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Issue 101 | 26 July 2023

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

A&E remains extremely busy

Our A&E remains extremely busy, and we would appreciate the support of elected members in sharing any messaging that we put out around the most appropriate use of our services.

Where someone’s care is not a critical emergency, they may face long waits or be redirected safely elsewhere. If someone thinks they need urgent care, but it’s not a critical emergency, they should call NHS 24 on 111 or contact their GP. In an emergency they should always call 999.

More information about the most appropriate services for constituents can be found [here](http://www.NHSInform.scot/right-care).

Main A&E entrance re-opens

Our main A&E entrance at the Victoria Hospital re-opened last week. To reinstate the doors, which were closed to help reduce spread of the virus during the COVID-19 pandemic, work was carried out on the approach road, including adding a new GP referral triage service, rearranging the ambulance, taxi, and public parking bays, and creating a safe pedestrian link from parking to the front door. The re-opening ensures patients can access A&E directly from the refurbished entrance with drop off areas close by. Additionally, work will soon be completed on the waiting area with new flooring, seating, and signage to enhance the experience for patients and families. The main hospital entrance will now be closed during the night and the A&E entrance will be the only point of access from 10pm-6.30am.

Jellyfish guidance issued to public

With the recent warm weather, more jellyfishes are appearing on Fife's shoreline - resulting in visits to our A&E due to stings. Most stings from sea creatures are not serious and can be treated with first aid. If someone gets stung and a lifeguard with first aid training is not available to help, they should rinse the affected area with seawater, remove any spines from skin using tweezers/edge of a bank card, soak the area in very warm water for 30 mins, and take painkillers such as ibuprofen or paracetamol. They should only come to A&E if they been stung and have difficulty breathing, chest pain, fits or seizures, severe bleeding or swelling, or vomiting, light headedness, or loss of consciousness.

Fife Simulation Training Centre sharing strengthens ties with armed forces

NHS Fife and 152 Medical Squadron of the British Army have joined forces to help military medics develop their skills in a controlled environment. The partnership will allow military medics to take advantage of our state-of-the-art Fife Simulation Training Centre at Queen Margaret Hospital. Funded by Fife Health Charity, the simulation centre is equipped with cutting-edge technologies, highly realistic patient mannequins and a four-bedded ward area to help recreate real-life medical scenarios. The training centre will provide military personnel with an invaluable opportunity to prepare for crisis situations in a controlled and realistic environment, increasing the chances of a better outcome for those in need of care.

NHS Fife has a long-standing relationship with our Armed Forces, which was further demonstrated by the widespread support provided during the COVID-19 pandemic. This relationship was recognised with the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) Silver Award last year. More information is available [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/latest-news/2023/07/nhs-fife-strengthens-ties-with-the-armed-forces-locally/?fbclid=IwAR0zdyo1EjW6PmBj_RH2roCvrgE7H5r3rmCjf-CtRiawIXK1kL9r1bqqyy8).

Reinforced autoclaved aerated concreate (RAAC)

Following an initial desk-based survey of NHS buildings across Scotland, parts of 22 buildings in Fife 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. At this stage none of our buildings have been confirmed as containing RAAC. More detailed surveys will shortly be carried out to determine whether the material is present in any of the buildings identified. These surveys will also determine any requirements in terms of ongoing monitoring or whether any immediate or future remedial action is required.

NHS Fife Board meeting

The latest meeting of the NHS Fife Board took place on Tuesday 25th July. In addition to standing items, the Board discussed the Director of Public Health Annual Report 2023 and endorsed the Fife Primary Care Strategy ahead of its presentation to the Integrated Joint Board. The published Board papers can be found [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/media/39064/boardbook-fife-nhs-board-25-july-2023.pdf).

