+

**Issue 12| August 2020**

## **Introduction**

**As part of efforts to keep you informed, NHS Fife is issuing updates dedicated to our response to the coronavirus pandemic. This briefing is circulated to NHS Fife Board members and Fife’s MPs, MSPs and local Councillors. Updates are currently available on a monthly basis.**

##### This update includes information on matters including planning and resilience, operational updates, along with signposting to the latest media updates issued by NHS Fife to ensure clear, consistent and timely sharing of information. Updates are also issued on our new public facing Coronavirus micro site ([*http://coronavirus.nhsfife.org*](http://coronavirus.nhsfife.org)) which provides a hub of information and advice as well as our established, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages.

## **Hot Topics**

**Reintroduction of services**

NHS Fife has published a remobilisation plan, which outlines how both hospital and community-based healthcare services in Fife are being safely and incrementally resumed. This is available in full at: <https://coronavirus.nhsfife.org/mobilisation>

**Car parking following extreme flooding at the Victoria Hospital**

The extreme weather last week resulted in damage to a number of cars owned by our staff. As an organisation we have been doing all that we can to support the affected staff through this particularly stressful time. We also have to thank local businesses, particularly Specialist Cars Volkswagen and Bay Travel, who have helped support those affected, whether that be helping them get home or the offer of rental cars over recent days.

A further impact of the flooding was that two of our car parks were closed for a number of days to allow for grounds maintenance and the recovery of vehicles. Whilst we have been able to reopen Car Park A, Car Park B remains closed at this time. We have used social media and internal channels to raise awareness of the closures and have encouraged patients and staff to use public transport where possible, and to allow extra time for their journey.

**Care home support**

There has been a considerable multi-agency effort since the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic to put a network of support in place for local care homes and assist in the prevention and management of any local outbreaks. A Care Home Oversight Group was established made up of representatives from NHS Fife’s Public Health, the Fife Health and Social Care Partnership, Primary Care, Scottish Care and the Care Inspectorate, and this continues to operate. This group has overseen the provision of any additional resources - such as staffing or personal protective equipment (PPE) - while facilitating rapid testing and specialist guidance as required. District Nursing teams continue to visit residential care homes as part of their clinical duties and assess whether any additional resources are required, whilst also supporting homes with infection prevention and control measures. NHS Fife’s specialist team has been undertaking the testing of residents and staff across many of Fife’s care homes over recent months. Where a resident has displayed symptoms, a sample has been taken the same day or next day after the suspected case is reported, and results are usually available within 24 hours.  Where there are confirmed COVID-19 cases in either staff or residents, enhanced testing is carried out - meaning that the testing of all care home staff and residents is initiated regardless of whether they are symptomatic or not. The UK Government testing portal, which was launched last month, enables local care homes to request weekly COVID-19 testing for staff. NHS Fife is allocated testing slots using this portal and has sufficient capacity to provide weekly testing for all care home staff in Fife.

**Reporting of discharge into care homes**

There have been a number of articles in local media relating to the discharge of patients who had previously tested positive for COVID-19 into care homes. In line with national guidance a small number of patients who had previously tested positive for COVID-19, less than five, were discharged to care homes in Fife. Importantly, no patients were discharged until at a least 14 days after a positive test, when the clinical advice and national guidance was that patients could be safely admitted to care homes without causing unnecessary risk to the health of other residents or care home staff.

**Self isolation period extended**

The period of time that people who have either tested positive for COVID-19 or displayed symptoms of the virus has been extended to ten days. Previously those showing key symptoms - a new continuous cough, a temperature or loss of taste or smell - had to self-isolate for at least a week. The new advice is in place across the UK and is in line with World Health Organization guidance. Self-isolating means staying at home and not leaving it. Anyone who has either tested positive for coronavirus or shown symptoms should isolate themselves for ten days, and those who show symptoms should arrange to get tested. People should continue to self-isolate if they still feel unwell after the initial 10 day period. Other members of the household should isolate for 14 days and not leave their homes.

## **Updates**

**Orthopaedic surgery resumed**

 NHS Fife has now recommenced much of its orthopaedic programme, including joint replacements, and was one of the first Health Boards in Scotland to do so. Over recent weeks our clinical team has been contacting those patients awaiting orthopaedic procedures to reassess their needs and are prioritising patients based on national guidance to ensure the most clinically urgent cases are seen first. We have now regained much of the operating capacity we had available prior to the pandemic and this capacity will continue to expand in the coming weeks and months.

