Issue 9 | 7 January 2021

Local update

for Fife’s MPs, MSPs and   
local Councillors

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# Introduction

This 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, 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. Updates, which we aim to provide weekly, are also issued on our refreshed website [www.nhsfife.org](http://www.nhsfife.org) which provides a hub of information and guidance as well as our established Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages.

# Coronavirus

Decisions about how vaccines are given, and at what intervals are made by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation.  This is an independent UK-wide committee comprised of expert medical staff.  The UK and devolved nations governments act on decisions and advice from this independent committee.

## NHS Fife is engaged in the most significant and extensive programme of mass vaccination in our lifetimes. The logistics of this programme are unprecedented and there are many moving parts that will likely evolve, change and require alteration as we move forward. As such, detailed information around elements of vaccine distribution and availability (who will get it, when they will get it, and where they will get it) may not currently be available and will likely be addressed in forthcoming updates. We appreciate your patience during these challenging times and please be assured that everyone in our health and social care sector is focused on getting life back to normal as early as possible and facilitating the most effective, efficient roll out of this vaccine.

## Approval of the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine

Following the approval of the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine, we took delivery of initial limited supplies this week. These supplies are going to GP surgeries who will begin vaccinating people over 80 as soon as they can. The Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine will continue to be provided to priority groups in line with the guidance provided by the Joint Committee on Vaccinations and Immunisation (JCVI).

## Vaccine booster scheduling

In line with revised guidance from the JCVI, the Scottish Government has issued an updated directive, which now requires second doses of both the Oxford AstraZeneca and Pfizer Biotech vaccines to be administered within a 12-week timeframe. This is an update on the previous position of 28 days. The updated guidance is designed to ensure that we are able to vaccinate as many people as possible with the crucial first dose of early protection – reducing mortality, hospitalisations, and the impact of COVID-19 on our NHS – whilst also making arrangements for longer term protection via the second dose. A letter from the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport, Jeane Freeman, outlining dose interval guidance can be viewed [here](https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/advice-and-guidance/2020/12/coronavirus-covid-19-update-on-vaccinations/documents/letters/cabinet-secretary-letter-to-presiding-officer-and-msps-4-january-2021/cabinet-secretary-letter-to-presiding-officer-and-msps-4-january-2021/govscot%3Adocument/Cabinet%2BSecretary%2Bfor%2BHealth%2Band%2BSport%2BMSP%2BLetter%2B-%2Bupdate%2Bon%2Bdose%2Bschedule%2B040121.pdf).

## Vaccination timelines and information

In line with JCVI priority guidance and the delivery of the Oxford Astra Zeneca vaccine which can be used in community settings, we will begin to contact people to arrange vaccination appointments from next week. Initially GPs will contact those over the age of 80 by letter or telephone and people travelling for receipt of this vaccine can do so as it is considered essential travel. As this is a significant undertaking, it is important that people do not contact the health board or their local GP practice for a vaccination appointment – they will be contacted in due course. For general information about the coronavirus vaccine and its delivery, people can phone 0800 030 8013 (available 8.00am to 8.00pm, seven days a week) although will not be possible to book or change vaccine appointments via this helpline.

## Temporary lockdown

Like the rest of mainland Scotland, Fife moved into temporary lockdown on Tuesday the 5th of January until at least the end of this month. The main changes are:

* A legal requirement to stay at home unless you have to go out for essential purposes such as caring responsibilities, work that can't be done at home, essential shopping, outdoor exercise
* When exercising outdoors a maximum of two people from two households can meet (not including children aged 11 and under)
* Schools and early learning/childcare only open to vulnerable young people and keyworkers' children until 1 February
* People who are shielding, who will receive a letter from the Chief Medical Officer, must stay at home and not go into any workplace. However, the national guidance is not advising people to stop going outside, as we know is good for physical and mental health. People who are shielding should stay at home as much as possible but can still go out for exercise and essential shopping or medicines. If someone is shielding and requires support, such as access to priority online shopping slots, this can be accessed [here](https://www.mygov.scot/support-shielding/).

To find out more details on the temporary lockdown protection measures click [here](https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-protection-levels/pages/protection-level-4/).

## New staff vaccination clinics in St Andrews and Buckhaven

This week we launched two new staff vaccination clinics - at St Andrews Community Hospital and Randolph Wemyss Memorial Hospital in Buckhaven. These clinics complement the already existing clinics at the Victoria and Queen Margaret Hospitals, and we expect that they will be operating at full capacity by Monday 11th January.

