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Elected Members Update
for local MPs, MSPs and Councillors

This update is part of our on-going commitment to keep elected members 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.

**suggests this may be as high as one third of the adult population with 50% of those**

Launch of the High Risk Pain Medicines (HRPM) 3 year patie

**Enquiries**

To ensure accurate and timely responses from NHS Fife, all enquiries from elected members should be directed to the NHS Fife Chief Executive Office for response and co-ordination at fife.chiefexecutive@nhs.scot. Members are politely asked not to approach services or individual members of staff directly for responses.

**Main updates**

**Ongoing pressure on services**

Our hospitals remain extremely busy. The demand for inpatient beds remains very high, and this, coupled with the ongoing difficulties in ensuring the timely discharge of patients to social care services, is restricting of the flow of patients through the hospital system.

Emergency department presentations, including those referred to us by NHS 24, continue to be extremely high. Those who are most unwell continue to be prioritised and assessed very quickly on arrival. Patients are triaged to ensure those who require immediate intervention can receive this –however, that means patients whose condition is less serious are currently likely to wait longer.

Work is ongoing across a range of areas to improve patient flow through our hospitals, from initial admission right through to eventual discharge.

**Proposed industrial action**

Proposed industrial action has now been suspended while union members consider the Scottish Government’s latest pay offer. In the event the offer is not accepted, and a course of industrial action is pursued, maintaining patient safety will remain our priority, and we will work with staff-side colleagues and unions to ensure this is at the forefront of any arrangements.

**GP contractors sought for local practices**

New GP contractors are being sought to take over the running of three local medical practices.

Kinghorn, Valleyfield, and the Links Practice in Burntisland have been operated by NHS Fife and the Fife Health and Social Care Partnership since the previous GP partners became unable deliver their contracted services.

Work has been ongoing to identify appropriate interested parties to take over the contract and return them to independent contractor status. There is currently a level of interest to merit making the contract available through a tender process. The process of tendering contracts to provide general medical services has been carried out successfully in other parts of the country, and NHS Fife and the Fife Health and Social Care are following the well-established national procurement framework to ensure the process is thorough and robust.

The process of engaging with the staff in each practice has also begun and NHS Fife is writing out to patients served by all three practices to ensure they are informed of these developments. More information is available [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/latest-news/2022/11/new-gp-contractors-sought-to-take-over-running-of-three-medical-practices-in-fife/).

**Specialist gynaecology services at the Victoria Hospital**

In 2018 the Acute Services Division delivered Phase 1 of the Victoria Hospital Site Utilisation Programme to ensure the optimised use of facilities to deliver clinical care.

One of the key changes within this work was the relocation of in-patient medicine of the elderly wards to the new build area within the Victoria Hospital, Kirkcaldy. These moves supported the co-location of services and reduced the need for vulnerable patients to be moved around the hospital. As part of this initial phase of site optimisation, the gynaecology ward was moved from Ward 32 in the new build area of the hospital into an interim ward (Ward 9).

Subsequently, and as a result of a bed modelling exercise as well as further transformation work, there was an imperative for gynaecology to relocate from Ward 9 to enable full completion of the Acute Services Transformation Programme. Plans were made to relocate gynaecology from Ward 9 to a dedicated gynaecology ward and initially this was planned for late 2019. To support patient care, the gynaecology service required to be close to theatres and critical care. It was also recognised that the physical and psychological needs of patients had to be considered, given the broad spectrum of patients who access the service. It was therefore agreed to relocate the service into what was previously Ward 24 (a maternity ward), and this was to include physical separation of areas to ensure appropriate separation of patient groups. This move was completed, and the service has been within the new build area of the hospital since.

Unfortunately, the onset of Covid and the subsequent restrictions meant that the physical works to separate the services within the ward have not yet been completed. We do however maintain complete separation of the maternity and gynaecology patient groups and there are separate exit and entry points to the ward for each patient speciality. In addition, we also have a dedicated surgical ward area for gynaecology, which is staffed with appropriate, trained nursing staff. Our gynaecology service has continued to provide good care for the women of Fife.

The planning for the ward re-configuration is in the final stages and we expect works to start in the very near future.

**Community based health and wellbeing services**

Planning to strengthen mental health and wellbeing services and support in communities across Fife is due to commence early next year.

The three-year programme is led by the Fife Health and Social Care Partnership as part of the Scottish Government’s ‘Coronavirus Mental Health Transition and Recovery Plan and aims to help people who need support with issues such as stress and distress, anxiety and depression, addictions, and their mental wellbeing to access the right supports, in the right place, at the right time.

In the first year, planning and piloting of enhanced services will commence in three areas in Fife, with a specific focus on Cowdenbeath, Levenmouth and North-east Fife. Following service user feedback and learning from the pilots, the new programme will then be rolled out to the remaining four areas - Glenrothes, Kirkcaldy, Dunfermline, and South-west Fife - over the following year.