Complaints waiting times

Following the NHS Fife Board meeting this week, there was local media coverage of our complaints waiting times. Work has been ongoing over recent months to improve our complaints management. This work has included creating a new complaints escalation procedure and aims to improve both the speed and quality of the response complainants receive. To support this work, additional staff have been recruited to our Patient Experience team. A dedicated, full-time patient experience officer will also be working within our Emergency Care Directorate on a three-month trial to support the complaint handling process. A new complaint handling feedback questionnaire is also being sent out 2 to 4 weeks following final response letters. Clinical pressures continue to impact our ability to respond quickly in many instances, however, because of the work already undertaken, we are seeing some improvement in performance. These efforts continue as we work towards achieving our target to answer at least 65% of Stage 2 complaints within 20 working days by March 2024.

Path House/Nicol Street GP patient update

More detailed information has been made available to patients at Nicol Street and Path House GP Practices ahead of the planned consolidation of both practices later this month. [As announced in April](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nhsfife.org%2Fnews-updates%2Flatest-news%2F2023%2F04%2Fplans-to-deliver-gp-services-in-a-new-way-for-kirkcaldy-community%2F&data=05%7C01%7CCraig.Hamilton3%40nhs.scot%7C1259629c988d4170940c08db82ee6edc%7C10efe0bda0304bca809cb5e6745e499a%7C0%7C0%7C638247732784153104%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=Y4eob0ypIxDKN7Xx7xZSppQ2Ht1ph4QtBszGirBdtec%3D&reserved=0), Nicol Street Surgery is due to form part of a newly expanded practice at Path House Surgery from 31 July 2023. The new approach will see both buildings retained, with the facility at Nicol Street Surgery continuing to be used to deliver a range of services including phlebotomy, mental health support and practice nurse clinics. Work is also well underway to create additional clinical space at Path House Surgery, with works on the first phase to create two additional rooms due to be completed in the coming weeks. More information is available [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/latest-news/2023/07/information-for-patients-at-nicol-street-and-path-house-ahead-of-upcoming-consolidation-of-both-practices/).

Changes to short-term wheelchair hire

The Red Cross in Scotland no longer provide a short-term wheelchair service. If a wheelchair is required to support someone in Fife for a short period (maximum period of six months) while they recuperate from illness, injury or to aid with a person at end of life, a free loan of a wheelchair can be provided from Fife Health & Social Care Partnership. More information is available [here](https://www.nhsfife.org/news-updates/latest-news/2023/07/short-term-wheelchair-hire-update/).

Students encouraged to get MMR vaccine

Cases of measles are on the rise across Scotland, and we are using social media to encourage students at schools, universities, and college to ensure they have had two doses of the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine before they start mixing with lots of new people when they return this autumn. Constituents can call their GP practice to find out if they’re fully vaccinated. They can also visit [this website](http://www.nhsinform.scot/MMRagainstMeasles) for details on how to arrange an appointment.

Children’s clerical assistant celebrates 50 years NHS service

Last week we congratulated Jennifer Kane, who was honoured at a ceremony to commemorate 75 years of NHS Scotland. Jennifer works as a clerical assistant in the children's ambulatory care unit and this year marks her 50th year of service. She was invited to meet First Minister, Humza Yousaf, at a special reception at Edinburgh Castle, where exceptional frontline staff members were recognised for their invaluable contribution to our NHS's legacy. Also celebrated at the event from NHS Fife were rotational pharmacy technician, Jamie Anderson, children's community nurse, Gill Deaves, and sexual health nurse specialist, Susan Paxton.

Covid vaccination

The Covid-19 spring booster programme ended on the 30th of June along with the offer of a first or second dose for people aged 5 to 49 who are not at a higher risk of severe coronavirus. Detailed information on any winter flu and Covid-19 vaccination programme will follow in due course.

For constituents who were eligible for a spring booster but were unable to attend for health reasons, they can call 01592 648 048 to arrange vaccination. For those with a newly diagnosed health condition that places them at higher risk of becoming seriously unwell with a Covid-19 infection, their GP or another medical professional may refer them for vaccination at any time.

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 communications team.*