

**Issue 7|22 May 2020**

## **Introduction**

**As part of efforts to keep you informed, NHS Fife is issuing a weekly update dedicated to our response to the Coronavirus pandemic. This weekly briefing is circulated to NHS Fife Board members and Fife’s MPs, MSPs and local Councillors.**

##### This digital 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.

## **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**](mailto: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 to Fife specifically.

## **Hot Topics**

**Overview of healthcare services as lockdown set to end**

Yesterday afternoon, the First Minister unveiled the next steps in emerging from lockdown: notably, from a healthcare perspective, she announced that next week NHS Scotland will:

*“Carefully and gradually resume national health service services that were paused as a result of the crisis.”*

We appreciate that there is a degree of urgency to remobilise our services and we are working in collaboration with regional partners and the Scottish Government to ensure this process is clinically led, safe and patient centered. The recovery of clinical services is being governed through our Remobilisation Oversight Group, which is being co-chaired by the board medical and nurse director.

**NHS Fife piloting contract tracing technology**

On Monday, NHS Fife joined colleagues in NHS Lanarkshire and NHS Highland as pilot sites for new contract tracing technology. The pilot, which is expected to last two weeks, will allow NHS Fife to test out the software which contact tracers will use to collect the information that they need digitally. This builds on existing contact tracing technology in place across the NHS and will allow health boards to trace more contacts faster. This is the first step in moving towards an extended test, trace, isolate and support (TTIS) approach, which will be used to keep transmission in communities low as the country moves out of lockdown -further information on TTIS is in the Public Health section of this update. The new software will be rolled out to all health boards by the end of May and then further enhanced during June.

**Enhanced support in place for care homes in Fife**

A new multi-agency group is bringing a range of services together to provide enhanced support to care homes in Fife. In the face of the unprecedented challenge of COVID-19, a range of agencies are working together to provide enhanced support to care homes in Fife. As has been widely reported, care homes across the UK have been affected by outbreaks of coronavirus, and Fife is no different. To support care homes to reduce the spread of the virus, a range of measures are in place:

* A new Care Home Oversight Group has been established to oversee the provision of additional resources such as personal protective equipment (PPE), provide rapid testing where it is needed, and offer expert guidance and support to Fife’s care homes.
* The designation of our Nursing Director, Helen Buchanan, to personally oversee the provision of nursing leadership, support and guidance within the care home and care at home sector.
* The testing of individuals for COVID-19 has been extended to support care homes in limiting the spread of the virus. All of those admitted to a care home from their own home will now be tested before or on admission to a care home and will be cared for in isolation for 14 days thereafter.
* All consenting staff and residents in care homes where COVID-19 is known to be present will be tested regardless of whether or not they are displaying symptoms. A mobile COVID-19 testing team is supporting this effort and providing additional testing capacity for residents and staff. We undertake this testing based on a full risk assessment and prioritise those care homes that we think need tested first. We have had lots of correspondence about this from elected members and would like to reassure you all that we are doing this testing now in a planned and measured way to avoid any disruption to the care of our elderly residents
* The Health and Social Care Partnership’s District Nursing team is visiting residential care homes as part of their clinical duties. In addition to assessing whether homes need any additional resources such as PPE or staffing, district nurses are also supporting homes with infection prevention and control.
* Care Homes with outbreaks receive additional regular support from the Health Protection Team in Fife, often through daily contact with those care homes that have confirmed cases of and suspected cases.

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

NHS Fife continues to work round the clock with partners across the public sector to ensure patients and staff in both our acute and community hospitals remain protected and supported throughout this pandemic. We have established a hub to distribute quantities of personal protective equipment to healthcare sites across Fife. This enables NHS Fife to provide supplies of important PPE quickly and efficiently to healthcare staff working in the Kingdom’s communities and in its hospitals. We have also been inundated with donations from the public and have recently produced 3D printing specifications for small plastic clips that are both extremely useful and not subject to the same safety requirements as other items.

