

Dear Colleagues,

I cannot believe that January gone. After the storms this weekend, summer cannot arrive quickly enough. A really big thank you to everyone who came in on days off; who battled to work and home again; who went out to look after folk in their own homes; and who were on call then did a huge number of work hours.

Right across public, third and independent sector we kept services going. I know our residents do appreciate what you do for them, just as that gratitude came across after Storm Arwen.

Great things going on at the Fiona Elcock Vaccination Centre beyond giving jabs, with the encouragement of good oral hygiene as an opportunity for improving the health of our children. And if we adults need to return for another booster, can you please leave in place the theme park experience?!



Simon Bokor-Ingram
Chief Officer
Moray Portfolio

Extreme weather response

Parts of Moray were affected by storms – Malik, closely followed by Corrie – which disrupted the electricity network infrastructure for a number of properties this weekend. Hundreds of homes and businesses were left without power and in some cases were also without water after a bout of extreme weather.

Health and social care staff worked hard to maintain critical service delivery in the face of the challenging conditions, particularly on journeys to and from work and while delivering services to people out in the community.

The Local Resilience Partnership was stood up on Friday following the Met Office amber weather warning and has continued to meet regularly to co-ordinate the Moray response and provide support to affected households.

Health and social care out of hours and on-call staff worked over the weekend to make contact with vulnerable and priority residents in the areas Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SEN) advised had been affected and to respond to calls for assistance. Staff also came in from days off to support the response effort.

SEN arranged hotels for people who required accommodation, while social workers arranged alternative support for some people unable to leave their homes. Moray Council sports and community centres were made available to residents without power to use for showers, heating and charging devices.

A subsequent debrief will be held to identify and learn lessons from the incident so that recommendations can be built into processes to improve any future response.

Covid vaccination programme

As the programme reaches the youngest members of our community, the Moray vaccination team has been getting creative, transforming the Fiona Elcock Centre in Elgin into a more child-friendly space to help put visitors at ease.

Children aged five to 11 with underlying health conditions, or who live with someone who has a weakened immune system, have been invited by letter to receive a Covid vaccine. Drop-in activity at the centre for all other ages is suspended while the children's clinics are running.

Staff have been busy creating fun imagery throughout the centre to help make the vaccination experience a positive one for children and their families, who are also invited to leave a message on the graffiti wall before leaving. With the support of the Health Improvement Team and the NHS Childsmile oral health programme, youngsters are presented with a Creating Healthier Communities goodie bag containing a toothbrush, toothpaste and water bottle.

We've already received loads of wonderful feedback from appreciative parents.

"My daughters loved the artwork, it was a wonderful distraction for them whilst they got their vaccines. The staff were wonderful as always too. Well done and thank you!"

"Really calm atmosphere, certainly enabled my boy to feel more at ease! Great work."

"It was brilliant to be able to sit and distract my son with all the beautiful artwork after his vaccination, everyone was soooo lovely (as always ♥) thank you, we admire all your hard work and commitment."



The targeted outreach vaccination programme, informed by ‘cold spot’ data analysis, is continuing to deliver local clinics in various locations around Moray to increase the uptake of 1st, 2nd and booster doses of the vaccine. This week it is in Lossiemouth, Forres and Elgin.

Total vaccination uptake in Moray for all doses is above the Scottish rate (data as at 31 January).

First dose	Total (12+ years)	% coverage (12+ years)	Total (18+ years)	% coverage (18+ years)
Moray	77,782	92.5	72,969	94.1
Scotland	4,400,213	92.0	4,148,573	93.5

Second dose	Total (12+ years)	% coverage (12+ years)	Total (18+ years)	% coverage (18+ years)
Moray	73,150	87.0	70,149	90.5
Scotland	4,124,684	86.2	3,977,812	89.6

Booster or dose 3	Total (12+ years)	% coverage (12+ years)	Total (18+ years)	% coverage (18+ years)
Moray	59,471	70.6	59,071	76.2
Scotland	3,295,234	68.9	3,282,055	73.9

Time to Talk Day

Moray Wellbeing Hub CIC is hosting two online events on Thursday 3 February which is Time to Talk Day – a national awareness campaign which aims to get people together to choose to have conversations about mental health and support positive change.



