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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. For previous issues of the Elected Members Update, including updates on specific topics, please click [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/briefings-for-fife-elected-members-msps-mps-and-councillors/).

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.

Members are politely reminded not to approach services or individual members of staff directly for responses.

Main updates

Complaints procedure

We are aware of the frustration being experienced by some constituents around the response times to a number of complaints made to NHS Fife, particularly those which have progressed to a Stage 2 complaint and require investigation and analysis. As referenced during the latest meeting with MSPs and MPs, NHS Fife has been experiencing significant challenges around meeting nationally set 20-day response timeframe.

There are currently around 150 open complaints, 115 of which are Stage 2. The majority of those that are outstanding are awaiting input, statements, or review from clinicians, who often must go through historical records or carry out analysis on complex events or archived documents.

Additional factors, such as clinical pressures, working through a pandemic backlog, and reduced capacity within our patient experience team, mean that we have taken longer than we would have ordinarily liked to respond to some enquiries, and we apologise for the impact this has on our patients and families.

Whilst this is not an excuse as to why responding to some complaints is taking longer than we would like, we hope that it provides some context. We are clear that this remains a priority area for improvement.

NHS Performs

NHS Performs brings together a range of information on how NHS Fife is performing, including A&E performance, cancelled operations, delayed discharges and diagnostic waiting times. The latest information can be viewed [here](https://www.nhsperforms.scot/).

Workforce information

NHS Education for Scotland publishes a quarterly update on workforce related information, including the number of staff directly employed by NHS Fife and the number of vacant posts for nursing and midwifery staff, allied health professions, and medical and dental consultants.

The interactive dashboard also outlines trends over time and references other useful information such as sickness absence rates, staff age profile, and spend on agency and bank. The latest publication was published in June and can be viewed [here](https://turasdata.nes.nhs.scot/data-and-reports/official-workforce-statistics/all-official-statistics-publications/06-june-2023-workforce/dashboards/nhs-scotland-workforce/?pageid=9432).

National Treatment Centre – Fife Orthopaedics

The next stage in the ongoing development of our new National Treatment Centre will be upcoming scheduling of patients from neighbouring Health Boards for specialist orthopaedic procedures. Whilst the centre, which has three operating theatres and the capacity to carry out around 1400 procedures per year, is extending its reach beyond Fife, it is expected that around two thirds of the total procedures carried out will be performed on local residents.

Recruitment of Chair

The Scottish Government is looking to appoint a new Chair of NHS Fife. Alistair Morris was formally invited to take up the role of Acting Chair in April last year, after previous Chair, Tricia Marwick, stepped down. The role is a fantastic opportunity to affect change, help set future direction, and achieve our vision for people to live longer, healthier lives at home or in a homely setting. Applications are open until the 2nd of October, and we would encourage you to share the post within your networks. For further information click [here](https://pa-scottishgovernment.icims.com/jobs/search?ss=1&hashed=-625948220&fbclid=IwAR0QcL6h-RcEu4YcETLChsEzfikc5B-NIG7-Abj9-6JLfFZ1Z42_vskeiyE&mobile=false&width=721&height=500&bga=true&needsRedirect=false&jan1offset=0&jun1offset=60).

Neonatal intensive care

Following the publication of a report, which contained proposals to reduce the number of hospitals offering intensive neonatal care, we were asked by national media outlets whether our neonatal intensive care unit would be ‘downgraded’ to consolidate three national units in Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Aberdeen.

We advised that NHS Fife was one of the early adopter sites of the Scottish Government’s Best Start model of neonatal intensive care and gave an assurance that it does not mean a downgrade to our services. We can and will be able to provide intensive care to babies who need it.

Best Start consolidates care for the smallest and sickest babies in three neonatal intensive care units, working alongside local neonatal and special care units, and supported by transitional care and community care services. That means that in certain cases, in line with evidence, the preferred pathway of care for the smallest and sickest babies is to be cared for in one of the three national neonatal intensive care units, until they can be moved to a unit nearer to home.

National overview of NHS dentistry

The Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe) has published a [helpful overview of NHS dentistry in Scotland](https://spice-spotlight.scot/2023/06/22/nhs-dental-services-in-scotland-braced-for-change/). It highlights some of the long-standing challenges for NHS dentistry, and considers aspects of the proposed reforms, which are currently being discussed and negotiated. SPICe has been receiving a high number of enquiries about people finding it hard to access an NHS dentist and the publication looks as some of the factors that might be behind this.

Accreditation as Living Wage employer

NHS Fife has been formally accredited as a Living Wage employer. Living Wage Scotland is a partnership with the Living Wage Foundation, funded by the Scottish Government, and celebrates employers that choose to go further than the legal minimum. NHS Fife has joined around 3,000 other employers across Scotland in becoming a Living Wage employer. More information is available [here](http://www.scottishlivingwage.org).

Vaccination

Measles

Cases of measles are on the rise in some parts of the UK, and we are using social media to encourage parents to check that their children have had two doses of the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine as they continue to mix with other children in school. Information for parents to check whether their child is protected can be found [here](http://www.nhsinform.scot/MMRagainstMeasles).

We are also linking in with the University of St Andrews to run drop-in sessions during fresher’s week, where students can chat to our immunisation team, make an appointment, and ensure they stay on top of both their MMR and meningitis vaccinations. Infection can easily spread within university communities so it’s important that students are given the opportunity to protect themselves and others around them.

COVID and flu

Constituents can find out if they’re eligible for any vaccines this winter with an [online self-help guide](https://www.nhsinform.scot/wintervaccines). NHS Scotland is rolling out the vaccination programme in stages. If a constituent is eligible, they will be contacted by post, email, or text. Postal invites will arrive in a white NHS Scotland envelope, which replaces the blue envelopes used previously.

Sharing our messages

We appreciate the support of elected members in sharing our health messages with constituents and on social media.

*All Information correct at time of publishing. Issued by the corporate communications service.*