

Tuesday 3 December 2024

Sickness outbreak, Dr Gray's Hospital We continue to see increasing cases of vomiting and diarrhoea among patients and staff at DGH. An incident management team has been set up to specifically manage the outbreak; in addition, there are tactical and strategic groups meeting to deal with the impact on services of closed wards and staff absence. Non-essential visiting remains suspended across the hospital.

Illnesses like this are widely circulating in the community and are very contagious. While unpleasant, they generally clear up in 24-48 hours. The key points for all of us to remember are as follows:

- If you have diarrhoea and/or vomiting, do not come to work until you are 48 hours symptom free.
- These are viral illnesses; antibiotics will have no effect and there is no treatment. Where possible, keep up your fluid intake.
- Thorough handwashing with water and soap is important; alcohol hand gels are not effective against norovirus.

Further helpful information is available on NHS Inform here: [Norovirus | NHS inform](#)

System pressures You may have seen media coverage, yesterday evening and again today, regarding a letter sent to the Chief Executive Team from members of the medicine and unscheduled care leadership team. This letter raised concerns about our performance against a range of targets and the further challenges expected in winter. We gave the statement below to the press and want to share it with you all as well:

Interim chief executive, Adam Coldwells, said: "I considered the points raised in this letter alongside the portfolio lead for medicine and unscheduled care. The portfolio lead met face-to-face with the team to discuss the concerns raised. A detailed written response was also provided.

"Continuous discussion with, and hearing the challenges of all our colleagues, is an integral part of both understanding the issues and finding the right solution."

"There are enormous challenges facing our teams, not only in medicine and unscheduled care, but in other parts of acute care, in community hospitals, and working out in the community itself. The past week has shown those challenges play out in real time. There is not a single solution to these difficulties. NHS Grampian has the lowest number of hospital beds per head of the population. Alongside this we are dealing with a significant volume of acutely ill patients, delayed discharges, capacity in community healthcare settings, and staffing pressures. This has a knock-on effect on everything throughout our system.

"We continue to look at ways to improve flow within the footprint across the whole of health and social care in Grampian. In addition, our colleagues in Scottish Government have committed to support that work as necessary.

"The hard work and dedication of our teams cannot be understated in such difficult times."

Reducing police demand - access to mental health care via the Flow Navigation Centre – phase 2

Earlier this year we highlighted a test of change, which sees colleagues across acute and mental health unscheduled care working with Police Scotland provide officers with direct access to mental health care when attending to individuals who are experiencing mental health distress. This ran in Aberdeen City from September to November and we are pleased to say the initial results are positive. There has been a marked reduction in Police Scotland time when attending and remaining at Place of Safety/ED with individuals experiencing mental health distress. There has been a similar reduction in the number of people brought to a Place of Safety/ED by Police Scotland colleagues.

The next phase of this project got underway on 1 December and sees officers in both City **and** Aberdeenshire locations being able to directly access mental health care via the flow navigation centre. Keen to know more? Please contact gram.uucteam@nhs.scot

Christmas/New Year pay arrangements/salary submission deadlines With the upcoming public holidays (25/26 December and 1/2 January) guidance has been prepared which sets out examples of working patterns. These cover everyone employed under Agenda for Change and apply for both Christmas and the New Year. There will also be changes to salary submission deadlines. Follow the relevant link below to the appropriate guide:

[Examples of working over the Christmas/New Year period \(networked devices only\).](#)

[Salary submission deadlines over the Christmas/New Year period \(networked devices only\).](#)

Road closures – Foresterhill The following works require changes to traffic management at Foresterhill:

- Essential resurfacing works will be carried out on the Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital brae, adjacent to Maggie's Centre and the ANCHOR Centre, starting tomorrow (Wednesday) and running until Friday. The current one-way traffic arrangements will remain in place; the parking spaces that run parallel with Maggie's Centre will be closed for the full duration of the works.
- Lane closure – loop road – this work was postponed due to the snow and ice; it will now take place this weekend (7/8 December). Traffic coming from the Westburn Road side will be able to use the road as normal. However, traffic coming from Ashgrove Road West will only have access to the car parks, ONE BioHub and Foresterhill Health Centre – there will be **no through route**. Access to the Emergency Department will be via the Westburn Road or Cornhill Road entrances to the Foresterhill site. Restrictions will apply from 7am on Saturday morning, until 4pm on Sunday afternoon. We apologise for any inconvenience.

Research round-up The latest edition of the research and development newsletter is out now and can be read here: [Research Round Up - NHS Grampian Research and Development Bulletin](#)

Yule Time at Night The team at Little Acorns nursery will be hosting their annual Christmas fayre this Friday (6 December), 5-7.30pm. There'll be craft, face painting, games galore, and a chance to meet Santa Claus. Appointments with Mr Claus must be booked and cost £5 per child (includes gift). Entry to the fayre cost £3 for adults, £1 for children under 12. Tickets and Santa visits can be booked in advance by contacting Laura Yeoman – laura.yeoman@nhs.scot This event is open to all; your child(ren) don't have to attend Little Acorns.

Tune of the day Today's request comes from the NHS Grampian Charity. They'll be on the ARI main concourse for a final Charity Roadshow of the year today, between 10am-3pm, to meet with staff and patients, answer any questions about the charity, and share our fun and exciting [National 'Elf Service Week](#) fundraising pack which launched yesterday. In the spirit of the season, they've asked for [It's Beginning To Look A Lot Like Christmas](#), we've gone for the Bubl  version (EP)

If you want to request a tune, follow up on items included in this brief, or suggest an item for sharing, drop us an email via gram.communications@nhs.scot