Issue 18 | 12 March 2021

Elected Members Update

for Fife’s MPs, MSPs and   
local Councillors

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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).

**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**](mailto:fife.chiefexecutive@nhs.scot)

# Coronavirus

## Local vaccination update

The COVID-19 vaccination programme continues to progress at pace. As of 10th March, approximately 132,000 citizens have received their first dose of vaccination.

We are, as always, indebted to the incredible efforts and innovations of our staff who have made this possible.

This week we started vaccinating care home residents and staff with their second dose of the vaccine, as well as continuing to appoint those in the first tranche of cohort 6. Whilst cohort 6 is by far the largest and most complex group we have had to co-ordinate; we remain on course to appoint all of its first subgroup by the end of this week – with a view to having these people vaccinated within a fortnight.

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).

Elsewhere, interim advice has been published by the JCVI regarding prioritisation of the rest of the population once those in cohorts 1-9 (those over the age of 50, and those at risk) have been offered their first dose of vaccination. Multiple approaches were considered, including occupation-based risk, however, the advice is that the rest of the programme will be split in to a further three cohorts:

* Those aged 40-49
* Those aged 30-39
* Those aged 18-29

Priority vaccination groups

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

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Priority order** | **NHS Fife Status** |
| 1. Residents in a care home for older adults and their carers | First doses complete for over 95% Second doses began on 8th March |
| 1. All those 80 years of age and over and frontline health and social care workers | Second doses for staff began on 1st March over 95% of over 80’s vaccinated with first dose |
| 1. All those 75 years of age and over | Over 85% of population vaccinated |
| 1. All those 70 years of age and over | Over 85% of population vaccinated |
| 1. All those 65 years of age and over | Over 80% of population vaccinated |
| 1. All individuals aged 16 years to 64 years with underlying health conditions which put them at higher risk of serious disease and mortality | Appointments began on 23rd February letters are being issued in batches due to the size of the cohort |
| 1. All those 60 years of age and over | Appointments start 13th March |
| 1. All those 55 years of age and over | Appointments start w/c 15th March |
| 1. All those 50 years of age and over | Appointment start w/c 22nd March |

Under 60’s vaccination

COVID-19 vaccination appointments will start to be issued this week for people aged 50-59, who were not included in previous priority groups.

Vaccinations to those aged between 55 and 59 years old (group 8 on the priority list) will begin week beginning 15 March, with those aged 50-54 (group 9 on the priority list) starting to receive their injections the week after that.

Vaccine supply

Updated information on supply has been received and we will start to be able to increase our capacity from 15th March, utilising AstraZeneca stock which is short dated and will be required to be used by the end of March. On this basis Local capacity will return to 24,000 appointments per week as of 15th March to make use of this supply. This should allow completion of first doses for cohorts 1-9 by mid-April, in line with new Scottish government direction.

As of 1st March, Pfizer supply is being retained for use in second doses, with the exception of those with a clinical requirement for this product

National Scheduling System

NHS Fife, along with other NHS Boards within Scotland, are utilising a National Scheduling Tool to allocate appointments for our community vaccination centres. NHS Fife does not have access to individual appointments, so individuals are asked not to contact us directly and instead call the national helpline on **0800 030 8013** NHS Fife also has no local capacity to inform members of the public when their appointment is booked for.

The appointment letters are issued nationally and delivered by Royal Mail in blue envelopes.

Anyone on eligible under the definition of the national priority cohorts who has not received a letter, or who may have lost their letter, can arrange an appointment by providing some details on the NHS Inform website, at: **https://invitations.vacs.nhs.scot/**

Or if they phone the National helpline number the operator can complete this form on their behalf. **Please be aware that the national team advise that it is likely to be 2-3 weeks from completing the form to receipt on an appointment letter.**

Those aged 80 and over living in the community should contact their GP Practice.

Vaccination appointment letter format

Most members of the public who have an appointment letter from the national scheduling team will receive this in a blue envelope. There are a small number of people who have their appointments scheduled locally, who will receive this in a white envelope. This should not be a cause for concern, and the letter will be written on NHS Fife headed paper.

