

**Issue 9|05 June 2020**

## **Introduction**

**As part of efforts to keep you informed, NHS Fife is issuing a weekly update dedicated to our response to the Coronavirus pandemic. This weekly briefing is circulated to NHS Fife Board members and Fife’s MPs, MSPs and local Councillors.**

##### This digital update includes information on matters including planning and resilience, operational updates, along with signposting to the latest media updates issued by NHS Fife to ensure clear, consistent and timely sharing of information. Updates are also issued on our new public facing Coronavirus micro site ([*http://coronavirus.nhsfife.org*](http://coronavirus.nhsfife.org)) which provides a hub of information and advice as well as our established, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages.

## **Hot Topics**

**Test and Protect**

Transmission of COVID-19 is expected to continue until a vaccine is available or there is enough acquired immunity amongst our population for it to stop spreading. Lockdown restrictions have had a profound effect on the lives of all of us across Fife - but they have also helped contribute to a reduction in the transmission of infection. However, the virus remains a very serious threat.

The Scottish Government’s – **Test and Protect Programme** is a key component of the next phase of our national response to the Coronavirus pandemic and essential for the gradual easing of lock down restrictions, while at the same controlling the spread of infection.

To support testing and keep the public informed, NHS Fife has developed comprehensive new test and protect pages on our coronavirus micro-site - [**https://coronavirus.nhsfife.org/testing**](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fcoronavirus.nhsfife.org%2Ftesting%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR2bDta4TVzI9gzzkrCjJcplwNNeOyDZw4NVc1a3UYBe2zISmfwbU0Ln8kY&h=AT1S9vg2vlIa8trH2MDnXmTxH1SoLWVmbsi1TqKaStHCuwW8ogotA8m_exsBHxPn7lBYffPdAoL7zEE_9NpaypreAm7nyDCZanehGDa9KFlvzgPZkwrSvyxreZqIN04Fm5HAxblWLS67KcYNQfwGcW8aZu11jKY247X3B3HMWSqWthQ_tHdqAXWHmoDtecThrYR2OukTRYuAtM-NfABullclXJndJArupqYHv6qT0rdvgAlA58e0XohzyVkw6JF3EgQ6D0tEidcQrtOaep3tGn_vIJBfjMmQg1qgh-rrLDWs6agNQKTblg88n2kOcXVv6eMrUExI2jEiZBVw-mY6ELS5OjRotDEVew8HGHs-dwwecDg_P_d6zU7kq_mFRtHqISs-VxLYYtZGpTLgXN9j-haZ_zcevfOkZCCFbSU7Sw0hgMZ1SpC8YN6imaCzKOke2Vd0sKuOQVJVxfTOdYirqIe2RuxycDesBrR62ejWgzH-oWZw7_f5azUCc-6QN0_49dFBwWp4F3cc-OjlHpZEIHCI2eW_rW09i5NlzcCTl71vFZY52U-0nmDbUX-Ryb4n7Z8gDaFDzDRRCgFvFSZ1zQz8EVRlqhhSUgPoGTWd_TNjxXP9iaAPODV4ZvIfzmWR_ziGxgYN)

**Service remobilisation**

Following the publication of the Scottish Government's Covid-19 Route Map last week, NHS Fife is working on ways to gradually remobilise some of our clinical services. At our board meeting on 27th May, a report was considered that sets out how take forward the restart of clinical services across Fife. This 'Remobilisation Plan' is clinically led and takes into account a number of key considerations:

* The impact of physical distancing on our patient flow and capacity; as well as continuing to ensure a safe working environment for staff.
* Continuing to use digital solutions to support outpatient services into our daily working practices.
* Making sure those patients most in need are prioritised for care.
* The continued importance of communication – with staff, patients, and the wider public.

Our immediate priority is to outline the steps we will take to gradually, cautiously, and in phases, move towards a new normality. Our short term future will include 'living with Covid-19' so we need to ensure services remain flexible and adaptable until the virus remains suppressed to very low levels and is no longer considered a significant threat to public health – in other words, when we reach, and not before, Phase 4 of the Scottish Government's Route Map. A Remobilisation Oversight Group, co chaired by our Medical Director and Director of Nursing, has been established to oversee the planning and restarting of services, to support a Covid-19 sensitive NHS Fife over the coming months. People across Fife have showed great understanding as we made the necessary changes to our services to ensure we could manage an effective local response to this global pandemic. By following Scottish Government guidance they have played a key part in slowing the spread of the virus and, in turn, helping to reduce hospital admissions. It is important that the public continues to follow Scottish Government guidance over the coming weeks so we can concentrate on reintroducing some of the services that had to be suspended, instead of focusing on any further disruption caused by a second surge in cases. We will continue to use social media and direct contact with patients to keep everyone up to date with the gradual reintroduction of services.

