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Elected Members Update   
for local MPs, MSPs and Councillors

This update is part of our on-going commitment to keep elected members 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.

**suggests this may be as high as one third of the adult population with 50% of those**

Launch of the High Risk Pain Medicines (HRPM) 3 year patie

**Enquiries**

To ensure accurate and timely responses from NHS Fife, all enquiries from elected members 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). Members are politely asked not to approach services or individual members of staff directly for responses.

**Main updates**

**Ongoing pressure on services**

Our hospitals remain extremely busy. The demand for inpatient beds remains very high, and this, coupled with the ongoing difficulties in ensuring the timely discharge of patients to social care services, is restricting of the flow of patients through the hospital system. Emergency department presentations, including those referred to us by NHS 24, continue to be extremely high. Those who are most unwell continue to be prioritised and assessed very quickly on arrival. Patients are triaged to ensure those who require immediate intervention can receive this –however, that means patients whose condition is less serious are currently likely to wait longer. Work is ongoing across a range of areas to improve patient flow through our hospitals, from initial admission right through to eventual discharge.

**Group A Streptococcal infections**

Our Health Protection team is investigating a small number of Group A Streptococcal (GAS) infections in areas of north-east Fife. GAS is a bacterium which can causes a diverse range of skin, soft tissue, and respiratory tract infections. It can be carried in the throat and on the skin, and carriers often show no symptoms of illness.

In some cases, GAS can develop into Invasive Group A Streptococcal disease (iGAS) which is more serious and occurs where the bacterium finds its way into a normally sterile part of the body, such as the blood or deep tissues. This is more likely to occur when a person has sores or other breaks in the skin, or when the person’s immune system is compromised.

Recently an increase in GAS infections has been noted across Scotland, and we are working to minimise the risk of further spread from those cases identified locally. The risk to the wider public is assessed as being low.

**Potential industrial action**

A number of trade unions are currently balloting their memberships on industrial action in response to the Scottish Government's latest pay offer. NHS Fife continues to review local contingency arrangements, and we await additional national guidance. In the event an agreement cannot be reached, and industrial action is taken, maintaining patient safety will remain our priority, and we will work with staff-side colleagues and unions to ensure this is at the forefront of any arrangements.

**Lochgelly and Kincardine community project update**

Work is well underway to develop new purpose-built Community Health and Wellbeing Centres in Lochgelly and Kincardine. The new facilities will bring together a range of health and wellbeing services – from GP practices and social care to community and voluntary services – improving the experience of patients and service users. You can read more in the latest newsletter [here](https://sway.office.com/hNOAc77CW6HuV9Zd?ref=email).

**NHS Fife teams win at Scottish Health Awards**

Healthcare support worker, Gemma Lawson, and the Rapid Cancer Diagnostic Service (RCDS) won two of the top prizes at last week’s Scottish Health Awards. Gemma took home the People’s Choice Award, which was the only prize determined by public vote, whilst the RCDS won the Innovation Award. Our Birth at Home team, who support women who choose to have their birth in their own home, were also finalists in the Midwife Award category. Gemma was honoured for her work consistently going above and beyond the call of duty to support patients and staff at Cameron Hospital, particularly during the height of the pandemic. She also made sure that patients were both stimulated with activities and felt safe and cared-for during periods where wards were closed. Our [Rapid Cancer Diagnostic Service](https://www.nhsfife.org/services/all-services/cancer-services/rapid-cancer-diagnostic-service/) is a fast-track clinic where cancer symptoms can be investigated by a team of specialists to rule out cancer. The clinic is one of the first in Scotland, enabling tests to be carried out as quickly as possible to find out what is causing symptoms to get patients the treatment they may need. Over 700 nominations were received this year for the Scottish Health Awards, which were held at a ceremony in Edinburgh, and we are extremely proud of both our winners and nominees. More information and photographs of the evening can be found [here](http://scottishhealthawards.com).

**New ICU rooftop garden opened**

A new roof-top Critical Care Recovery Garden at the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) at the Victoria Hospital has been officially opened. Funded by Fife Health Charity, the £180,000 project transformed an existing vacant roof space next to ICU to create a dedicated garden area for the use of ICU patients, their loved ones, and staff. More information is available [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/latest-news/2022/11/pandemic-inspired-icu-roof-garden-officially-opened-at-victoria-hospital/).

**Recruitment of NHS Fife Chair**

The recruitment window for the appointment of a new NHS Fife Chair has been extended until the 30th of November. To facilitate the extension, the Rt Hon Tricia Marwick will remain in her role until the 31st of March 2023. More information on the role and the recruitment process is available [here](https://pa-scottishgovernment.icims.com/jobs/3932/fife-nhs-board-chair-appointment/job).

**NHS Fife art collection**

Following a report by the Taxpayers’ Alliance, which called for a review of NHS art holdings, NHS Fife was asked to comment on the works of art on display at its sites throughout Fife, we stated that the art collections on display in healthcare facilities is managed by the Fife Health Charity, rather than by NHS Fife itself, and has been gifted over many decades. We also stressed that attending hospital can often be an anxious time for patients and visitors, and we believe it is important to make our healthcare environments as welcoming as possible. The art within our collection has largely been gifted on the basis that it is displayed for the benefit of patients in Fife and, therefore, it could not appropriately be sold.

**Hospital visiting arrangements**

Current visiting guidance allows patients in most areas of Fife hospitals to receive two visitors per day, and both visitors can visit at the same time. There are no time restrictions on visits. Essential visiting is in operation in some areas and more information can the latest information can be found [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/visiting).

**Masks in clinical areas**

We have been using social media to remind hospital visitors to wear a fluid-resistant face mask in clinical areas. This guidance remains in place to help protect clinically vulnerable people, for whom Covid-19 still poses a greater risk. For more details, including what is considered a clinical area, click [here](https://fal.cn/3tqt8).

**Vaccination**

**Covid vaccination**

The [online vaccination portal](https://www.nhsinform.scot/wintervaccines) remains open for people aged 50-64 to book their appointment. They can also book an appointment by calling 0800 030 8013.

More than 20,000 appointments have been made available across the next few weeks and new appointment dates are regularly added to the portal – if constituents are unable to find an appointment that is suitable when they initially enquire, they may be able to find one by logging on at a later date.

All the at-risk group and those over the age of 65, who were previously able to book their appointments, have now been scheduled. Those within these groups who have not yet been contacted should book their appointment through the link above.

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/).

Additional vaccination information/stats

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)

All Information correct at time of publishing. Issued by the communications team.