Issue 16 | 25 February 2021

Elected Members Update

for Fife’s MPs, MSPs and   
local Councillors

[Coronavirus 1](#_Toc65155633)

[Other updates 5](#_Toc65155634)

[In the media 6](#_Toc65155635)

[Keep in touch 7](#_Toc65155636)

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 regularly visit and refer your constituents for the latest news and updates from NHS Fife on our website: [www.nhsfife.org](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).

# Coronavirus

## **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 at fife.chiefexecutive@nhs.scot.**

## Local vaccination update

The local programme has been able to progress at pace over the last week and on Monday afternoon we hit 100,000 COVID-19 vaccinations – almost 1 in 3 people living in Fife. Getting to this stage has been no means straightforward and heartfelt thanks goes to all of those who have made it possible.

Mindful of vaccine supply, we anticipate being able to vaccinate a further 15,000 people by the end of this week, many of whom will be amongst cohort 6 – who began to receive appointment letters on Monday.

Cohort 6 comprises those at risk and unpaid carers and is the largest to date. As such, it comes with considerable complexities, particularly around the identification of unpaid carers, and is being broken down into four subgroups. The first of these subgroups is a modified list of those normally eligible for a flu vaccine, aged 16-64; it will be a further week before all are appointed, and three weeks before this subgroup is complete. Dates for the rest of cohort 6 are being determined nationally. An online registration system for unpaid carers is also being developed by the national team.  A list of all of those eligible for the vaccine in cohort 6 can be found [here](https://www.nhsinform.scot/covid-19-vaccine/invitations-and-appointments/who-will-be-offered-the-coronavirus-vaccine).

We continue to tightly monitor our vaccination rates and supply to ensure that we continue to meet national targets and vaccinate our eligible population as quickly as possible.

To help us continue to manage these vaccinations, the key message to the public remains to wait until they receive a letter inviting them for their vaccine. We will be in touch with them as soon as we possibly can via the NHS Scotland National Scheduling system, and members of the public should not contact vaccination venues directly in the meantime.

## Priority vaccination groups

NHS Fife is following the JCVI advice on the order of priority for the coronavirus vaccination:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Priority Cohort** | **Vaccination Status** |
| Cohort 1: Residents in a care home for older adults and their carers | Complete for over 95% and scheduling of second dose underway |
| Cohort 2: All those age 80+ and frontline health and social care workers | Complete for over 95% and scheduling of second dose underway |
| Cohort 3: Those aged 75+ | Complete for over 95% and scheduling of second dose underway |
| Cohort 4: Those aged 70+ and those who are clinically extremely vulnerable | Well over 20,000 people vaccinated – all have been offered appointments |
| Cohort 5: 65+ | 16,000 people vaccinated, over 70% of this population |
| Cohort 6: Those aged 16-64 with underlying health conditions that put them at higher risk of serious disease and mortality. Unpaid carers, including all adult carers and young carers aged 16 to 18 | Appointments started this week, around 6,000 vaccinated to date |
| Cohort 7: Those aged 60+ | Reviewing cohort data |
| Cohort 8: Those aged 55+ | Reviewing cohort data |
| Cohort 9: Those aged 50+ | Reviewing cohort data |

## Vaccine supply

As noted in previous editions of this update, vaccine supply is slowing over the coming weeks and this week we intend to vaccinate 15,000 people as opposed to 22,000 last week. We are currently preserving Pfizer vaccine stock in advance of second dose administration, which will begin next month for our frontline staff clinics and those in care homes. There is no suggestion of insufficient supply: we will be able to provide all second doses.

## Appointment letters not received

Anyone who is currently eligible for vaccination but has not received a letter, or who has lost their letter, can arrange an appointment by providing some details [here](https://invitations.vacs.nhs.scot/). In addition, anyone who phones the National Helpline on 0800 030 8013 will now have an operator complete this form on their behalf. It will likely take a few days for the national team to review the forms and issue letters.

## Duplicate first appointment letters issued in error A small number of people have received an additional letter inviting them for their first vaccination, after they had already received their vaccine. This error was due to an issue with the national appointment scheduling tool. If people have received a letter in error after receiving their first dose, there is no need to do anything.

## Follow-up appointments for second dose

Letters confirming second appointment dates will be sent following attendance at the clinic and well in advance of the second appointment date. The trigger for generation of the second appointment is the attendance at the clinic. Appointments are arranged by the national scheduling team and are not made locally. The over 80s group follow a different process due to their vaccinations taking place in GP Practices.

