Issue 11 | 22 January 2021

Local update

for Fife’s MPs, MSPs and   
local Councillors

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# Introduction

This 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, this includes information on our on-going response to the COVID-19 pandemic, remobilisation of our services, service changes and operational updates, along with signposting to the latest media updates issued by NHS Fife. Updates, which we aim to provide weekly, are also issued on our refreshed website [www.nhsfife.org](http://www.nhsfife.org) which provides a hub of information and guidance as well as our established Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages.

# Coronavirus

**Decisions about how vaccines are given, and at what intervals are made by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI).  This is an independent UK-wide committee comprised of expert medical staff.  The UK and devolved nations governments act on decisions and advice from this independent committee.**

## *NHS Fife is engaged in the most significant and extensive programme of mass vaccination in our lifetimes. The logistics of this programme are unprecedented and there are many moving parts that will likely evolve, change and require alteration as we move forward. As such, detailed information around elements of vaccine distribution and availability (who will get it, when they will get it, and where they will get it) may not currently be available and will likely be addressed in forthcoming updates. We appreciate your patience during these challenging times and please be assured that everyone in our health and social care sector is focused on getting life back to normal as early as possible and facilitating the most effective, efficient roll out of this vaccine.*

## **We ask that Elected Members do not contact members of our staff directly with any queries around vaccination. 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/)**.**

## Local vaccination update

Our vaccination programme is now well underway and we are pleased to have completed the first dose of vaccinations for care home residents and staff (second doses to be scheduled for March), as well as beginning vaccinating those over the age of 80 through GP Practices. So far, more than 19,000 people have been vaccinated across Fife.

In line with other Scottish Health Boards, NHS Fife has received a directive from the Scottish Government that the following cohorts must be vaccinated by the following dates:

**5th February 2021** *- care home residents and staff, and those over the age of 80.*

**Mid February 2021** *- those aged 75-80 and 70-75 (approximately 32,000 people in Fife).*

**Early March****2020** *- those aged 65-70 (approximately 21,000 people in Fife).*

**Early May 2021**  *- those at high risk aged 16-64/those over the age of 50.*

To help us manage these vaccinations, the key message to the public at this time is 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 and they should not contact vaccination venues directly in the meantime.

## Vaccine supply

## Supply of the Pfizer BioNTech vaccine has been delivered to NHS Fife sites as expected to allow for the vaccination of our staff at four clinic sites (Victoria/Queen Margaret/ St Andrews and Randolph Wemyss Hospitals). Supply of the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine, which is considerably less demanding in its logistical requirements than Pfizer BioNTech, with fridge storage sufficient for up to six months, has been limited. All GP Practices have now received at least 100 doses to begin vaccinating their staff and the over 80s. Whilst we are mindful that supply continues to be limited, we expect local GP Practices will receive weekly supply of the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine going forward.

## Vaccination appointments

Appointments are currently being offered to those over the age of 80 by letter or telephone. It is important that people do not contact the health board or their local GP practice for a vaccination appointment – they will be contacted in due course. For general information about the coronavirus vaccine and its delivery, people can phone 0800 030 8013 (available 8.00am to 8.00pm, seven days a week) although will not be possible to book or change vaccine appointments via this helpline.

## Vaccination recruitment

We have had an extremely encouraging response to our recent recruitment advert for the COVID-19 vaccination programme in Fife. In addition to the recruitment of staff through NHS Education for Scotland and the Nursing and Midwifery Council, our recent social media campaign to recruit recently retired registrants resulted in more than 240 people expressing an interest in joining the local vaccination effort.  This recruitment process is underway and will complete in the next few weeks, however our vaccination team is working tirelessly, with the first of those recruited starting next week having completed their training.

## Vaccination sites

Over recent weeks, we have been assessing a wide range of potential venues for their suitability to host COVID-19 vaccination clinics. This process is now complete, and the following locations have been confirmed for clinics: Parkgate Community Centre, East End Park Football Stadium, Dunfermline East Church, The Lochgelly Centre, Templehall Community Centre, Randolph Wemyss Memorial Hospital, Rothes Halls, Cupar Corn Exchange, East Neuk Centre, Anstruther, The Larick Centre, Tayport, St Andrews Community Hospital, and the Tayside Institute Community Centre, Newburgh; a further venue will also be added in West Fife in the coming days. We are pleased to be working with military colleagues providing support and assurance to the final stages of our community clinic establishment. The team comprises eight military personnel and can be requested on a weekly basis. The programme has worked closely with military planning officers throughout the development and would like to express its thanks for this invaluable support.

## 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/). 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/).

## New testing centres in Dunfermline and Glenrothes

The UK Government has opened two new walk-through coronavirus testing centres at Glenrothes Miners Charitable Society in Glenrothes and Dell Farquharson House in Dunfermline.

Tests must be booked in advance at: [www.nhsinform.scot/test-and-protect](http://www.nhsinform.scot/test-and-protect) or by calling 0800 028 2816. People should only book at test if they have coronavirus symptoms (a high temperature, a new and continuous cough, or a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste).

