

Here is the brief for Monday 22 February 2021.

Chief Executive's update You can watch the latest update from Caroline by clicking [here](#); this week she is joined by Les Petrie (interim Chief Nurse for Mental Health & Learning Disability Services), in recognition of Mental Health Nurses' Day. This was marked yesterday – a big thank you to everyone working in MH&LD for everything you do. Remember, you can contact Caroline at any time by emailing gram.grampianchiefexecutive@nhs.scot

COVID-19 payment to healthcare staff Following the First Minister's announcement and publication of a Scottish Government circular [PCS\(COV\)2020/1](#), the COVID payment will be paid to all NHS staff in February salaries. A Q&A document is available on the Scottish Government website [here](#). In summary, the payment is payable to all directly employed NHS Scotland staff, including bank workers and locums paid through NHS payrolls who have had at least one month of continuous service between 17 March 2020 – 30 November 2020. The payment is not pensionable, but tax and national insurance is due on the sum paid. Those who worked full time will be eligible for £500. Part time staff/bank workers are paid pro rata, inclusive of excess hours, based on average hours over the qualifying period, or over the time in service during the qualifying period. Overtime hours are excluded. The payment is capped at £500 where NHS staff worked hours beyond full time and/or had multiple contracts across all NHS Scotland employments. Staff on COVID special leave, or who are shielding, on sick leave or on maternity leave are eligible for the payment.

Staff who have left the service will be paid as soon as practicable. NHS Grampian will contact leavers who are due a payment; there is no need for leavers to make contact with the organisation. For leavers who have re-joined NHS employment the aim is to pay any COVID payment due through their current employer in March 2021. The capping at £500 applies to terminated and current posts. Queries should be directed to your Payroll point of contact, details of which are noted on your pay advice. Before you make contact you are strongly encouraged to read the Q&A document (see General and NHS Scotland sections) as this may contain the answer to your query. Managers should make copies of the Q&A document widely available in their work area to assist with queries from staff.

New research highlights impact of vaccination programme Vaccination has been linked to a substantial reduction in the risk of COVID-19 admissions to Scotland's hospitals. As part of the EAIVE II project, which uses patient data to track the pandemic and the vaccine roll out in real-time, Public Health Scotland, the Universities of Edinburgh, Strathclyde, Aberdeen, Glasgow and St Andrew's analysed data on vaccine effect.

The data was gathered between 8 December and 15 February. During this period, 1.14 million vaccines were administered and 21 per cent of the Scottish population had received a first dose. Researchers compared the outcomes of those who had received their first jab with those who had not.

The study shows that, by the fourth week after receiving the initial dose, the Pfizer and Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccines were shown to reduce the risk of hospitalisation from Covid-19 in up to 85 per cent and 94 per cent, respectively. Among those aged 80 years and over, one of the highest risk groups, vaccination was associated with an 81 per cent reduction in hospitalisation risk in the fourth week when the results for both vaccines were combined. You can find out much more about this research by clicking [here](#).

Asymptomatic community testing – Aberdeen City As previously highlighted in this brief, pilot asymptomatic community testing schemes will be running across the region. These will be slightly different in each local authority area and today we're focusing on the scheme that will operate in Aberdeen City. The facility will be co-located at the University of Aberdeen's Butchart Centre on University Road, where testing for students will continue in parallel with eligible key workers who will be able to book a test at their convenience. Those eligible to access the facility must book their test in advance and this can be [done via the booking portal](#). Key workers can be tested twice a week three days apart. More information on the scheme is available [here](#).