## Unpaid carers

## Carers who do not receive carers benefits, and who have not been identified by GPs, will soon be asked to come forward to register for their vaccine at a later date through an online portal or the national helpline. Work is also ongoing to identify people with underlying conditions who are not on the modified flu vaccine list, and they will be invited shortly.

## Military support

The military continues to provide two teams of ten vaccinators to support our clinics, in line with our community clinic plans. The military vaccinators are based in two venues – East End Park, Dunfermline, and Templehall Community Centre, Kirkcaldy - and are available to NHS Fife until early March.

## Assessment of larger vaccination venues

We are working to identify a small number of longer-term mass vaccination sites located at the main population centres in Fife, although it should be made clear that second doses for those who have already had them administered will be offered at the same sites as first doses. We are using various metrics, including geo-mapping, to work out the most effective and efficient locations for people to receive their vaccination and a number of sites are under consideration. We are also looking at the possibility of utilising vacant retail premises, which are generally located favourably in terms of accessibility.

## Community clinics

All community vaccination clinics have opened to members of the public. Vaccination at clinics is by appointment only and appointments are provided from 9AM to 7.30PM on weekdays, and from 10AM to 4.30PM at weekends. Further information, including how to reach the locations and details of our Equality Impact Assessment, can be found [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/campaigns-projects/coronavirus-information/vaccination-programme/).

## National scheduling tool

NHS Fife, along with other NHS Boards within Scotland, are utilising a National Scheduling Tool to allocate appointments for our community vaccination centres. Appointments are allocated following guidelines by the JCVI as well as Scottish and UK Governments regarding vaccination cohorts. Once individuals have received their letter inviting them to be vaccinated, should they need to reschedule their allocated appointment they should contact the National Helpline: 0800 030 8013 which is open 8am-8pm, seven days a week. Those aged 80 and over who have not received an appointment letter should contact their GP Practice – patients who are not over the age of 80 should not contact their local GP practice as we have received numerous reports of phonelines being very busy with enquiries.

## Vaccine progress data

Public Health Scotland is publishing weekly statistical data on vaccinations in Scotland. The report will include data on; the numbers of people who have had their first and the numbers of people who have their second dose of the vaccine. The data for the numbers of people who have had the first dose of the vaccine will be broken down by; age group, NHS Board, sex, and eligibility criteria (whether the person receiving the vaccine was a Healthcare worker, a member of staff in a care home, a resident in a care home, social care worker). This data will be updated every week and will be published within the Statistical report on a Wednesday at noon, [here](https://beta.isdscotland.org/find-publications-and-data/population-health/covid-19/covid-19-statistical-report/) – this week’s dashboard will be published on Friday at 2pm. Daily uptake at a national level is published daily by the Scottish Government. 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/).

## Statements on specific coronavirus cases (including care homes)

There continues to be significant media coverage of coronavirus cases across Fife. Statements relating to specific incidents, information on how best to reduce the chances of contracting the virus, and what you should do if someone develops symptoms, can be found on [our website](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/campaigns/coronavirus-information/). Please note that we will only release statements related to care home outbreaks after residents and relatives have been informed and if it is in the public interest to do so.

## Second community testing site opened in Kirkcaldy

Fife’s second Community Testing site for people without COVID-19 symptoms has opened in Kirkcaldy. Based at the town’s Glebe Centre, the site provides testing for members of the public who have no symptoms associated with COVID-19 but who could be infectious and spreading the virus to others unknowingly. The centre also provides confidential support to assist anyone who tests positive and needs to self-isolate, with access to different financial support alongside practical measures, such as food packages. The new Kirkcaldy site follows the opening of the Community Testing site in Cowdenbeath earlier this month. More information is available [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/press-releases/2021-february/second-covid-19-community-testing-site-set-to-open-in-kirkcaldy/).

## 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/).

## 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.

# Other updates

## Helping people get the right care, in the right place

The Scottish Government has redesigned the way that urgent healthcare services are accessed across Scotland, supporting the public to access the right care, in the right place, at the right time, and keeping people and the NHS safe this winter. Under the arrangements, people with non-life-threatening conditions, who would usually attend A&E, are asked to call NHS 24 first, during the day or at night. Further information about the redesign of urgent care services is available [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/services/right/).

