

Monday 6 January 2025

Happy New Year As the Daily Brief returns for 2025, we would like to wish everyone a healthy and happy new year. For those working throughout the festivities, we know it hasn't been an easy shift. While we are continuing to care for an increasing number of patients in hospital with 'flu, with numbers far above those seen in the last bad 'flu year of 2018, daily admissions have slowed over recent days. Treating a high number of patients with 'flu is having a knock-on impact on flow, along with staffing pressures across the board, yet teams across Grampian are continuing to achieve so much. We are monitoring the situation with teams working hard together across ARI, Dr Gray's, all community hospitals and care homes to keep things moving and deliver the best possible care to our patients. Thank you for all that you do.

If you need to travel today, please take care. Walk like a penguin! And remember you can check the main roads before you set off: [Live traffic cameras in Scotland | Traffic Scotland](#)

Could your meeting be an email? As we return to our regular working patterns after the festive break you may have much to catch up on. However, before you click on 'new event' in your calendar, stop and think. Is a meeting necessary? Could you achieve the same result with a telephone conversation or an email? The coming months are among the busiest in the NHS calendar and time is precious. The Chief Executive Team have agreed to pause their non-essential meetings and are encouraging us to do the same. Governance, assurance, and oversight are important, and some meetings will still be required, however, we can help ourselves and each other by protecting our time.

If meetings are required, keep them short, sharp, and focused. Remember, it is also acceptable to provide updates on actions to chairs in advance by email, if you require meeting time to focus on the job in hand.

Reduced working week - next steps? The 2023/24 Agenda for Change pay deal included a pledge to eventually reduce the standard working week to 36 hours. As everyone reading will already be aware, a huge amount of effort has been made this year to make the first reduction, of 30 minutes (pro-rata). We're pleased to say some 93% of AfC teams have already made their reduction. Backfill arrangements will be put in place to support those services - usually providing 24/7 unscheduled clinical care - who have been otherwise unable to make the reduction.

So, what's next? At the time of writing, we have received **no** guidance or instruction from Scottish Government. We do not know if we will be expected to reduce by a further 30 minutes (pro-rata) in the next financial year, or the full 60 minutes (pro-rata). We, along with colleagues at all other boards, are doing our utmost to encourage a reasonable and realistic implementation timescale, regardless of the reduction required.

We would ask all managers and team leaders reading to begin discussing with your teams how you might further reduce the working week but be assured there is **no instruction** to act at present.

Health and Safety Toolkit for Managers e-learning programme - essential training for all line managers If you're a line manager, you have specific responsibilities for the health, safety and wellbeing of those colleagues reporting to you, as well as any others who may be affected by the activities your team or service carry out. The Health and Safety Toolkit for Managers programme consists of 8 modules which are designed to help you as a manager understand what your responsibilities are, and the tools available to assist both you and your staff to meet these responsibilities. The course is designed to allow you to work at a pace which suits you.

In view of the critical role line managers play in ensuring the health, safety, and wellbeing of staff, patients and other people who may be visiting NHS Grampian sites are being managed, the Health and Safety Toolkit e-learning programme has now been added as essential training for all line managers.

The H&S Toolkit for Managers programme can be accessed here: [Information for Managers](#)

Open University awareness sessions Are you a healthcare support worker? Come and study with the Open University to gain a BSc (Hons) in Adult, Learning Disability, Children and Young People, or Mental Health nursing. [There's more information on the entry requirements here](#) (intranet link, networked devices only) and there will be information sessions as follows:

- Wednesday 8 January, 2-3pm, Medical Lecture Theatre, ARI
- Thursday 16 January, 2-3pm on Teams

Welcome Wards: A key message for visitors Helping patients benefit from contact with friends and family is important. One of the key messages in our Welcome Wards guides is that friends and family can help staff by supporting a restful environment in our wards. Please share copies with visitors to give them helpful pointers like the importance of respecting other patients' and visitors' need for privacy, supervising children who visit and being considerate of others. Find the guides on the Welcome Wards page on our website: <https://www.nhsgrampian.org/hospital-hub/visitor-information>

Final tickets for Lasting Impact Symposium It is your final chance to get a ticket for NHS Grampian Charity's Lasting Impact Symposium at ONE BioHub on Tuesday 21 January.

The Symposium will launch the charity's Lasting Impact programme, a seven-figure funding programme which will bring together third sector organisations, academics and researchers to develop collaborative research projects across a range of health and social care topics, with an aim of creating real, tangible improvements in health outcomes for patients in Grampian. Ticket sales close on Thursday 9 January. For more information, or to register for your free ticket, please visit the [Lasting Impact Programme page](#) on the NHS Grampian Charity website.

Pause for thought As we reflect on the year just gone, what brings warmth to your heart that you will carry through this year?

Tune of the day In need of a pick-me-up on your first day back after a break, or as you continue to battle through? Here's [Mr Blue Sky](#) by Electric Light Orchestra to bring a smile to your face on this wintry day (KJ).

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