## Statements on specific coronavirus cases (including care homes)

There continues to be significant media coverage of coronavirus cases across Fife. Statements relating to specific incidents, information on how best to reduce the chances of contracting the virus, and what you should do if someone develops symptoms, can be found on [our website](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/campaigns/coronavirus-information/). Please note that we will only release statements related to care home outbreaks after residents and relatives have been informed and if it is in the public interest to do so.

## Local data

You 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 [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/).

## Continuing to promote the FACTS

NHS Fife is continuing to use the platforms available to us to promote the Scottish Government’s FACTS campaign. The initiative, which was refreshed in December, reinforces the important role that everyone has in stopping the spread of COVID-19. For the latest design assets and to help us to promote the national guidance, please download the most up to date graphics and posts [here](https://www.nhsinform.scot/media/4253/20-21-coronavirus-new-facts-stakeholder-toolkit-final-2-dec-2020.pdf).

## Hospital capacity challenges

Whilst winter is traditionally the most challenging time of year for our NHS, the prevalence of COVID-19 and subsequent admissions to hospital due to the virus has compounded this. Our hospitals are under significant pressure at the minute and we are asking for the support of elected members to help us alleviate this by using their social media presence to promote winter readiness and changes to the way that people are accessing urgent care. Assets can be accessed on our online campaigns area [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/campaignresources/).

# Flu Vaccination

***Over 123,300 vaccines delivered so far.  
Priority groups:***

* ***Over 65’s (62,000)***
* ***Primary School (22,100)***
* ***2-5 year old (4,800)***
* ***Healthcare workers (5,600)***

Almost 80% of over 65s now vaccinated

62,004 vaccines have been delivered to people over the age of 65 so far, which we are pleased to note is 78% of those who are eligible. All remaining adults entitled to free flu vaccination are now being encouraged to contact their local community pharmacy to arrange an appointment.

Community clinics now complete

As part of our efforts to make the flu vaccine as accessible as possible to those who need it most, we hosted a series of vaccination clinics across the region. These clinics, which were targeted towards specific areas, have now concluded. Eligible adults continue to be able to access vaccination at participating community pharmacies across Fife

Enhanced advice and flu guidance online

We have enhanced our [online information](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/campaigns/seasonal-flu-vaccination-programme/#faqs) to assist those eligible for a flu vaccination. This includes a detailed FAQ section to address many of the questions that our call handlers have been answering. This section is updated on a regular basis and we hope that it will also assist our elected members in addressing any questions that your constituents may ask.

# Service updates

## Helping people get the right care, in the right place

The Scottish Government has redesigned the way that urgent healthcare services are accessed across Scotland, supporting the public to access the right care, in the right place, at the right time, and keeping people and the NHS safe this winter. Under the arrangements, people with non-life-threatening conditions, who would usually attend A&E, are asked to call NHS 24 first, during the day or at night. NHS 24 will assess people by telephone and refer them to the right care by the right healthcare professional as close to home as possible. This could include self-care, a GP practice or primary care, Pharmacy, Minor Injuries or referral into a flow and navigation hub within their NHS board for a clinical assessment.  Following this assessment, if the patient still needs to attend A&E the flow and navigation hub will schedule an appointment. Emergency 999 calls will continue to be transferred to the Scottish Ambulance Service as normal. Further information about the redesign of urgent care services is available [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/services/right/) and complements a national awareness raising campaign, which started this week.

## EU exit and healthcare

EU citizens currently living in Scotland continue to be able to access health and social care. Many EU citizens currently work in health and social care settings in Scotland and their contribution is greatly valued. EU citizens should be able to continue working as they do now, but will need to [apply for settled status](https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families) by 30 June 2021 if they wish to continue living and working in the UK. The [EU citizens living in Scotland](https://www.mygov.scot/eu-exit-citizens/) page gives the latest information on this, including details on how to apply for the EU Settlement Scheme, and on the Scottish Government's advisory service for EU citizens.