**Cataract procedures resumed at Queen Margaret Hospital**

Cataract procedures re-commenced at Queen Margaret Hospital on 13 July 2020. Across our wider ophthalmology service, only urgent patients received face-to-face appointments at the height of the pandemic. Since the beginning of July 2020 there has been a steady and incremental increase in activity across the various ophthalmological sub-specialties. Patient safety remains our number one priority and we have put additional infection prevention measures in place during any surgical procedures. The need for physical distancing has impacted upon capacity as our services recommence, however, this is necessary to ensure the continued safety of staff and patients, and every effort is being made to minimise the effects of such measures.

**Test & Protect – anti fraud measures in place**

NHS Fife is working alongside local and national colleagues to ensure that there are robust anti-fraud measures in place for the national Test & Protect service, and ensuring the public are aware of these, continues to be a priority. The transition of all territorial Boards to the national service has allowed both the NCTC and Boards access to the same number (0800 0308 012) for all outbound and inbound calls. If members of the public wish to verify that calls are genuine, they can now call this number. The Scottish Government has started to communicate these anti-fraud measures to the public and is planning further proactive communications over the coming weeks.

**Medicine delivery service stopped**

Fife Council has taken the decision to stop provision of medicine delivery, a service previously provided by Fife Voluntary Action (FVA), with deliveries stopping on Saturday 15 August.FVA has notified patients that the service will not be available after this date and have updated their website and advertising materials accordingly.

**New NHS Fife website to launch in September**

We are launching our brand new website on 1 September. A significant amount of work has been undertaken over the last year to get to this point and, despite the impact of COVID -19 on our communications resource; the site will go-live next month. Amongst the key features of the new site, which will retain the [www.nhsfife.org](http://www.nhsfife.org) address, will be a significantly improved user experience, a design which has mobile and tablet use at its heart, and ACAG AA compliance, which is an internationally recognised accessibility standard.

**New video highlights changes to pharmacy services in light of COVID-19**

Earlier this month, we released the latest in a series of videos showcasing the ‘new normal’ and what patients can expect from services. Our most recent video showcased the changes to pharmacy services and can be viewed [here](https://youtu.be/ICaTJBXfSpk).

**Return of volunteers to the Victoria Hospital**

We were delighted to be able to welcome back a small number of our Meet ‘n’ Greet volunteers to the Phase 3 reception at the Victoria Hospital. Volunteering in NHS Fife was generally stood down at the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic in order to reduce the risk of virus transmission. Our volunteers provide invaluable help; giving directions and a warm welcome to the public, as clinics begin to remobilise, along with some visiting.

**Health and wellbeing packs provided to staff**

Health and wellbeing packs have been distributed to staff. The packs are a small token of thanks for the considerable efforts of those responding to COVID-19. The health and wellbeing packs contain a variety of useful items and have been funded entirely from donations, including from NHS Charities together.
Over 10,000 packs were collated by volunteers and staff and were distributed over a number of weeks due to the significant logistical undertaking. A short video on the packs can be viewed [here](https://youtu.be/PEBsDHFOljM).

## **Visiting & Service Update**

**Changes to services/visiting**

The latest information around changes to services, access and visiting can be found on our micro site: <https://coronavirus.nhsfife.org/changes-to-services/>

## **Public Health Update**

**Covid-19 local data**

You can find the number of confirmed cases, people in hospital and ICU in Fife at: <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 at: <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/covid19stats>

We have produced a handy info graphic that we publish every week on the Know Fife website summarising the above data: <https://know.fife.scot/>

**Test and Protect – helping to reduce the spread of COVID-19**

We continue to urge people in Fife with symptoms of coronavirus to access testing as part of efforts to reduce the spread of the virus. The Scottish Government ‘Test and Protect’ programme, enables anyone in Scotland who developed symptoms of coronavirus to be tested. The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are a high temperature; a new, continuous cough; or a loss or change to sense of smell or taste. Those with symptoms must get tested as soon as possible and this can be requested using the UK Government Citizens’ Portal at: <https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test>  or by calling 0800 028 2816. Contact tracing is an established method of reducing transmission of communicable disease and NHS Fife’s Public Health Team is well-versed in carrying out the process. Public Health Scotland’s weekly COVID-19 Statistical Report, published each Wednesday at noon, now includes Board level data and is available to view [here](https://beta.isdscotland.org/find-publications-and-data/population-health/covid-19/covid-19-statistical-report/).

