Issue 54 | 25th November 2021

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 & flu vaccination overview**

Over 671,000 doses of Covid vaccine have now been administered across Fife, with over 112,000 people having received their full course and a booster vaccine.

For the last fortnight we have been encouraging people aged 50-59, those aged 16 or over and an unpaid carer, and those living in immunosuppressed households to book online their booster vaccinations at one of our sites across Fife. Slots are available across late November and December and there are plenty of opportunities to secure a suitable time and date – evening and weekend appointments are also being provided to make vaccination as accessible as possible.

Importantly, those who are aged 50-59 will not receive a blue envelope appointing them to a venue as had previously taken place – as such, it is important that they proactively book online using the [new national portal](https://www.nhsinform.scot/flu-vaccine/invitations-and-appointments/book-a-flu-or-coronavirus-booster-vaccination/) or call 0800 030 801 to arrange vaccination.

Next week, once the online portal has been updated, 40–49-year-olds will be invited to book their booster vaccination. For more information please visit our booster page [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/campaigns-and-projects/coronavirus-information/covid-19-vaccination-programme-in-fife/covid-19-booster-and-flu-vaccination-programme/).

**Second doses for young people aged 16-17**

The JCVI has advised that young people aged 16 to 17 years who are not in an at-risk group should be offered a second dose of Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine. The second vaccine dose should be given 12 weeks or more following the first vaccine dose and this age group can visit one of our advertised drop-in clinics. The published guidance can be viewed [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-in-children-and-young-people-aged-16-to-17-years-jcvi-statement-november-2021/joint-committee-on-vaccination-and-immunisation-jcvi-advice-on-covid-19-vaccination-in-people-aged-16-to-17-years-15-november-2021). Guidance in relation to any second dose for the 12–15-year-old age group is expected early in 2022.

**Booster drop-in clinics**

Next week (w/c 29th November) we will be providing a series of drop-in clinics targeted at those who are eligible for a booster vaccination, however those requiring first, or second dose vaccination will also be able to have these administered at the clinics. All confirmed drop-in clinics, including opening times and criteria, are listed [**here**](http://www.nhsfife.org/dropinclinics).

**Flu vaccination for pregnant women**

Women who are pregnant continue to be provided with the opportunity to be vaccinated against flu at upcoming hospital appointments. Those who do not have upcoming hospital appointments are encouraged to phone the following number to arrange for vaccination:

Victoria Hospital: 01592 729 089

Queen Margaret Hospital: 01383 627 033

**Vaccination leadership team site visiting**

The vaccination leadership team, which consists of the Director of the Fife Health and Social Care Partnership, the Head of Service for Primary and Preventative Care, and the Immunisation Programme Director, will visit vaccination centres in Dunfermline, Methil, and Kirkcaldy on the 8th of December. These visits will see them meet the workforce involved in delivering vaccines, hear directly from them about their experiences, and answer any questions they may have.

**Further information**

[This table](https://www.nhsfife.org/media/36137/nhs-fife-covid-19-vaccination-summary.pdf) provides the latest information on who is being vaccinated, when and where this will be, and how they will be invited. Flu vaccination is being offered at the same appointment as a booster – where appropriate. These appointments are currently invite-only, and not accessible to the public via drop-in clinics unless specified. Further information about the joint Covid booster and flu vaccination programme can be found [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/campaigns-and-projects/coronavirus-information/covid-19-vaccination-programme-in-fife/covid-19-booster-and-flu-vaccination-programme/).

Across Fife, the number of confirmed Covid cases remains high – with notable transmission taking place indoors - and this number is expected to rise further over the winter months. The current number of confirmed cases, people in hospital and intensive care in Fife can be viewed [here](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-daily-data-for-scotland/).

**Other news**

**Face-to-face GP appointments**

NHS Fife continues to receive correspondence and enquiry from elected members, both privately and in the public domain, in relation to the difficulties that some people are experiencing accessing GP appointments, particularly ones that are face-to-face. This topic has been a regular feature in our weekly update, and we would take the opportunity to reinforce that local practices continue to follow infection control guidance that is set or adopted nationally to minimise the risk to patients and staff, mindful that many of them who are considered clinically more vulnerable to infection.

Practices must continually manage the number of patients attending at any one time, and while some of the guidance for primary care settings has recently eased, there continues to be a necessity for a minimum of one metre physical distancing within waiting areas, and two metre distancing is still required for those patients who are considered most clinically vulnerable.

In some practices, and particularly those with smaller waiting areas, distancing requirements continue to impact on the number of patients who can safely wait, and this can in turn reduce the number of in-person appointments practices can make available. However, despite these ongoing challenges, the proportion of face-to-face appointments available to patients in Fife continues to increase as it has for many months, with many thousands of face-to-face consultations provided each week.