## Hospital visiting restrictions

**Visiting is limited to essential visits only. Further information on arrangements, including guidance on essential visiting criteria and FAQS on services we frequently receive enquiries around, such as maternity and children’s, can be found** [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/services/patients-carers-and-visitors/visiting-arrangements-during-covid-19-pandemic/)**.**

# In the media

## Show you care, prepare

This winter, NHS Fife is linking in with the Scottish Government’s national campaign to encourage people and their loved ones to stay healthy as the temperature drops - ‘Show you care, prepare’. The campaign, which is aimed at alleviating some of the pressures faced by our NHS during a period where there is traditionally significant challenges for our services, raises awareness of some of the simple steps that people can take to make sure they are as prepared as possible in the event of ill health. Reminders to check prescriptions are ordered and in plenty of time, to use your local pharmacy for advice about winter health and medicines, and that there are a wide range of health advice and support available online all form part of the campaign. More information can be found [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/campaigns-projects/show-you-care-prepare/).

## Well-kent faces thank health and social care staff

Responding to COVID-19 and the public health measures in place meant that the Board’s popular staff Christmas video could not be produced this year, however, a number of famous face with links to Fife stepped in to offer their thanks to healthcare and social care staff for their incredible efforts this year. Their contributions can be viewed [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/news-and-updates/2020/12/well-kent-fife-faces-thank-health-and-social-care-staff-for-their-efforts-to-tackle-covid-19-pandemic/).

## Fife simulator helping medics across the world to prevent late miscarriage

A ground-breaking new training aid – developed in Fife – is helping to equip trainee medical staff from around the world with the skills to prevent late miscarriage. Invented by Consultant in Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Dr Graham Tydeman, in conjunction with the St Thomas’ Hospital, London, and Limbs & Things, the lifelike simulator allows trainees to perform hands on cervical cerclage in advance of a real-life emergency. More information, including a short video, can be found [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/news-and-updates/2020/12/fife-consultant-in-obstetrics-and-gynaecology-develops-sought-after-medical-aid/).

## New permanent support hub for staff

## During the initial phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, a network of temporary staff hubs was established in healthcare sites across Fife. The wellbeing of our staff is an absolute priority for us, and these hubs helped to provide a calm and relaxing environment for staff to recharge, get refreshments and take breaks away from busy hospital wards and departments. The wellbeing hub at the Victoria Hospital in Kirkcaldy was one of the first of its kind in Scotland and was initially housed within the Maggie’s Centre in the hospital grounds. A new permanent wellbeing hub is now being created within the Staff Club in the grounds of the Victoria Hospital. Plans are currently being developed to create permanent staff hubs in the other healthcare sites across Fife. More information is available [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/press-releases/2020-december/fife-health-board-endowment-fund-green-lights-new-permanent-support-hub-for-staff/).

## Margo McGurk appointed NHS Fife Director of Finance and Strategy

Following a formal recruitment process, we are pleased to announce the appointment of Margo McGurk as our new Director of Finance and Strategy.  Margo has previously served as NHS Fife’s Interim Director of Finance and also takes on the role as the Board’s Senior Information Risk Officer (SIRO).  More information can be found [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/news-and-updates/2020/12/margo-mcgurk-appointed-as-nhs-fife-s-director-of-finance-and-strategy/).

## Scots word campaign encouraging people to ‘keep the heid’ over New Year

## Between Christmas and New Year, we ran a social media campaign aimed at keeping people safe by limiting contact with others.  The campaign messages were delivered using common Scot’s words such as 'scunnered' and 'havering' to underline the serious message in a light-hearted way. More information can be found [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/news-and-updates/2020/12/scot-s-word-campaign/).

## Jessica investigates the unique circumstances of Christmas 2020

In the run-up to Christmas we published a series of new ‘Jessica Investigates’ videos on our social media channels, featuring six-year-old Jessica Gardiner from Kirkcaldy. The videos saw Jessica quiz both our Director of Public Health, Dona Milne, and Santa Claus himself about public health guidance over the Christmas period. An example of the content can be found [here](https://www.facebook.com/nhsfife/videos/1245145812523118).

## 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. As such, and in order to help you share our messages with the public in as vibrant a way as possible, we have created a [dedicated campaigns area](https://www.nhsfife.org/campaignresources/) on our website where you will be able to download graphics, videos and any other resources to complement your posts.

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| Keep in touchElected 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](mailto: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 or Elected Members briefing on a weekly rather than fortnightly basis. This will be emailed directly to you and available to access online at:  [**www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/briefings-for-fife-elected-members-msps-mps-and-councillors/**](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/briefings-for-fife-elected-members-msps-mps-and-councillors/)  This update will also collate and address any common or shared requests for information from Elected members, received via the Chief Executive's Office, rather than us having to address each individual enquiry. 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/). Board papers accessible online Board 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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