- What keeps people out of prison & prevents reoffending? : Listening & Learning from lived experience. 10-11am.

Hosted by partners Moray Wellbeing Hub CIC and Families Outside, this event includes the launch of a report based on a 2021 peer-research project for the Moray Community Justice Partnership, which focused on exploring the topic of what keeps people out of prison / prevents reoffending.

- Better mental health for Moray parents and their infants. 1.30-2pm

Focusing on the support parents can give one another, the year-long project will involve activities hosted by Moray Wellbeing Hub CIC with partners Children 1st and Moray College UHI. A group of parents will lead the project as peer-researchers and seek to hear the voices of experience including those seldom heard such as those in more rural areas, minority ethnic communities and young people.

See the Moray Wellbeing Hub website for booking details.

Pharmacotherapy Service

Improvements being driven forward through the work of the Moray Pharmacotherapy Service was highlighted to the Moray Integration Joint Board (MIJB) at its meeting last week.

Pharmacotherapy is a technical task involving prescribing medicines provided by pharmacists and technicians within GP practices. The health and social partnership has worked to establish a sustainable service providing enhanced access to medicines for the patient while improving prescribing quality and maintaining patient safety.

The MIJB heard that following successful recruitment and ongoing training and upskilling, Moray Pharmacotherapy is on track and providing medicines support to all local medical practices.

GP practices continue to experience considerable pressures as a result of the prescribing workload. Patients will be supported to order what they need, avoiding waste, along with increased medicines review and support where that is required. This is provided by the Pharmacotherapy Service which includes pharmacists, technicians and pharmacy assistants, freeing up GP time, reported Christine Thomson, Lead Pharmacist.

Cost effective review of prescribing has been reinstated by the pharmacotherapy team and pharmacy technician presence within care homes has recommenced in order to advise on medication aspects as well as perform efficiency savings.

The development of the Community Pharmacy First and Pharmacy First Plus service in Moray offers patients increased access to medicines and promotes self-management.

New national independent advocacy service launched

Disabled people in Scotland are now able to access a new national advocacy service for support when applying for social security benefits.

The charity VoiceAbility will help disabled people be aware of their rights, express themselves and feel understood when applying for any of Social Security Scotland's current and future benefits including Child Disability Payment and Adult Disability Payment. It also covers advocacy support to access payments for families with children, to help to pay for a funeral, support for carers and young people entering the workplace.

Jonathan Senker, Chief Executive of VoiceAbility, said: "Our team of skilled advocates will cover the length and breadth of Scotland. The advocacy we provide will support disabled people to make sure their voices are heard when it matters most and will mean that more people know and understand their rights when applying for Social Security Scotland benefits."

Calls to VoiceAbility on 0300 303 1660 are free and the service can also be accessed by visiting voiceability.org.

Call for urgent social care reform

A new report has warned of “huge challenges facing the sustainability of social care” in Scotland and called for the “crisis” in the workforce to be addressed now.

The joint briefing by the Accounts Commission and the Auditor General for Scotland pushes for reform to the delivery of social care services so that it meets the needs, and improves the experience of, the many vulnerable people who rely on social care for support.

And they warn that change cannot wait for the introduction of the National Care Service.

More than £5 billion is spent annually on delivering social care services and the report said there needs to be a shift in how this money is used, with greater emphasis on preventative care and enabling choice. Carers, it was said, are not getting all the support and advice they need, despite existing legislation.

William Moyes, Chair of the Accounts Commission, said: “There are significant problems with the delivery of social care services. These services are vital, yet we have a workforce that’s not adequately valued or regarded.

“Staffing shortages are a major issue across the sector and not all people’s needs are being met. Too often a focus on costs comes at the expense of delivering high quality services that aren’t at the heart of the needs of individuals. The additional funding to achieve this will be significant. Not taking action now presents a serious risk to the delivery of care services for the people who depend on them.”

Stephen Boyle, Auditor General for Scotland, said: “We cannot wait another five years until the planned National Care Service is in place. Action must happen now, and at speed, by the Scottish Government.

“There must be clear timescales for delivery, demonstrating that lessons have been learnt from previous reforms of health and social care services. This will create a strong foundation for the government’s vision to create a National Care Service.”

The full report is available at:

<https://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/report/social-care-briefing>