These initial areas have been identified as having particularly high levels of mental health and wellbeing needs according to Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation data and, in the case of North-east Fife, a high level of rural deprivation which can make accessing services and supports much more challenging.

Strengthened services and access to support within communities will be provided through a ‘hybrid’ multi-agency approach and, through a process known as ‘coproduction’, the voices of those who have lived experience of mental health difficulties within the communities themselves will be integral to shaping how services are designed and delivered. This approach will ensure that services are based around the issues that matter to people in these communities and can enable individuals to live independent and healthier lives.

**Cabinet Secretary visits Rapid Cancer Diagnostic Service**

Last week, we welcomed Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care, Humza Yousaf MSP, to the Victoria Hospital to see the work of our award-winning Rapid Cancer Diagnostic Service (RCDS).

RCD was launched last year and provides a new clinical pathway to support the earlier diagnosis of patients with non-specific symptoms of possible cancer. NHS Fife was one of three Health Boards in Scotland to pilot RCDS. The work of the team was recently recognised at the Scottish Health Awards 2022, where the team picked up the Innovation Award. More information is available [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/latest-news/2022/11/cabinet-secretary-welcomed-to-fife-to-see-work-of-award-winning-rapid-cancer-diagnostic-service/).

**Urology consultant appointed to NICE**

Consultant urologist in NHS Fife, Feras Al-Jaafari, has been appointed advisor to National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), which publishes evidence-based guidelines for health and care across the United Kingdom.

Mr Al-Jaafari is an internationally recognised expert in the treatment of benign prostate hyperplasia (BPH), commonly referred to as an enlarged prostate, and has pioneered innovations including UroLift implant interventions, laser surgery, and Rezum steam treatment. The latter of which was formally celebrated by a motion in the Scottish Parliament.

In his role with NICE, Mr Al-Jaafari will meet with other experts, evaluate data, and consider the best possible practice for urologists to follow on the topic of male lower urinary tract symptoms (LUTS). The NICE guidelines for male LUTS were last updated in 2010 and are due to be updated in 2024. More information is available [here](https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn%3Ali%3Aactivity%3A6999305436256477184).

**Former play volunteer remembered by artwork**

This week our volunteering service, together with the paediatric and neonatal service, held an official presentation of a commemorative artwork in recognition of longstanding play volunteer, Helen Hagan.

Helen volunteered for NHS Fife for over 30 years, with her volunteering beginning back in 1988. She wished to create a warm and welcoming environment for children and young people coming into the hospital for an outpatient appointment. Helen provided vital support to the play staff by providing and supervising play opportunities within the playrooms.

Helen's presence in the play area enabled the play staff to carry out the duties in the treatment rooms with the knowledge that the children in the waiting area were being well looked after by her. More information is available [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/latest-news/2022/11/long-serving-volunteer-remembered-as-commemorative-artwork-is-unveiled/).

**Recruitment of NHS Fife Chair**

The recruitment window for the appointment of a new NHS Fife Chair has been extended until the 5th of December. To facilitate the extension, the Rt Hon Tricia Marwick will remain in her role until the 31st of March 2023. More information on the role and the recruitment process is available [here](https://pa-scottishgovernment.icims.com/jobs/3932/fife-nhs-board-chair-appointment/job).

**New staying safe and winter wellbeing resources**

NHS Fife has launched new winter advice webpages, which bring together lots of useful information and advice on preparing for winter and how to look after yourself, your family, and friends. The pages can be found [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/campaigns-and-projects/winter-advice/). We have also been working with colleagues at Fife Council, the Fife Health and Social Care Partnership, and the voluntary sector to create a ‘Staying Safe and Keeping Well’ booklet. The booklet aims to help address a range of concerns– from finance to issues about health and wellbeing. The online version of the booklet can be accessed [here](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Chamiltoncr%5CDesktop%5CELECTED%20MEMBERS%20BRIEF%5C2022%5Cwww.nhsfife.org%5Cmedia%5C37959%5C).

**Hospital visiting arrangements**

Current visiting guidance allows patients in most areas of Fife hospitals to receive two visitors per day, and both visitors can visit at the same time. There are no time restrictions on visits. Essential visiting is in operation in some areas and more information can the latest information can be found [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/visiting).

**Vaccination**

**Covid vaccination**

The [online vaccination portal](https://www.nhsinform.scot/wintervaccines) remains open for those who are eligible to book their appointment. They can also book an appointment by calling 0800 030 8013.

Drop-in sessions are also being provided across Fife, where appointments are not required. The latest information on these sessions can be found [here](http://www.nhsfife.org/dropin).

The latest information on vaccination locally can be found [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/services/all-services/immunisation/covid-19-vaccination-programme-and-advice/covid-19-vaccination-programme/).

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/).

Additional vaccination information/stats

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)

All Information correct at time of publishing. Issued by the communications team.