## **Media**

**New team providing care boxes for hospital patients**

A new team of healthcare staff and volunteers are supplying items to patients who would otherwise not have access to toiletries and other home comforts. Visiting across Fife’s hospitals was suspended on the 24th of March to limit the spread of coronavirus and protect vulnerable patients. Thanks to the recent donation of £500,000 from an anonymous donor towards tackling COVID-19 in Fife, the unprecedented step has been taken to purchase a range of additional items for patients during this time. Items such as toiletries, body lotions, lip balms, mobile phones chargers and even underwear, pyjamas and reading glasses, are being supplied for patients who require them to make their stay in hospital more comfortable. Two distribution hubs have been established at Hayfield House in Kirkcaldy and Queen Margaret Hospital and these are being run by staff redeployed from other areas of non-urgent care. While routine volunteering has been suspended, five existing volunteers are providing invaluable support to the project, so keen were they to assist patients in any way they could during the pandemic. Deliveries have now begun on wards at Victoria Hospital and will commence at Queen Margaret Hospital next week before being rolled out across hospitals in Fife. A supply of these items will be readily available on each ward for distribution to patients as required. Healthcare staff will also be able to request specific items over and above those already provided as part of the initiative. This is the latest development in the efforts to make patients stay in hospital more comfortable after the recent rollout of tablet computers to wards across Fife. A total of 100 tablets have been purchased using the donated money. These are being distributed to hospital wards across Fife to enable patients to stay connected with their loved ones with video calling whilst they remain in hospital.

**Mental Health Awareness Week 2020**

Mental Health Week runs from 18th-24th May. This year’s theme is ‘Kindness’ and the importance of kindness in our daily lives. Kindness and mental health are closely connected, never more so than in this time of uncertainty and worry. At a time when social distancing applies, where people are not able to see their loved ones, and where people have a variety of concerns relating to coronavirus, being kind to ourselves and others has never been more important. NHS Fife is committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our staff and of the communities we serve and throughout this week we have been using platforms such as social media, StaffLink and the Chief Executive’s daily COVID-19 update, to signpost to resources and promote the following themes:

* It’s ok not to feel ok – there is a wide range of support and resources available to support mental, emotional wellbeing for staff and for public during these extraordinary times.
* Your own mental health is important - look after it and explore the techniques and resources that work for you.
* Acts of kindness are all around us - from the huge number of donations that have been received for patients and staff to the weekly Clap for Carers.

**Bogus text messages**

Members should be aware that scammers are now targeting the UK COVID-19 contact tracing solution, which is being introduced to NHS Fife. Bogus texts link to fake websites to gain bank account and other personal details. People should be wary of any unsolicited texts received and if unsure, contact the company or organisation using a phone number or website you know is real, not the information in the text message. Scam texts can be reported to 7726 (the numbers spell “SPAM” on a keyboard).

**Donations and offers of support**

An updated section of the NHS Fife Coronavirus micro site has been launched to outline the process for members of the general public and organisations wanting to assist NHS Fife’s response to the Coronavirus pandemic in relation to donations and offers of help - including supplying PPE. For more information, visit: [**https://coronavirus.nhsfife.org/donations-and-offers-of-help/**](https://coronavirus.nhsfife.org/donations-and-offers-of-help/)

## **Clinical updates**

**Changes to services/visiting arrangements**

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

**HIV Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis**

Sexual Health are currently not able to start anyone on PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis) but are continuing to offer a PrEP service to those who have previously been receiving it. If a person remains eligible and requires an appointment or advice on how to pause their PrEP they should call the Health Advisers on 01592 729268. It is also recommended that they visit the HIV Scotland website for info on COVID-19 and PrEP. HIV Scotland’s website can be accessed here: [https://www.hiv.scot/coronavirus](https://www.hiv.scot/coronavirus?fbclid=IwAR3MYxDURGeAet-N15-OR0fF19opuO0dnSbPXtZW5Vj21BMFRs-Y0A60a_0)

**ACORN – Access Care and Respond to Needs**

Sexual Health Fife is prioritising care during COVID-19 service restrictions. A telephone advice service is operating for anyone living in Fife between Monday and Friday from 8.30am to 4pm. This can be reached on 01592 647979. For those who meet any of the below criteria, the caller should ask for ‘ACORN’ and their call will be prioritised:

* Under 20 years old,
* Supported by one of our Family Nurse Partnership team
* Are within 12 months after a delivery or abortion
* Are living with disadvantage such as substance use, homelessness, offending behaviour, mental health or gender based violence

**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 at <https://coronavirus.nhsfife.org/accessible-informationtranslation/>

**Infant mental health pathway**

NHS Fife and the Fife Health and Social Care Partnership have been given funding from the Scottish Government to develop work around an Infant Mental Health Pathway. Due to COVID-19 this work was paused but it is now starting again. There are already practitioners within Fife who can support Infant Mental Health work and we are keen that, especially in these difficult times, support is available for families and practitioners.

