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NHS Fife Update

for Fife’s MPs, MSPs and
local Councillors

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# Welcome

Welcome to the second edition of our new fortnightly NHS Fife update for MP’s, MSP’s and local councillors. This update is part of our on-going commitment to keep you informed of the latest developments that may be of interest to you and your constituents. In each edition we will include a range of standing and topical themes. This includes information on our on-going response to the COVID-19 pandemic, remobilisation of our services, service changes and operational updates, along with signposting to the latest media updates issued by NHS Fife available to view on our new NHS Fife website at: [www.nhsfife.org](http://www.nhsfife.org)

NHS Fife also runs a number of social media accounts on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. If you have not already done so please follow us and where appropriate, can we encourage you to share any relevant posts with you followers, to help us reach as many members of the communities we serve.

# COVID-19 (coronavirus.nhsfife.org)

**Covid-19 Fife 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/**](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**](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/**](https://know.fife.scot/)

**COVID-19 cases linked to Fife schools and nurseries**

We are aware that there has been significant media coverage of positive coronavirus cases linked to a small number of Fife schools and nurseries. In each of these instances, our Test and Protect team has identified individuals who have been in prolonged close contact with the confirmed cases whilst infectious and provided the necessary support and guidance. Contact tracing is a proven method of preventing the spread of the virus and contacts are instructed to isolate for 14 days to limit the risk of potentially passing the virus to others. Any statements relating to specific incidents, information on how best to reduce the chances of your family contracting the virus, and what you should do if someone in the household develops symptoms, can be found on our dedicated NHS Fife Coronavirus micro site: **www.coronavirus.nhsfife.org**

# Test and Protect

**Testing Capacity in Fife and NHS Fife Labs**

You may well have seen media coverage of perceived issues around testing capacity for COVID-19. While NHS Fife is not responsible for public testing sites, such as the walk-in site in St Andrews and the mobile unit in Dunfermline, the Board does retain responsibility for the drive-through testing site at Cameron Hospital. This site is not part of the national public testing network and is instead used for the testing of healthcare staff and other key workers. NHS Fife’s microbiology laboratories at the Victoria Hospital are currently testing samples from a variety of areas, including those taken at the aforementioned testing facility at Cameron Hospital; hospital patients; care home residents and pre-surgical testing – this is not an exhaustive list and our local laboratories continue to operate well.

# Service updates

**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/>

**NHS Fife flu vaccination programme**

With COVID-19 around, it is more important than ever to get the flu vaccine. That is the message as this year’s flu immunisation campaign commences. Those aged over 65, pregnant women and those with underlying health conditions are at the greatest risk of the effects of the flu, and are entitled to a free flu jab each year. A number of changes have been made to the delivery of flu vaccination this year. Rather than attend a GP practice, those in the ‘at risk’ categories, are receiving letters asking them to make an appointment to attend one of the many vaccination clinics taking place across Fife. We have seen an exceptional response from those calling to arrange their flu jab with our call handlers answering well over a 1,000 calls an hour at the peak. While this is encouraging, we are aware that some people have experienced difficulties getting through as a result and we are asking these people to wait and call back later. We have used our social media channels to thank local people for their patience and assure them that there is no shortage of appointments available, with many vaccination clinics planned to take place in community venues across Fife in the coming weeks and months.

**People in Fife urged to think Pharmacy First**

NHS Pharmacy First Scotland is an NHS service provided by local community pharmacies. If you have a minor illness, a pharmacy is the first place you should go for advice. You do not usually need an appointment and you can go to any pharmacy. Your local pharmacist or a trained member of the pharmacy team will give you advice and provide medicine if needed. They may need to refer you to another healthcare professional such as your GP practice, dentist, optometrist or another NHS service if they feel your condition needs further investigation or more specialist care. NHS Fife has been promoting the importance of thinking Pharmacy First on our social media channels, especially around some of the common issues that pharmacies can help with, such as a UTI or Impetigo. Further information about Pharmacy First can be found [here](https://bit.ly/3jeOYnE).

**Mental health support helpline for health and social care workers**

All health and social care workers in Scotland now have access to mental health support through a national wellbeing helpline. The helpline will be open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The number for health and social care workers to call is 0800 111 4191.

**Scottish Health Awards – nominations open!**

2020 has been an unprecedented year for everyone in the health and social care sector. The Scottish Health Awards provide a unique opportunity to show appreciation for colleagues across the organisation in the form of a nomination. Please consider encouraging the public to nominate at **https://www.scottishhealthawards.com** by 30 September.

# In the media

**Incidences of COVID-19 in Fife**

NHS Fife has received a considerable number of press enquiries regarding incidences of COVID-19 associated with local educational establishments and other facilities. All media statements have been made available proactively to media, and indeed the wider public on our dedicated coronavirus website, at: **https://coronavirus.nhsfife.org/changes-to-services/news-updates/**

**Link between inequalities and premature birth**

NHS Fife was asked to comment after a recent report to the Fife Council environment and protective services committee suggested that inequalities are evident with 31% of all premature babies from the most deprived areas in Fife compared to 12% from the least deprived areas. NHS Fife said that pre-term birth is a complex area and there are many factors that are known to contribute to a baby being born prematurely, including medical conditions of both the mother and baby. It is well recognised that there is an association with social deprivation and premature birth, the contributing factors can include maternal smoking and living in a household where other smoke, alcohol and substance use, increased BMI, increasing maternal age and teenage pregnancy. NHS Fife and the Fife Health and Social Care Partnership already have several programmes in place supporting pregnant mothers in the most deprived areas of Fife - these include Family Nurse Partnership for first time mothers under 20, the VIP project for those with alcohol and substance issues, and family health midwives for pregnant women who are in socially vulnerable circumstances.

**Randolph Wemyss Memorial Hospital**

There has been widespread reporting of the decision to close the Wellesley Unit at Randolph Wemyss Memorial Hospital, which is a 10-bed in-patient ward providing end of life care and transitional care for patients. Significant challenges around maintaining safe levels of medical cover on the unit have been the driving factor behind this decision, taken by the Integrated Joint Board, and these long standing challenges have only been compounded by the impact of COVID-19. Whilst there is work ongoing to redevelop community services across Fife and make sure patients continue to get the best possible care in the most appropriate location, NHS Fife and the Fife Health and Social Care Partnership remains committed to Randolph Wemyss Memorial Hospital and the communities it serves.

## **Fife Health Board Endowment Fund – Local Community Grants Scheme**

Elected members are being asked to encourage their local community groups working on COVID-19 related projects to apply for funding from the Fife Health Board Endowment Fund. Throughout this pandemic, NHS Charities Together has shown fantastic support for the Fife Health Board Endowment Fund and the funds have enabled us to run and support a number of initiatives for the benefit of our staff and patients.  The Fife Health Board Endowment Fund has received additional funding of just under £165,000 from NHS Charities Together and is keen to use this funding to support community organisations providing support for the well being of local communities across Fife in responding to the challenges faced of living through a global pandemic. Trustees are particularly keen to hear from community organisations that have assisted through the pandemic to date, who might wish assistance to continue, or those wanting to expand their services in the future i.e. friendship and support hubs to help social isolation, inequalities and mental health well being.  Fife Voluntary Action is helping to support The Endowment Fund in the process.  Details of how to apply can be found on their website [here](https://www.fva.org/news.asp?id=12930). The closing date for applications is 30th September.

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| Keep in touchElected members enquiries 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.chiefexecutive@nhs.scotThe 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. These assets and further information can be found [here](https://coronavirus.nhsfife.org/accessible-informationtranslation/).Board papers accessible onlineBoard 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). |

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