## 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.

## Asymptomatic testing programme

NHS Fife is one of two Health Boards which has received approval from Scottish Government to roll out an asymptomatic community testing programme, following a successful bid for funds. The programme is time limited and is expected to run for up to six months. The Community Testing Programme is in addition to asymptomatic testing programmes already available in universities and healthcare. The programme will allow us to undertake a targeted response to areas of high prevalence, with the aim of breaking chains of transmission and protecting public health. Asymptomatic testing sites will be placed in fixed locations alongside an ongoing mobile programme, allowing us to target areas with the greatest need based on the most up to date data and intelligence. The programme will also seek to target harder to reach groups and those who may be at higher risk.

## 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/).

# Service 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. NHS 24 will assess people by telephone and refer them to the right care by the right healthcare professional as close to home as possible. This could include self-care, a GP practice or primary care, Pharmacy, Minor Injuries or referral into a flow and navigation hub within their NHS board for a clinical assessment.  Following this assessment, if the patient still needs to attend A&E the flow and navigation hub will schedule an appointment. Emergency 999 calls will continue to be transferred to the Scottish Ambulance Service as normal. Further information about the redesign of urgent care services is available [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/services/right/) and complements a national awareness raising campaign, which started this week.

## 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

## Claims of vaccination postponements due to supply issues

In light of claims that GP Practices in Fife have postponed vaccination appointments due to issues around vaccine supply, we would like to reassure local people that there has been no interruption in the supply and our vaccination programme is continuing at pace. Vaccine supply into NHS Fife has been in line with nationally agreed levels. There have been no widespread delays in supply to GP practices, and there is no suggestion that we are in any way under-supplied. Supplies of the vaccines continue to increase and we are confident of meeting Scottish Government directives on vaccinating the people of Fife. Significant progress has been made through our vaccination programme thus far and we are grateful to everyone involved in the local and national programmes, including our partners in General Practice who are currently vaccinating the over 80s population.

## COVID-19 hospital admissions/occupancy

Hospital occupancy is fluid and moves over the course of each day as patients are discharged or admitted. Similarly, hospital capacity can be adapted and expanded to meet any changes in demand for inpatient hospital beds. There has been a steady increase over recent weeks in the number of patients requiring inpatient care after contracting COVID-19. We have known for some months that this winter would be especially challenging and redesigned many of our services to ensure that they were as robust as they can be. This has so far enabled us to manage the increase in demand despite the considerable pressure on our acute hospital. We have, however, had to take the very difficult decision to postpone some non-urgent procedures so that we can prioritise the care of those who are most unwell. All postponed procedures are being rescheduled as soon as is practical and safe to do so.

## Vaccine waste coverage

There has been coverage of potential waste of the Pfizer BioNTech across local and national press. NHS Fife has well-practiced procedures in place to ensure that waste vaccine is minimised. This is achieved through careful management and coordination of vaccination clinics and distribution. It is unusual to have unused vaccine available, and in such circumstances, this can be returned to fridge if cold chain can be maintained, or offered as first dose to another person, following the JCVI prioritisation guidance.

## Report into HIS unannounced inspection of Tarvit Ward

Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS) has published a report on their unannounced inspection of Tarvit Ward at Adamson Hospital in Cupar on Tuesday 28 October 2020. Tarvit Ward, which provides GP-led rehabilitation and palliative care, was assessed both on the safety and cleanliness of the environment and the way in which older people are cared for in hospital. The report noted a very good standard of environmental cleaning, and that patients were treated with dignity and respect by staff who were attentive to their needs. Further information can be found [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/news-and-updates/2021/report-into-the-healthcare-improvement-scotland-unannounced-inspection-of-tarvit-ward-at-adamson-hospital/).

## New Director of Property and Asset Management

NHS Fife has appointed a new Director of Property and Asset Management, encompassing all aspects of Estates, Facilities and Capital Planning services. Neil McCormick joins NHS Fife from Robertson Capital Projects, where he was Managing Director with specific responsibility for delivering infrastructure projects and Joint Ventures with the public sector including NHS Frameworks. Neil will take up his new post on 01 February 2021, succeeding Andy Fairgrieve who is retiring in March 2021.

## COVID-19 impacts New Park Medical Practice

This week, New Park Medical Practice in Dunfermline continued to operate a reduced service following cases of COVID-19 amongst practice staff. Those with prearranged appointments were asked to attend as originally planned, however, new routine appointments could not be booked. Patients requiring urgent review or assessment continued to be managed by phone, video link or in person as appropriate.

## 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).

## Show you care, prepare

This winter, NHS Fife is linking in with the Scottish Government’s national campaign to encourage people and their loved ones to stay healthy as the temperature drops - ‘Show you care, prepare’. The campaign, which is aimed at alleviating some of the pressures faced by our NHS during a period where there is traditionally significant challenges for our services, raises awareness of some of the simple steps that people can take to make sure they are as prepared as possible in the event of ill health. Reminders to check prescriptions are ordered and in plenty of time, to use your local pharmacy for advice about winter health and medicines, and that there are a wide range of health advice and support available online all form part of the campaign. More information can be found [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/campaigns-projects/show-you-care-prepare/).

## 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.

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| 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/news-updates/briefings-for-fife-elected-members-msps-mps-and-councillors/**](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/briefings-for-fife-elected-members-msps-mps-and-councillors/)  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