## **Workforce updates**

**StaffLink – the NHS Fife Staff App**

NHS Fife has launched its new staff app – StaffLink. StaffLink ensures our workforce have the important news and information they need at their fingertips, whether they are at work or at home. They can also access key guidance and documents quickly and easily to help them in their daily roles. Secure and free to use, the app is easily accessible on their work or personal smartphone, tablet and desktop, and has already been downloaded by around half of our workforce. We are extremely encouraged by the level of engagement on the app and view it as a cornerstone of the way that we will communicate with our workforce going forward.

**More staff support hubs now open across Fife**

Staff Support Hubs have opened across Fife, providing calm and welcoming spaces for all staff to take time out from work. Staff are encouraged to use them quiet spaces with no need for interaction, however, a variety of easily accessible resources are also available for use, with colleagues on hand to provide support. Refreshments are also available. They are available at:

* Maggie’s Centre, Kirkcaldy
* Queen Margaret Hospital
* Lynebank Hospital
* Whyteman’s Brae
* Stratheden Hospital
* Randolph Wemyss Memorial Hospital
* Cameron Hospital
* Glenrothes Hospital
* Adamson Hospital
* St Andrew’s Community Hospital

**Mobile testing for staff**

Mobile testing, where the testing team visits a staff member at home to take a sample, is available Monday to Friday. It was set up to respond to requests from social care staff, many of whom do not drive. A mobile testing appointment will only be considered if:

* They meet the testing criteria set out in protocol, **and**;
* They live within Fife, **and**;
* The staff member / household member has no access to their own transport, **and**;
* They do not have a household member living with them that can drive them to a drive-through appointment

The mobile testing service will be subject to review depending on demand and capacity of the testing team but is coping well with the additional requests for mobile testing that have been received.

The most up to date testing criteria can be found on our micro-site (this now includes the addition of loss of / change in sense of smell or taste to the clinical criteria): <https://coronavirus.nhsfife.org/staff-testing>

**Recruitment area on coronavirus micro site**

As part of ongoing Covid-19 resilience, NHS Fife is recruiting additional staff to complement its existing workforce. Details on how we are recruiting to these additional roles can be found on our dedicated Coronavirus micro site at <https://coronavirus.nhsfife.org/opportunities/>

**Public Health Update**

**Covid-19 local data**

There have been a lot of enquiries about Covid-19 data and what is available at a Fife level. Most of the data published on Covid-19 is published at a Scottish level, but there is some local data published and updated daily.  You can find 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 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/2020/05/14/covid-19-weekly-data-update-13th-may-2020/>

**Test trace isolate support programme (TTIS)**

This is the name of the Scottish approach to introduce widespread community testing and early identification of people at risk of transmitting the virus to others in their households, during their commutes, at workplaces, and leisure locations. This is the next critical public health approach as we look towards a phased easing of the current population lockdown situation. The Scottish Government laid out the approach on 4th May in [TTIS-a public health approach to maintaining low levels of community transmission of COVID\_19 in Scotland](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-test-trace-isolate-support/). Each step – Testing, Tracing, Isolation and Support for those who need it whilst in isolation is crucial. Fife along with two other Health Board areas has been chosen to test the details of the processes required to deliver this programme. It is hoped that the service will be up and running in all Health Boards by the end of May and will gradually build up over June as the need for the service increases. This programme will initially involve Public Health staff contacting Fife residents whose COVID-19 tests report as positive, identifying those with whom they have been in close contact and then following up those named contacts to advise them to self isolate. The programme will increase in scope over following weeks and we will update you each week on its progress.

**Covid-19 surveillance work**

In order to help us understand more about COVID-19, NHS Fife is participating in a Health Protection Scotland (HPS) strategy to gather information. This will enable HPS to measure how effective public health interventions are, such as lock down, social distancing and shielding. It will also help HPS understand how well Scotland is flattening the curve of the pandemic. This will help prevent illness and save lives. There are several programmes coming on stream to help HPS gather information. The first to launch is the Community Programme, which is an adaptation of the routine GP Influenza surveillance scheme. This will gather 1000 samples every week from across Scotland from people who have COVID-19 like illness. HPS aims to gather 500 samples from people who have attended clinical assessment centres, and 500 samples from people who have been triaged by the COVID-19 telephone triage hubs. You can find out more about this programme here:

<https://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/web-resources-container/enhanced-surveillance-of-covid-19-in-scotland-community-surveillance-protocol/>

## **National Guidance**

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| **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, information correct at: 22/05/2020*