**Enhanced support in place for care homes in Fife**

A multi-agency group is bringing a range of services together to provide enhanced support to care homes in Fife. In the face of the unprecedented challenge of COVID-19, a range of agencies are working together to provide enhanced support to care homes in Fife. As has been widely reported, care homes across the UK have been affected by outbreaks of coronavirus, and Fife is no different. To support care homes to reduce the spread of the virus, a range of measures are in place:

* A new Care Home Oversight Group has been established to oversee the provision of additional resources such as personal protective equipment (PPE), provide rapid testing where it is needed, and offer expert guidance and support to Fife’s care homes.
* The designation of our Nursing Director, Helen Buchanan, to personally oversee the provision of nursing leadership, support and guidance within the care home and care at home sector.
* The testing of individuals for COVID-19 has been extended to support care homes in limiting the spread of the virus. All of those admitted to a care home from their own home will now be tested before or on admission to a care home and will be cared for in isolation for 14 days thereafter.
* All consenting staff and residents in care homes where COVID-19 is known to be present will be tested regardless of whether or not they are displaying symptoms. A mobile COVID-19 testing team is supporting this effort and providing additional testing capacity for residents and staff. We undertake this testing based on a full risk assessment and prioritise those care homes that we think need tested first. We have had lots of correspondence about this from elected members and would like to reassure you all that we are doing this testing now in a planned and measured way to avoid any disruption to the care of our elderly residents
* The Health and Social Care Partnership’s District Nursing team is visiting residential care homes as part of their clinical duties. In addition to assessing whether homes need any additional resources such as PPE or staffing, district nurses are also supporting homes with infection prevention and control.
* Care Homes with outbreaks receive additional regular support from the Health Protection Team in Fife, often through daily contact with those care homes that have confirmed cases of and suspected cases.

## **Media Releases and Statements**

**Rise in reported covid-19 cases**

Statistics published by Scottish Government showed a sharp increase in the numbers of those who had tested positive for covid-19 in Fife.

NHS Fife confirmed a discrepancy during a period in late May where positive lab reports for Covid-19 cases in NHS Fife did not reach Health Protection Scotland in order that they were included in the daily Scottish Government Coronavirus figures. This was due to a software issue that has since been resolved.

All positive test results were captured on NHS Fife’s local reporting system, ensuring that all were followed up and contact traced in-line with current Scottish Government Guidelines.

**Donations for patients and staff**

NHS Fife was asked for details of any donations it has received for staff or patients during the pandemic.

We confirmed that we have received, and continue to receive, incredible support from local people and extremely grateful for every single gesture of support shown. A variety of donations have been made from staff and patients, including snacks, meals, toiletries and a host of other items.

Attention was also drawn to a notable donation from an anonymous local donor, who gifted an incredible £500,000 to support patients and healthcare staff throughout this pandemic. This money has so far been used to fund a number of projects, including the purchase of iPads to keep patients connected on our hospital wards, and care boxes, which include toiletries and other home comforts that patients may otherwise not have had access to.

In a follow-up question, we confirmed that we had received around £98,000 from NHS Charities Together,

**Routine testing in care homes**

We were asked how many care homes have tested as part of the new routine testing arrangements announced recently by the Cabinet Secretary, Jeane Freeman.

NHS Fife confirmed that our specialist team has been undertaking testing of residents and staff across a number of Fife’s care homes over recent months.

“Testing is currently carried out in homes whenever a resident is displaying symptoms. Samples are taken the same day or next day when suspected cases are reported, and results are usually available within 24 hours. Where there any confirmed cases of staff or residents, enhanced testing is carried out meaning all care home staff and residents are tested regardless of whether they are symptomatic or not.

From 08 June 2020, a new testing portal is being launched which will enable local care homes to request weekly covid-19 testing for staff.

**NHS Fife Covid-19 Remobilisation Plan**

NHS Fife announced that it has been working on its own service remobilisation plan.

At the recent NHS Fife Board meeting today (27/05/2020) a report was considered that sets out the mechanism to take forward planning of the restart of clinical services across Fife.

The NHS Fife Remobilisation Plan is clinically led and takes into account a number of key considerations:

* Impact of physical distancing on our patient flow and capacity; as well as continuing to ensure a safe working environment for staff
* Continuing to embed digital solutions to support outpatient services into our daily working practices
* Clinically led patient prioritisation
* Importance of communication – with staff, patients, public and local/national politicians

Chief Executive, Carol Potter, confirmed that the plan would “...outline the steps we will take to gradually, cautiously, and in phases move towards a new normality”. A Remobilisation Oversight Group, co chaired by the Medical Director and Director of Nursing, has been established to oversee the planning and restarting of services, to support a Covid-19 sensitive NHS Fife over the coming months.

Mrs Potter also thanked healthcare staff for the hard work and professionalism shown over a number of months and for their continued commitment as we move into this next phase of response to Covid-19.

## **Clinical updates**

**Changes to services/visiting arrangements**

The latest information around changes to services, access and visiting can be found in a new area of our new micro site: <https://coronavirus.nhsfife.org/changes-to-services/>

**Hospital pharmacy prescription delivery service**

NHS Fife continues to work in partnership with the Fife Health and Social Care Partnership and Fife Voluntary Action to deliver medicines to vulnerable, elderly and at risk people.