National Vaccination Marketing Campaign – Unpaid Carers

Carers who do not receive carers benefits, and who have not been identified by GPs, have now been asked to come forward to register for their vaccine. A national marketing campaign will be launched next week to help these individuals recognise themselves as unpaid carers and encourage them to register will launch digitally in the week commencing 15th March, with press and radio activity following in the week commencing 22nd March.

To support the campaign and online self-referral form will be available for unpaid carers to complete if they believe that they are eligible for the vaccine under priority group 6, but who have not yet received an invitation.

Long-stay inpatients

The vaccination of long-stay inpatients is progressing it is estimated that 360 were vaccinated as of Friday 5th March.

BAME and harder to reach groups

We are working closely with partner organisations and community influencers, including Fife Voluntary Action, Fife Centre For Equalities, and Fife Council to develop very localised and targeted messages that address the specific needs of individual BAME and harder to reach communities, and provide the necessary reassurance around the vaccine. A detailed Equality Impact Assessment is also in place and can be viewed [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/campaigns-projects/coronavirus-information/vaccination-programme/).

NHS Fife Community COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic Venues

NHS Fife continues to operate 13 community clinics, with Templehall being the 10th busiest vaccination centre in Scotland.

All community vaccination clinics are now open. 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 at: **www.nhsfife.org/media/34517/covid-vaccine-programme-eqia.pdf**

Work is already well underway to identify larger scale venues as we move beyond cohort 9. Large retail units in Kirkcaldy and Glenrothes are at late stage of consideration, alongside a large venue in Dunfermline. A vaccination clinic in the VHK, aimed at those who require enhanced clinical supervision, is at late stage of development and should come on stream shortly.

All the venues selected for our clinics have been carefully considered and assessed by utilising geo mapping technology and aligning with our equality impact assessment. This approach is the most effective way to vaccinate the population of Fife in a safe and equitable manner, at the pace required from the national vaccination programme.

Military support

NHS Fife has benefitted from military vaccinators across two sites, in the form of two teams of ten. The teams started with NHS Fife on Sunday 14th February and will continue until the end of April, subject to local requirements.

## Vaccine progress data update

Public Health Scotland is now publishing [daily statistical data](https://beta.isdscotland.org/find-publications-and-data/population-health/covid-19/covid-19-statistical-report/) on vaccinations in Scotland. The report includes data on; total vaccination – daily count and cumulative total, school’s information, vaccination by age group, sex and ethnicity (including percentage of population to receive first dose), and vaccination by location (health board and local authority area). 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/).

## 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/).

## Schools and nurseries updates

During the last school term, NHS Fife and Fife Council jointly published information on COVID-19 cases connected to nurseries and schools. For this new school term NHS Fife and Fife Council will be publishing a weekly update on cases within local schools and nurseries.

More information is available [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/latest-news/2021/03/weekly-reporting-of-covid-19-cases-linked-to-schools-and-nurseries/?fbclid=IwAR3cTD2G_Lj0dyliA1Bn_frxQGDBEA2RajGLgp-9qIXlsdLW9BTz-odMNDY).

We are also working closely with Fife Council to help ensure that children and their families and carers are prepared, confident and informed around the phased return of schools. As part of this programme, we have developed a range of social media and online assets which will begin next week, as well as a video message from Public Health Consultant and Child Health Commissioner, Dr Lorna Watson. [Parent Club Scotland](https://www.parentclub.scot/articles/faqs-on-scottish-schools-reopening?fbclid=IwAR12yK8y9zDwpsat_wJByB0FQOEYSqu7WkNsYPPh1CVlrDcjV1jV7wp6XvU) and [Fife Council](http://www.fife.gov.uk/schoolcovidfaqs.) have also provided useful Q&As as well as ongoing support and resources.

It is really important that everyone around our schools follows the public health guidance about maintaining a 2 metre distance, especially from other adults. We would appreciate your help in reminding parents and other adults of this advice to support us and our education colleagues in keeping as many of our children at school as possible.

## Asymptomatic and symptomatic testing in Fife

Alongside the vaccination programme, testing is an important part of the response to COVID-19. Over the last few weeks, a number of additional sites have opened across Fife providing symptomatic and asymptomatic testing for members of the public.