Face Fit testing – final call! There are two models of FFP3 mask (3M 1863 and 3M 8833) which are no longer being supplied. In addition, the re-validation for the 3M 1863 mask will expire shortly after which it will be removed from circulation. Airborne precautions are required when Aerosol Generating Procedures are being undertaken for medium (amber) and high-risk (red) pathways, as well as for patients who have other infectious agents transmitted via the droplet or airborne route. These precautions include the wearing of FFP3 masks. National Procurement have sourced other models of FFP3 masks which will be supplied going forward (Alpha Solway H and + series; 3M 1863+, 1873V+ and 9332+). Our records indicate that there remains a significant number of staff who have attended the Fit Test Hub since March 2020 and only have a pass on the 1863 or 8833*. If this is you then please make an appointment to be retested as a matter of urgency by emailing gram.face-fit-appointment-hub@nhs.scot

*Please note that no further action is required by staff who have already been tested on the models of masks which are now being supplied but have not yet obtained a pass.

Easing of restrictions You will likely have seen extensive media coverage today of plans by the UK Government to begin easing lockdown restrictions and the Prime Minister is set to make a statement this evening. Please bear in mind that all indicative dates reported on today relate to England only. An announcement is expected from the Scottish Government tomorrow; in today's briefing the First Minister confirmed there will be broad similarities between the plans but there are unlikely to be hard and fast dates for Scotland. We'll bring you more on this in tomorrow's brief.

Grampian data The local figures for today (and over the weekend) and the 7 day rolling positivity rate are shown below. If you click [here](#) you can visit the Public Health Scotland website, which includes neighbourhood figures for all local authority areas in Scotland.

| | Daily number of new people tested | New cases in past 24 hrs | Daily no. of contacts isolated in past 24 hrs | Patients in hospital | Patients in ITU | Deaths in hospital |
|-----------|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------------|
| Sat 20/02 | 421 | 25 | 58 | 33 | 5 | 1 |
| Sun 21/02 | 307 | 36 | 48 | 32 | 5 | 0 |
| Mon 22/02 | 343 | 34 | 48 | 36 | 6 | 0 |
| | 357 avg daily tested last 3 days | Down 2 from 21/02/21 | No change from 21/02/21 | Up 4 from 21/02/21 | Up 1 from 21/02/21 | Last recorded death 19/02 |
| | Tests reported from Illuminate up to 3pm on 20/02/21 <i>NB tests refreshed daily due to lag in reporting</i> | Reported by Scottish Govt up to 8am today | Reported from CMS up to 15:30 today | Confirmed patients from Trakcare according to new definitions from 15/9 | Confirmed from Trakcare as per SG definitions - excludes patients who were +ve >28 days. ECMO patients included if flagged for COVID-19 | Confirmed from Trakcare |
| | 7 day rolling positivity rate on 21/2 2.16% | | | | | |

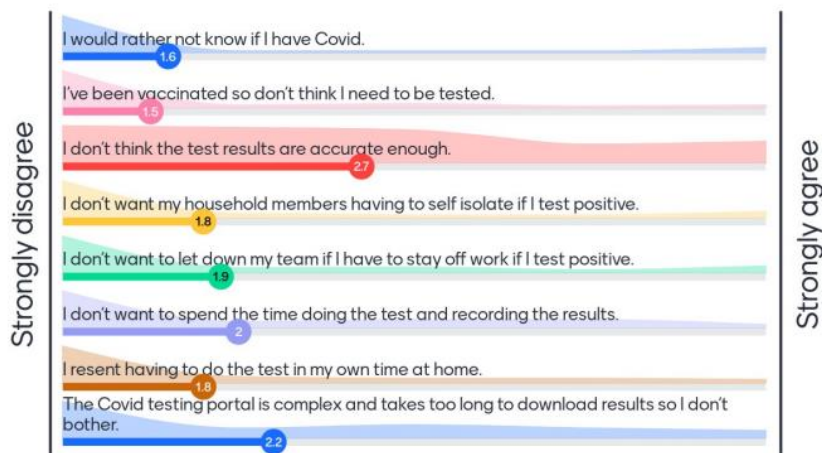
February 22-28 is Cyber Security Week To tie in with this Scottish Government initiative, the eHealth team are raising awareness of the cyber security threats we all face and the impact these may have. We have seen an increase of **700%** in threats since the start of COVID-19 with hackers targeting citizens, staff and IT systems by exploiting, for instance, the vulnerability of employees working from home and capitalising on people's interest in pandemic related news (e.g. malicious fake coronavirus related websites). As well as the Cyber Security Week focus on staying safe in the workplace, we have extended that to staying safe at home especially given the number of staff working at home. There is good advice to be applied to the family as a whole by being cyber aware when using personal computer devices and smartphones for instance. We have promoted some of this material before but there are also a number of links to cyber awareness material which we hope will be of value to you. Clicking [here](#) will open up the Cyber Security Week homepage. In the event you do not recognise address in the link, it will take you to a page delivered by the MS Sway (part of the Office365 suite of applications). Included this year is a very short survey (also via link above) which we would appreciate your taking time out to complete and help eHealth improve any aspect of cyber security awareness.

