.nhsfife.org/dropinclinics/) are updated regularly on our website.

**Further information**

You can find out about the numbers of people in Scotland who are vaccinated along with data about case numbers, and hospitalisations by accessing the Scottish Government [Daily Update](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-daily-data-for-scotland/) or by visiting Public Health Scotland’s [Daily Dashboard](https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/phs.covid.19/viz/COVID-19DailyDashboard_15960160643010/Overview)

**Test & Protect**

**Scottish Government Test and Protect Transition Plan**

Scottish Government have published the transition plan for Test and Protect. The plan outlines the transition from population-wide testing to a more targeted approach. The plan also includes a helpful appendix which sets out associated timescales. It is available to view [here](https://www.gov.scot/publications/test-protect-transition-plan/).

**Self-Isolation, Close Contact and Testing Guidance**

Up-to-date guidance around isolation periods, rules for close contacts and further testing information, including a walk-through guide, can be found [here](https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19/test-and-protect/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-individuals-with-possible-coronavirus-infection).

**Current Community Testing Provision**

Alongside UK Government symptomatic testing, our community testing sites continue to operate across Fife, seven days a week, providing LFD tests, and PCRs where needed. Members of the public can drop-in at any time during opening hours to access testing and a variety of support. A targeted approach is also being taken to distribute LFD home testing kits directly to members of the public at selected venues including food banks, supermarkets, and local shops, with staff on hand to signpost to further support. As well as these targeted distribution sites, home LFD kits continue to be available to pick up from testing sites and can be ordered online for home delivery.

**Changes to Community Testing from 18th April 2022**

In line with the Test and Protect transition plan, from 18th April 2022, most people without symptoms will no longer have to test, unless they are:

* a fully vaccinated close contact of a confirmed case
* visiting a care home or hospital
* asked to test before a planned stay in hospital

Individuals in these identified groups will be required to take an LFD test and will be able to order a home testing kit online by visiting <www.nhsinform.scot> or calling 119. LFD tests will not be available from Community Testing sites or available to pick up from distribution venues after 17th April 2022.

Anyone who is symptomatic should continue to get tested until the end of April. PCR testing will be available from UK Government sites, Community Testing sites and to order online.

**Other news**

**Ongoing pressure across services**

Our staff are working incredibly hard during an extremely challenging time for all healthcare services. As is the case across all workplaces, our staffing levels have been increasingly impacted by the effects of Covid-19 and the associated absence caused by illness or the requirement to isolate. However, whilst our services are undoubtedly coming under extreme pressure, the safety of both staff and patients remains our number one priority.

Robust procedures are in place and enacted daily to ensure that wards or services remain safe environments and, where extra support is required, this is delivered through processes that have been developed and refined over the course of the pandemic - allowing us to be both responsive and agile.

We deeply value our staff and their incredible efforts delivering healthcare services in such challenging circumstances. Across the organisation, various initiatives are in place to support staff including a dedicated staff listening service, peer support, and access to a wide range of information and advice through our Health and Wellbeing Hub.

**Recruitment of new Board members**

NHS Fife is looking for three new members to join its Board. As a non-executive member of the Board, members will be expected to play a central role in guiding the strategies which address the health priorities and health care needs of our population.  More information is available [here](https://t.co/VZVJdnvv9i).

**Launch of new Sexual Assault Response Co-ordination Service**

The Sexual Assault Response Coordination Service (SARCS) is a dedicated NHS service which can offer healthcare and support following rape or sexual assault if people aren’t ready or are unsure about reporting to the police. SARCS is a self-referral service, meaning that a GP or other healthcare professional referral is not needed; anyone over the age of 16 can self-refer. Across Scotland SARCS will help people with their immediate healthcare needs and can potentially gather forensic evidence (which will be kept for 26 months) in case they want to tell the police later. See the NHS Fife [SARCS](https://www.nhsfife.org/services/all-services/sarcs-sexual-assault-response-coordination-service/) page for more information.

**Hospital visiting**

The current hospital visiting arrangements in Fife are that patients can receive at least one visitor per day. This position remains under regular review and the latest provisions can be found [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/visiting/).

We have used our social media platforms to remind those who are visiting patients in our hospitals to ensure they are up to date with the latest arrangements for that ward by [calling in advance.](https://fife.link/97e8)

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.

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/).

All Information correct at time of publishing. Issued by:

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