Like very many other areas of the healthcare system, general practice is experiencing significant and sustained pressure, with the demand for healthcare unlike anything we have ever seen. This is made significantly more challenging due to the UK-wide shortage of general practitioners, which in many areas is also reducing the numbers of appointments practices can offer. We continue to work in partnership with medical practices, particularly those facing difficulties in recruiting to vacant GP positions, to ensure that they are supported by a wider multi-disciplinary clinical team to ensure patients who most urgently need to be assessed can access that assessment. We also collate weekly returns from all 54 GP practices in Fife, which provide us with a helpful overview of factors such as appointment availability, demand, and staff absence.

The latest infection control guidance for health and social care settings can be found [here](https://www.nipcm.scot.nhs.uk/scottish-covid-19-community-health-and-care-settings-infection-prevention-and-control-addendum/).

**GP cover at Linburn Road Health Centre**

There has recently been media coverage of an issue regarding GP cover at Linburn Road Health Centre on Friday 12th November. This situation involved the GP on shift becoming unwell and returning home to recover.It was not possible to arrange a GP locum at short notice, however, cover was provided by our advanced nurse practitioner with support from a prescribing pharmacist to ensure that as many patients could continue to be appropriately seen as possible.The GP has since recovered and returned to work, and those patients who could not be seen have been rescheduled.

**Scottish ambulance service statistics**

On Wednesday (24th November) the Scottish Ambulance Service published its first weekly update of key statistics on unscheduled care operational measures across Scotland. The information includes trends in the number of unscheduled care incidents, responses, conveyances to hospital, response times and hospital turnaround times. The latest statistics can be accessed [here](https://www.scottishambulance.com/publications/unscheduled-care-operational-statistics/).

**Hospital visiting**

Hospital visiting arrangements continue to be reviewed on a weekly basis and remains at one visitor, [with some exceptions](https://www.nhsfife.org/services/patients-carers-and-visitors/current-visiting-arrangements/).

**Covid status app**

Constituents can download their Covid status app [here](https://www.nhsinform.scot/covid-status), which gives record of vaccination. If they are experiencing issues with vaccination status, they should telephone the national vaccination status helpline on 0808 196 8565.

**SAMH drop-in clinics being provided across Fife**

The Scottish Association for Mental health (SAMH) is providing a series of regular mental health drop-in sessions across Fife (Leven, Kirkcaldy, Burntisland, and Dunfermline). The sessions, which run from 12noon-8PM, are led by trained peer practitioners with their own lived experiences of mental health issues and recovery. No referral is required to attend the drop-ins. More information is available [here](https://www.facebook.com/nhsfife/posts/10159717659052246).

**Test & Protect**

**Community testing and festive campaign**

1 in 3 people with COVID-19 don’t have symptoms but can still pass the virus on. Vaccination provides very good levels of protection; however, it is still possible to catch the virus. By testing regularly, members of the public can help to protect those around them.

In the run-up to the festive season, a local campaign has been developed highlighting the role of community testing and encouraging members of the public to test regularly as part of their normal routine. In addition, people should test prior to socialising or heading out to busy venues. A range of channels will be utilised over the coming weeks and a supporting toolkit has been developed to support partners and community organisations to further promote the messaging. The toolkit is available to download [here](http://www.nhsfife.org/campaignresources/).

Community testing sites operate across Fife, operating seven days a week. Members of the public can drop-in at any time during opening hours, no booking is necessary. LFD home testing kits are also available to pick up from testing sites across Fife, participating community pharmacies and can be ordered for home delivery. Further information on community testing and LFD home testing kits is available [here](http://www.nhsfife.org/communitytesting).

**Symptomatic cases**

Anyone with the symptoms of COVID-19 or who has been advised to take a test should book a test via <www.nhsinform.scot> If support is needed with the booking process, call 119.

## 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.

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| Keep in touchWe endeavor 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, please let us know.Elected member meetingsNHS Fife facilitates regular informal group meetings with our elected representatives on a quarterly basis, via TEAMS. These meetings are open to all Fife’s MP’s and MSP’s to ensure parity and consistency of feedback. The final dates for 2021 is:**Friday 10 December** at 9.30 amElected 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 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 an Elected Members Update (EMU) on a weekly basis. This will be emailed directly to you and available to access online at: [www.nhsfife.org/emu](http://www.nhsfife.org/emu)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/).Covid-19 statisticsVaccine progress data updatePublic Health Scotland publishes [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, vaccination by age group, sex, and cohort (including percentage of population to receive first dose), and vaccination by location (health board and local authority area). The [weekly statistical report](https://beta.isdscotland.org/find-publications-and-data/population-health/covid-19/covid-19-statistical-report/17-february-2021/dashboard/) issued by Public Health Scotland includes national-level data on uptake rates by ethnicity and by level of deprivation. 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/).General Covid-19 dataYou 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 can be found [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/). General statistical publicationsThe latest local health and social care performance statistics, including emergency department, cancer, and delayed discharge, are published [here](https://publichealthscotland.scot/publications/). |

Issued by NHS Fife Communications, all information correct at time of publishing.