## Screening programmes continuing during lockdown

We are using social media to remind people that national screening programmes are still running during the national lockdown. Travelling for a screening appointment is an essential journey. Further information on screening can be found [here](https://bit.ly/3pZ0J4L).

## Hospital visiting restrictions

Visiting is limited to essential visits only. Further information on arrangements, including guidance on essential visiting criteria and FAQS on services we frequently receive enquiries around, such as maternity and children’s, can be found [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/services/patients-carers-and-visitors/visiting-arrangements-during-covid-19-pandemic/)**.**

# In the media

## £250,000 donation from anonymous benefactors

Local donors who previously gifted £500,000 to support patients and healthcare staff in Fife during the COVID-19 pandemic have made a further donation of £250,000. The benefactors, who wish to remain anonymous, have gifted the additional sum to the Fife Health Charity after being pleased with the creativity with which their initial contribution was used to provide support for patients and the healthcare staff working tirelessly to care for them.

The Fife Health Charity, which was previously known as the Fife Health Board Endowment Fund, supports a range of initiatives to benefit the patients, carers and staff of NHS Fife. The Charity is separate to the Fife Health Board and its monies cannot be used to provide core health services. A Board of Trustees is responsible for the governance of the Charity and makes awards on all applications for funding over £10,000. Last year, the Charity awarded over £1 million to support local initiatives. More information is available [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/latest-news/2021/02/250-000-donation-to-support-fife-patients-and-healthcare-staff-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/).

## Delivering mental health services in Fife

Following the review of Fife’s Mental Health Strategy, the focus of care is changing. Working with our partners and with individuals at the centre of decisions, more care and services will be delivered closer to home and with an increased level of choice based on what is important to the individual. As well as delivering services differently there is also a need to improve our mental health in-patient facilities ensuring that environments meet the needs of patients to enable therapeutic intervention and support speedier recovery.  Over the coming weeks and months, NHS Fife and Fife Health and Social Care Partnership will be engaging with people who use and have used mental health in-patient services in the past, their families and staff about what is important to them and how we can improve on our current facilities.

Feedback from these discussions will help to develop options for consideration with the wider public.

## National study suggests vaccine roll-out working

Earlier this week Edinburgh University announced that the vaccination has been linked to a substantial reduction in the risk of COVID-19 admissions to Scotland’s hospitals. The study, of which the Public Health Consultant Lead is NHS Fife’s Dr Josie Murray, is the first to describe across an entire country the effect of the Pfizer and Oxford-AstraZeneca jabs in the community on preventing severe illness resulting in hospitalisation. Previous results about vaccine efficacy have come from clinical trials.  By the fourth week after receiving the initial dose, the Pfizer and Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccines were shown to reduce the risk of hospitalisation from Covid-19 in up to 85 per cent and 94 per cent, respectively. Among those aged 80 years and over - one of the highest risk groups - vaccination was associated with an 81 per cent reduction in hospitalisation risk in the fourth week when the results for both vaccines were combined.

## Raising awareness of avian flu in Levenmouth

Following Scottish Ministers confirmation of the presence of avian flu H5N1 in a breeding gamebird farm near Leven, we reminded people not to touch or pick up any dead birds that they come across. While the risk to human health is very low, people should be extra vigilant if they take part in water-based activities such as wild swimming, canoeing, kayaking or boating, and report anything that is untoward. If they do find a wild bird, such as a swan, duck or gull, this should be reported to Defra on 03459 33 55 77. Further advice and guidance can be found [here](https://www.gov.scot/publications/avian-influenza-bird-flu/).

## Recruitment of whistleblowing champion

We are looking for a non-executive whistleblowing champion to join our Board. The successful candidate will be expected to play a central role in guiding the strategies which address the health priorities and healthcare needs of our local population. More information is available [here](https://applications.appointed-for-scotland.org/pages/job_search_view.aspx?jobId=3893&JobIndex=2&categoryList=&minsal=0&maxsal=150000&workingPatternList=&keywords=&PageIndex=1&Number=5&fbclid=IwAR01ypuLa7PE7J4XupN2_buceepIlk96FsIfmXS-8qZO03U5aNXBls5It_0).

## 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.

|  |
| --- |
| 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](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 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 online Board 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). |

Issued by NHS Fife Communications