The most up-to-date public health data is being used to determine where there is a testing need and which kind of testing provides the most benefit to particular communities – whether that is local access to symptomatic testing, asymptomatic testing or a combination of both.

Members of the public with symptoms can book a test online at their nearest available site by visiting [www.nhsinform.scot](http://www.nhsinform.scot) or by phoning **0800 028 2816.**

The Community Testing in Fife programme provides testing for people who have no symptoms associated with COVID-19, but who could be infectious and spreading the virus to others unknowingly.

Asymptomatic testing sites are currently open in Cowdenbeath, Kirkcaldy and Methil, with additional mobile units, provided by National Services Scotland and operated by the Scottish Ambulance Service, based in Cupar and Kincardine.

Testing is available in a drop-in basis at our main asymptomatic sites, with booking required at the Cupar and Kincardine mobile units.

All asymptomatic sites are open for a limited time, based on the latest data.

Members of the public who do not have symptoms are being encouraged to play their part in reducing the spread of the virus by getting tested at their local site. By identifying positive cases and having people self-isolate if they do have the virus, people can help to protect loved ones and the wider community.

For many people self-isolation can have financial and practical implications, but support and advice is available online and can be accessed directly on-site at our main asymptomatic sites.

For more information: [www.nhsfife.org/testing](http://www.nhsfife.org/testing)

We are grateful for your continued support in promoting the asymptomatic sites to your constituents.

A full breakdown of current testing sites is available below:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Area** | **Type of Site** | **Target Population** | **Access to Site** |
| Glenrothes | Regional Drive Through | Symptomatic | By appointment |
| St Andrews | Walk in | Symptomatic | By appointment |
| Dunfermline | Walk in | Symptomatic | By appointment |
| Glenrothes | Walk in | Symptomatic | By appointment |
| Kirkcaldy | Walk in | Symptomatic | By appointment |
| Dunfermline | Mobile Unit | Symptomatic | By appointment |
| Glenrothes | Mobile Unit | Symptomatic | By appointment |
| Cupar | Mobile Unit | Symptomatic and Asymptomatic | By appointment |
| Kincardine | Mobile Unit | Symptomatic and Asymptomatic | By appointment |
| Maxwell Centre, Cowdenbeath **(until Sunday 14th March)** | Asymptomatic Testing Site | Asymptomatic | Drop-in |
| Glebe Centre, Kirkcaldy | Asymptomatic Testing Site | Asymptomatic | Drop-in |
| Chapel Neighbourhood Centre, Kirkcaldy | Asymptomatic Testing Site | Asymptomatic | Drop-in |
| Savoy Centre, Methil | Asymptomatic Testing Site | Asymptomatic | Drop-in |

Members of the public can access testing by visiting [NHS Inform](http://www.nhsinform.scot)  or calling **0800 028 2816**.

# Other updates

# Scottish Parliament Elections - Purdah

# Election guidance has been issued in relation to the Scottish Parliament elections, which all NHS Fife staff should observe. The election will take place on Thursday 6th May, with the pre-election period beginning on Thursday, 25th March.

# The guidance sets out a range of general principles and information including:

# •Campaigning and canvassing on NHS premises

# •Candidacy of employees

# •Dealing with enquiries and correspondence from political parties and candidates.

# On this basis NHS Fife will have to decline any requests for visits or tours of our sites or facilities in line with visiting restrictions and lockdown as well as during Purdah. We will also pause any public consultation activity until after May 6th.

## We will continue to respond to elected members enquiries and where possible with reference to already published information on our website, along with continuing to publish our weekly elected members update with information focused only on our ongoing response to the global pandemic in relation to test and protect and the COVID-19 vaccination programme.

## Remobilisation update

Despite the ongoing and unprecedented operational challenges posed by COVID-19, NHS Fife has continued to carry out urgent procedures, investigations and surgeries. We are currently in the process of remobilising a number of diagnostic and inpatient day case services, opening more theatres across our estate, and we have recently re-established elective orthopaedic surgery. Significant logistical planning is ongoing, including conversations with national governing bodies, to ensure we can further remobilise more of those services that have been suspended, as safely and as quickly as possible.

## 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/)**.**

## 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.

## 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.

|  |
| --- |
| 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