Moving & Handling Clinical Induction training session – 8 March Please note the Aberdeen training, highlighted in the brief on [18 February](#), will take place at the Woodhill House Annex and not the Suttie Centre as previously advertised. We apologise for any confusion.

Question of the day – results Thank you to everyone who further participated in our question on asymptomatic staff testing over the weekend. To recap, we were particularly interested in hearing from those of you who are eligible for the twice weekly testing but have chosen not to take part. As of 16:00 today, the results were as follows:

We would like to explore the barriers that are preventing any staff from taking part in regular asymptomatic testing .

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102

The results suggest the accuracy of the Lateral Flow tests and the ease (or otherwise) of reporting results are key concerns. We have fed back to the national team on the user friendliness of the testing portal and it is hoped improvements will be seen in the coming weeks. With regards to accuracy, we asked Professor Shantini Paranjothy from the Public Health team to give us a clinical view: "1 in 3 people who are infected with COVID-19 are asymptomatic. The purpose of testing healthcare workers who are asymptomatic is to detect infections as early as possible to prevent transmission within the hospital. The Lateral flow antigen test (LFT) detects a protein target (part of the structure of the virus) in a positive patient swab sample. This test is less sensitive than PCR testing but can still identify those people with a high amount of virus and is used as a surrogate marker for infection. Data from Public Health Scotland suggests that 1 in 4 positive LFTs are false positives, so it is really important that anyone who has a positive LFT books a confirmatory PCR test."

Thought for the day It's a two parter today – bear with us...

Many of you will have seen your small (or not so small) people head back to school today. Whether you were woken early by children already brimming with excitement and wearing their uniform, or had to prise teenagers out of their beds, it's likely been a day of mixed emotions. Perhaps you have older children still home-schooling. Perhaps you're worried about safety in the classroom (as an aside, we recognise the enormous efforts of our Education colleagues to keep our young people safe). Perhaps you are thrilled your children got to see their friends again and that life feels that tiny bit more normal. Whatever you're feeling, all change represents a loss of some sort. Go easy on yourself and those around you, as you make yet another adjustment to life.

It feels particularly apt to write a thought for the day on World Thinking Day. If you're not familiar with this, it takes place on 22 February each year and is a celebration of the girl guiding/girl scouts movement active in 150 countries around the world. For the sake of balance, it is also Founders Day for the Scouting movement (Lord Baden-Powell and his wife Olave shared the same birthday, hence the coinciding dates). Many of you will volunteer in your lives outside of work, if not in Guiding or Scouting, then with other youth or community groups, or charities. Some of you will have been able to keep this going throughout the pandemic – and found it a much-needed dose of normality – others will be desperately waiting for the opportunity to return. Whichever category you fall into, thank you for taking the time to give something back to your community.

Questions to ask? Information to share? If you have particular questions – or are aware of questions coming from friends and family – please share them with us. We may not be able to answer every question and it may take us time to get a proper answer, but we will endeavour to respond and share the answers. You can get in touch with us via gram.communications@nhs.scot. Please also use that email address if you have items for consideration for future briefs.