Issue 68 | 11th March 2022

Elected Members Update

for local MPs, MSPs and
Councillors

This regular 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 to regularly visit and refer your constituents for the latest news and updates from NHS Fife on our [**website**](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)**.**

**Covid vaccination**

**Local vaccination overview**

Across Fife, more than 300,000 first dose Covid vaccinations have now been delivered, whilst more than 236,000 people have received their initial two doses, plus a booster.

**First dose:** 300,637

**Second dose**: 282,958

**Booster dose:** 236,230

In addition to the regular COVID clinics and drop-in sessions, our [outreach work](http://www.nhsfife.org/dropin) is continuing and we are providing pop-up vaccination clinics at Morrison’s supermarket in Kirkcaldy, and Linton Lane Centre and foodbank, and Knockhill Racing Circuit over the coming days. This work is ongoing and potential sites are being explored across the length and breadth of the Kingdom.

The emphasis of the vaccination programme will shift during March to include the offer of primary doses for all children aged 5 to 11 years, and second ‘spring’ boosters for those aged 75 and over along with those aged 12 and over who are clinically vulnerable. We will, however, continue to offer first, second and initial booster doses to all of those eligible and who have not yet come forward.

The spring booster programme will begin week commencing 14 March 2022, beginning with the vaccination of residents in Fife’s care homes. Those eligible housebound patients will be contacted from mid/late March to offer a suitable time for a home vaccination visit over the coming weeks. Similarly, along those aged 75 and over will receive an appointment letter later this month with the offer of an appointment at a local vaccination clinic.

**Vaccination of children aged 5-11 years old**

The vaccination of children aged 5-11 with at risk health conditions, or who live with someone who is immunosuppressed, has been ongoing for a number of weeks. This offer has now been extended to all children in this age group in Scotland.

Parents and carers of children in the 5-11 age group will shortly receive a letter inviting their child to attend an appointment at a dedicated child immunisation clinic. As per the guidance issued by the JCVI, this will be a ‘non-urgent’ offer and this age group will be invited in a structured, managed roll-out, alongside the additional Spring dose vaccinations for those considered at greater risk.

Alongside dedicated clinics for this age group – where venues will continue to be made child-friendly as they have been during sessions for the at-risk 5–11-year old’s - NHS Fife will be enabling ‘family clinics’, where siblings and others in the household within this aged grouping will be able to attend together without the need for a separate appointment

Our child vaccination clinics are being scheduled for evenings, weekends and during the Easter holidays to both minimise any disruption to education and ensure that first and second doses are offered prior to schools returning in August after the summer holidays.

**Community and workplace resource**

We have developed an [online resource](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/campaigns-and-projects/coronavirus-information/covid-resources-for-local-workplaces-and-community-organisations/) that is being made available to local businesses, hospitality, and other community organisations to help them promote the benefits of vaccination and testing to clients and staff. The resource includes social media graphics, posters, videos, and other helpful assets to outline the importance of maintaining good practice and playing a role in keeping both individuals and businesses safe from the effects of the virus.

**Getting vaccinated**

We continue to encourage anyone eligible for a first, second or booster dose to book their vaccination appointment via the [online booking portal](https://vacs.nhs.scot/csp) (people who need to recover their username can do so [here](https://vacs.nhs.scot/csp?id=recover_username)) or by calling 0800 030 8013. Alternatively, the latest [drop-in clinics](https://www.nhsfife.org/dropinclinics/) are updated regularly on our website.

**Further information**

You can find out about the numbers of people in Scotland who are vaccinated along with data about case numbers, and hospitalisations by accessing the Scottish Government [Daily Update](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-daily-data-for-scotland/) or by visiting Public Health Scotland’s [Daily Dashboard](https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/phs.covid.19/viz/COVID-19DailyDashboard_15960160643010/Overview)

**Test & Protect**

**Close contacts video support –** Public Health Scotland have produced two videos to assist members of the public in defining who a close contact is. The definition of a close contact can be different depending on age. The videos have been produced for both adults (18 years and four months or over) and children or young people (under 18 years and four months). The videos are available to view [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/latest-news/2022/03/not-sure-who-your-close-contacts-are-if-you-test-positive-for-coronavirus/).

**Self-isolation, close contact and testing guidance**

Up-to-date guidance around isolation periods, rules for close contacts and further testing information, including a walk-through guide, can be found [here](https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19/test-and-protect/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-individuals-with-possible-coronavirus-infection).

**Community Testing**

Alongside symptomatic testing, our community testing sites operate across Fife, seven days a week, providing LFD tests, and PCRs where needed. Members of the public can drop-in at any time during opening hours to access testing and a variety of support.

Fixed testing sites are currently based at Glebe Centre, Kirkcaldy; Leys Park Road Car Park, Dunfermline; and Parkgate Centre, Rosyth, with mobile units visiting communities around Fife. Locations of our sites are based on the latest Public Health data.