**Test and Protect – registering contact details**

We have been using social media to encourage the general public to remember to leave their contact details with hospitality establishments. By giving their details they are helping to keep themselves and others safe by allowing our Test & Protect team to act fast in the event of positive cases - breaking the chain of transmission. Registering contact details applies to any hospitality establishment that provides an on-site service such as pubs, restaurants and cafes. It includes where a service is provided indoors, or outdoors in a designated service area such as a beer garden. It does not, however, apply where services are taken off-site immediately, for example, a food outlet which only provides takeaways. If a business offers a mixture of a sit-in and takeaway service, contact information only needs to be collected for customers who are sitting in.

**Test and Protect recruitment**

The Scottish Government has asked health boards to establish Test and Protect services for two years within local public health teams. To date we have been using staff who have been redeployed from their normal job during Covid-19 and trained them as contact tracers supervised by specialist public health staff. These staff are slowly returning to their normal job and therefore, we are recruiting a new team to stay with the public health department up to March 2022. These staff are already starting to join us and to be trained so that there is no reduction in the capacity of the Test and Protect service, which must be maintained and is a priority for NHS Fife. The existing 48 staff, who have been trained as contact tracers and continue to work for NHS Fife, will continue to receive training in the case that we have a significant outbreak and require additional staff at short notice.

## **General Information**

**Stay in touch**

NHS Fife tries at all times to be open and transparent with elected members. However, we need to manage enquiries to ensure that urgent work is not disrupted. To help you and to help us we are asking that all emails are directed in the first instance to a central email address. To ensure accurate and timely responses all political enquiries - letters and emails - should be directed to the NHS Fife Chief Executive Office for response and co-ordination. Enquiries should be emailed to a dedicated email address: **fife-uhb.chiefexecutive@nhs.net**

The Chief Executives’ Office will formally acknowledge receipt of all letters and emails and coordinate a response from services to ensure that all enquiries are responded to in a timely manner. 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 NHS Inform and the Scottish Government website and only come to us if the request relates specifically to Fife.

**Accessible information and translation**

NHS Fife continues to provide interpreting and translation services for patients despite there being no face to face interpretation at this time. Along with nationally allocated assets, we have published a suite of COVID-19 resources in a number of formats, including:

* British Sign Language
* Easy Read translation
* Foreign language leaflets
* SMS text service for those who may be deaf, hard of hearing, or are unable to speak in the phone due to impairment.

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).

**Helping us to spread messages on social media**

We appreciate the support of elected representatives in helping us ensure as many people as possible are aware of key messages and guidance around COVID-19 and its impact on our services. As such, please feel free to use any of the national or locally produced assets that we use on our social media channels.

|  |
| --- |
| **National Guidance** **Health Protection Scotland Guidance**Available at:  [www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/a-to-z-of-topics/covid-19](http://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/a-to-z-of-topics/covid-19) |
| **Information and Guidance for Non-Healthcare Settings**<https://hpspubsrepo.blob.core.windows.net/hps-website/nss/2973/documents/1_COVID-19-Guidance-for-non-healthcare-settings.pdf>  |
| **Information and guidance for social or community care residential settings** [www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/web-resources-container/covid-19-information-and-guidance-for-social-or-community-care-residential-settings/](http://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/web-resources-container/covid-19-information-and-guidance-for-social-or-community-care-residential-settings/) |
| **Ready Scotland Information**<https://www.readyscotland.org/coronavirus/> |
| **NHS Inform**[www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19](http://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19)   |
| **NHS Inform Covid-19 translated materials**NHS Inform has created a toolkit of accessible versions and translated Coronavirus information.  [Download the Coronavirus (COVID-19) communication toolkit (ZIP, 20 MB)](https://www.nhsinform.scot/media/3011/coronavirus-communication-toolkit-18032020.zip)[Download translated versions of our COVID-19 posters (ZIP, 22MB)](https://www.nhsinform.scot/media/3021/coronavirus-covid-19-posters_-7_-languages19032020.zip) |
| **Free Helpline for those who do not have symptoms**A free helpline has been set up for those who do not have symptoms but are looking for general health advice Tel: 0800 028 2816. |
| **Helpline for small businesses**A helpline providing businesses across Scotland with advice and guidance on COVID-19 is open Monday to Friday, between 8.30am to 5.30pm.Tel: 0300 303 0660. |

*Issued by NHS Fife Communications*