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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. For previous issues of the Elected Members Update, including updates on specific topics, please click [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/briefings-for-fife-elected-members-msps-mps-and-councillors/).

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 reminded not to approach services or individual members of staff directly for responses.

Main updates

Vaccination

COVID and flu

Scotland’s winter vaccination programme [started last week](https://publichealthscotland.scot/news/2023/september/scotland-s-winter-vaccination-programme-has-commenced/), with a range of vulnerable groups being offered the vaccine against flu and COVID. Invitations to book or attend an appointment have already been sent to those eligible by post, email, or text depending on communication preference.

Aligning with updated recommendations made as a precautionary measure by Scottish Government last week, we have [brought forward both flu and COVID vaccinations](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/latest-news/2023/09/update-on-delivery-of-the-winter-flu-and-covid-programme/) for those most at risk, following the identification of a new COVID variant of interest. This group includes:

* all over 75s
* those with a weakened immune system
* care home residents

Since the recommendations were adopted, we have appointed around 45,000 people, with these appointments beginning to arrive in the post last week. Residents in care homes will also be offered vaccination up to one month earlier than initially scheduled, with our immunisation team commencing visits from the 18th September.

Prioritising appointments for the most vulnerable has regrettably impacted some scheduled appointments for other eligible groups, with around 500 people requiring having their appointment rearranged. These people will be contacted and offered a suitable alternative as soon as possible.

Online portal update

We are mindful that some eligible constituents may have experienced difficulties booking via the online portal after being encouraged to do so. This was caused by a temporary pause in the allocation of appointments to prioritise scheduling the most clinically vulnerable. However, the portal has since reopened and booking for these groups has resumed, although we are mindful that appointments at some venues may not be available until later in the year for those unable to travel. Constituents can find out if they’re eligible for any vaccines this winter with an [online self-help guide](https://www.nhsinform.scot/wintervaccines).

Measles

Cases of measles are on the rise in some parts of the UK, and we are using social media to encourage parents to check that their children have had two doses of the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine as they continue to mix with other children in school. Information for parents to check whether their child is protected can be found [here](http://www.nhsinform.scot/MMRagainstMeasles).

Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC)

Following an initial desk-based survey of NHS buildings across Scotland, parts of some of our buildings were identified as potentially containing Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) in their construction. These assessments were primarily based on the buildings having been constructed during the period when RAAC was used regularly and include a number where the likelihood of containing RAAC is considered low.

More detailed surveys have recently been carried out to determine whether the material is present in any of the most likely buildings, and we await the results. These surveys will also determine any requirements in terms of ongoing monitoring or whether any immediate or future remedial action is required.

Temporary A&E entrance closure

Due to the latest stage of planned works to replace water piping in [Phase 3](https://www.nhsfife.org/services/hospitals-and-wards/hospitals/victoria-hospital/#map) of the Victoria Hospital, the A&E entrance will require to be temporarily closed next week.

The closure will begin on Thursday the 14th of September and is anticipated to remain in place for around a week. During this period, alternative access will be provided through the main entrance doors, in a similar arrangement to what was in place during and immediately following the COVID pandemic.

The closure is part of a wider programme of work that will see the replacement of part of the water pipework, which is intended to improve the resilience of the hot water system and facilitate easier maintenance in years to come. We will be using communication platforms including social media and our website to communicate the short-term closure of the entrance to the wider public.

New employee director appointed

Lynne Parsons has been appointed NHS Fife employee director and staff side representative, effective from the 1st October. Lynne will serve for an initial term of four years and replaces longstanding employee director, Wilma Brown, who is stepping down to stand for election in the Westminster parliamentary seat of Kirkcaldy & Cowdenbeath.

During her term of office, Wilma contributed to the full range of Board committees, with particularly strong input to the staff governance and renumeration committees, the Integration Joint Board, and the former District Community Health Partnerships.

Spiritual care framework launched at Queen Margaret Hospital

Scotland's new spiritual care framework has been launched at Queen Margaret Hospital. The way that spiritual care is provided in Scotland is a model that is recognised and respected across the world. More information is available [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/latest-news/2023/08/fife-launch-for-national-spiritual-care-framework/).

Recruitment of Chair

The Scottish Government is looking to appoint a new Chair of NHS Fife. Alistair Morris was formally invited to take up the role of Acting Chair in April this year, after previous Chair, Tricia Marwick, stepped down. The role is a fantastic opportunity to affect change, help set future direction, and achieve our vision for people to live longer, healthier lives at home or in a homely setting. Applications are open until the 2nd of October, and we would encourage you to share the post within your networks. For further information click [here](https://pa-scottishgovernment.icims.com/jobs/search?ss=1&hashed=-625948220&fbclid=IwAR0QcL6h-RcEu4YcETLChsEzfikc5B-NIG7-Abj9-6JLfFZ1Z42_vskeiyE&mobile=false&width=721&height=500&bga=true&needsRedirect=false&jan1offset=0&jun1offset=60).

Campaign urging people to cancel appointments they no longer need

We have launched a new social media campaign encouraging patients that need to change or cancel their appointment to call in advance. Those who cannot attend should call the number on their letter or, if they no longer have the letter, they should call our switchboard on 01592 643 355 and ask for the department or clinic they need.

Iron tablets offered to pregnant women

Iron deficiency is the main cause of anaemia in pregnancy, with 1 in 5 women anaemic by the time their baby is born. Research shows that taking a small dose of iron may prevent anaemia and all women booked with NHS Fife are now offered iron tablets at their booking appointment. Pregnant constituents should speak to their midwife for more information.

Pupil support team win national award

Our pupil support nursing team won the prestigious 'Health and Wellbeing' prize at the Children's Health Scotland Awards last month. The team were recognised for their work with children and families in schools for children with complex additional support needs. More information is available [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/latest-news/2023/08/pupil-support-nursing-team-win-national-award/).

Statistical information

NHS Performs

NHS Performs brings together a range of information on how NHS Fife is performing, including A&E performance, cancelled operations, delayed discharges and diagnostic waiting times. The latest information can be viewed [here](https://www.nhsperforms.scot/).

Workforce information

NHS Education for Scotland publishes a quarterly update on workforce related information, including the number of staff directly employed by NHS Fife and the number of vacant posts for nursing and midwifery staff, allied health professions, and medical and dental consultants.

The interactive dashboard also outlines trends over time and references other useful information such as sickness absence rates, staff age profile, and spend on agency and bank. The latest publication was published in June and can be viewed [here](https://turasdata.nes.nhs.scot/data-and-reports/official-workforce-statistics/all-official-statistics-publications/06-june-2023-workforce/dashboards/nhs-scotland-workforce/?pageid=9432).

Sharing our messages

We appreciate the support of elected members in sharing our health messages with constituents and on social media.

*All Information correct at time of publishing. Issued by the corporate communications service.*