A targeted approach is also now being taken to distribute LFD home testing kits directly to members of the public at selected venues including food banks, supermarkets and local shops, with staff on hand to signpost to further support. As well as these targeted distribution sites, home LFD kits continue to be available to pick up from testing sites, participating community pharmacies, and online for home delivery. Further information is available [here](http://www.nhsfife.org/communitytesting).

**Other news**

**Cabinet Secretary Welcomes New International Nursing Recruits to NHS Fife**

Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care, Humza Yousaf MSP, visited the Victoria Hospital in Kirkcaldy on Monday 7th March 2022 to personally welcome a group of new international nursing recruits to Scotland and Fife.

Kesia Chandy and Shincy Raju, both from India, and Eric Bautista from the Philippines have taken up permanent roles as staff nurses with NHS Fife at the Victoria Hospital in Kirkcaldy. Both Eric and Shincy arrived in Fife after leaving nursing roles in the United Arab Emirates, taking up positions within theatres and intensive care respectively. Kesia joins from her home country of India and will also be working in the Intensive Care Unit.

The new recruits are part of a wider project to enhance and expand NHS Fife’s nursing workforce, with Fife becoming the first Health Board in Scotland to welcome international recruits into the workforce as part of a partnership with Yeovil District Hospital NHS Foundation Trust. This partnership will see the recruitment of up to 40 registered nurses joining NHS Fife in the coming months.

While the first cohort of international recruits in Fife are taking up posts within the acute hospital, some of those nurses joining through the partnership programme will also take up community nursing roles in the Kingdom. The programme will also see as many as three qualified radiographers recruited internationally to posts in Fife over the coming year.

**Hospital visiting**

The current hospital visiting arrangements in Fife are that patients can receive at least one visitor per day. This position remains under regular review and the latest provisions can be found [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/visiting/)

**Elective surgery backlog and treatment waiting times**

The latest waiting times figures for stage of treatment are available on the Public Health Scotland website at: <https://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Waiting-Times/Inpatient-Day-Cases-and-Outpatients/>.

The vital measures taken to protect services during peak stages of the pandemic means that there are many people in Fife awaiting elective surgical procedures. The most recently published figures show that around 4,100 patients in Fife are currently awaiting treatment, compared with just over 3,200 in December 2019.

The additional infection control measures in place since the pandemic mean that it continues to be very difficult to perform the numbers of procedures carried out pre-COVID. We continue to assess all patients requiring surgical procedures to ensure those at greatest clinical need are seen quickly, whilst reviewing those patients longer.

**Elective surgery**

During peak periods of the pandemic, it was necessary to retract parts of our non-urgent surgical programme to enable us to protect vital emergency care, cancer, and trauma services. This was in response to the unprecedented pressures on health services in caring for significantly greater numbers of people acutely unwell due to COVID-19 and led to a rise in the numbers of people in Fife awaiting elective procedures.

A recovery plan is being implemented to assist us in maximising our elective surgical capacity and additional resources have been agreed with the Scottish Government to help support us in this aim. Patients currently awaiting procedures continue to be assessed regularly to ensure those at greatest clinical need can be see quickly, whilst reviewing those patients required to wait longer.

Work also continues apace on the construction of the new Orthopaedic National Treatment Centre at the Victoria Hospital, which remains on course to open later this year. The £33m project will enable us to increase orthopaedic theatre capacity and enable staff to care for patients in a modern, state-of-the-art, and purpose-built facility

**Support for Ukraine**

To support the people of Ukraine and those displaced by the crisis, we are encouraging our staff, where they can, to consider contributing to the appeal launched yesterday by the [Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC)](http://www.dec.org.uk/) Ukrainian fund. The DEC brings together 15 leading UK aid charities to raise funds quickly and efficiently to ensure that the appropriate help can reach those that have fled their homes to escape the conflict in Ukraine. DEC charities and their local partners are already in Ukraine and in neighbouring countries providing food, water, shelter, and medical assistance. Alternatively, we are also highlighting the work being done by Fife Voluntary Action, which has set up a dedicated webpage outlining local donation points and the donations being accepted for refuges [here](https://www.fva.org/news.asp?id=15342).

**International Women's Day 2022**

On Tuesday 8th March 2022 NHS Fife marked International Women’s Day - a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women.

**Scottish Apprenticeship Week 7th – 11th March 2022**

Scottish Apprenticeship Week shines a light on the vital role apprenticeships play in supporting people, employers, and the economy. Through-out the week NHS Fife has been showcasing the range of apprenticeships available and sharing the stories of those that have directly benefited from our scheme.

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.

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 as possible across Fife in a timely manner.

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/).

All Information correct at time of publishing. Issued by:

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