As well as the collection of prescription medicines from community pharmacies, collection can also be made from the Queen Margaret and Victoria hospital pharmacy dispensaries for delivery to people at home. This service is only for those people who need it most e.g. people who are very unwell or self isolating and have no family member, carer or friends nearby who can collect their medicines.

For those who have a representative who can collect the medicines, - they will be required to show identification (driving licence, a bank card or passport).  If there is no one who can collect the medicine, patients can contact Fife Voluntary Action, who will arrange a delivery.  An online form can be completed on the Fife Voluntary Action webpage [**fva.org/prescription**](http://www.fva.org/prescription)

Patients can also contact FVA by telephone: 0800 389 6046 (9am - 5pm, Mon - Fri) or email **prescriptions@fva.org** (anytime).

## **Public Health Update**

**Covid-19 local data**

There have been a lot of enquiries about Covid-19 data and what is available at a Fife level. Most of the data published on Covid-19 is published at a Scottish level, but there is some local data published and updated daily.  You can find 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 at: <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/2020/05/14/covid-19-weekly-data-update-13th-may-2020/>

**Covid-19 surveillance work**

In order to help us understand more about COVID-19, NHS Fife is participating in a Health Protection Scotland (HPS) strategy to gather information. This will enable HPS to measure how effective public health interventions are, such as lock down, social distancing and shielding. It will also help HPS understand how well Scotland is flattening the curve of the pandemic. This will help prevent illness and save lives. There are several programmes coming on stream to help HPS gather information. The first to launch is the Community Programme, which is an adaptation of the routine GP Influenza surveillance scheme. This will gather 1000 samples every week from across Scotland from people who have COVID-19 like illness. HPS aims to gather 500 samples from people who have attended clinical assessment centres, and 500 samples from people who have been triaged by the COVID-19 telephone triage hubs. You can find out more about this programme [here](https://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/web-resources-container/enhanced-surveillance-of-covid-19-in-scotland-community-surveillance-protocol/):

## **General Information**

**Stay in touch**

##### 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-uhb.chiefexecutive@nhs.net**

The 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 to Fife specifically.

**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. Along with nationally allocated assets, we have published a suite of COVID-19 resources in a number of formats, including:

* British Sign Language
* Easy Read translation
* Foreign language leaflets
* SMS text service for those who may be deaf, hard of hearing, or are unable to speak in the phone due to impairment.

These assets and further information can be found [here](https://coronavirus.nhsfife.org/accessible-informationtranslation/).

**Donations and offers of support**

An updated section of the NHS Fife Coronavirus micro site has been launched to outline the process for members of the general public and organisations wanting to assist NHS Fife’s response to the Coronavirus pandemic in relation to donations and offers of help - including supplying PPE. For more information, visit: [**https://coronavirus.nhsfife.org/donations-and-offers-of-help/**](https://coronavirus.nhsfife.org/donations-and-offers-of-help/)

**Board papers accessible online**

Board papers from previous meetings can be accessed online. The latest papers from the meeting of the NHS Fife Board on the 27th of May 2020 can be found [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/nhs/index.cfm?fuseaction=publication.pop&pubid=51243B5B-C0A2-BDFB-E486CA098F01F08A). Papers from previous meetings are also available, and can be accessed [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).

**Helping us to spread messages on social media**

We appreciate the support of elected representatives in helping us ensure as many people as possible are aware of key messages and guidance around COVID-19 and its impact on our services. As such, please feel free to use any of the national or locally produced assets that we use on our social media channels.

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| **National Guidance** **Health Protection Scotland Guidance**Available at:  [www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/a-to-z-of-topics/covid-19](http://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/a-to-z-of-topics/covid-19) |
| **Information and Guidance for Non-Healthcare Settings**<https://hpspubsrepo.blob.core.windows.net/hps-website/nss/2973/documents/1_COVID-19-Guidance-for-non-healthcare-settings.pdf>  |
| **Information and guidance for social or community care residential settings** [www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/web-resources-container/covid-19-information-and-guidance-for-social-or-community-care-residential-settings/](http://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/web-resources-container/covid-19-information-and-guidance-for-social-or-community-care-residential-settings/) |
| **Ready Scotland Information**<https://www.readyscotland.org/coronavirus/> |
| **NHS Inform**[www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19](http://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19)   |
| **NHS Inform Covid-19 translated materials**NHS Inform has created a toolkit of accessible versions and translated Coronavirus information.  [Download the Coronavirus (COVID-19) communication toolkit (ZIP, 20 MB)](https://www.nhsinform.scot/media/3011/coronavirus-communication-toolkit-18032020.zip)[Download translated versions of our COVID-19 posters (ZIP, 22MB)](https://www.nhsinform.scot/media/3021/coronavirus-covid-19-posters_-7_-languages19032020.zip) |
| **Free Helpline for those who do not have symptoms**A free helpline has been set up for those who do not have symptoms but are looking for general health advice Tel: 0800 028 2816. |
| **Helpline for small businesses**A helpline providing businesses across Scotland with advice and guidance on COVID-19 is open Monday to Friday, between 8.30am to 5.30pm.Tel: 0300 303 0660. |

*Issued by NHS Fife Communications*