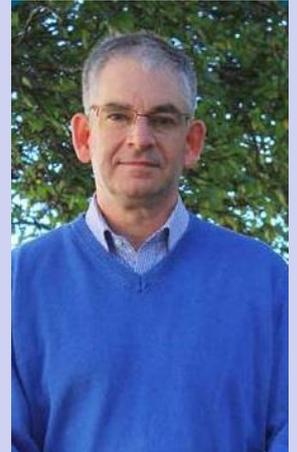


Dear Colleagues,

As we approach the Easter weekend, I hope that in between the business of work we can all get out a bit and enjoy the better weather that is expected.

The system continues to face immense challenge, from care out in the community, to care homes and residential facilities, to hospital services. No area is able to avoid the levels of challenge from demand to coping with absences.

As we focus more resource to try and meet some of those challenges, we cannot duck some of the intractable issues, with recruitment in some areas proving to be particularly difficult. We will continue our efforts, and I see that happening everywhere as teams strive to find a more sustainable footing. Thank you for all that you continue to do.



Simon Bokor-Ingram
Chief Officer
Moray Portfolio

Resilience tested

The resilience of Moray's health and social care services continues to be severely tested by the sustained pressure.

Alongside the number of hospital patients who have confirmed Covid-19 and require to be isolated, resulting in ward restrictions, Dr Gray's Hospital Emergency Department remains very busy with some patients experiencing long waits.

There is a continued focus on supporting flow through the health and care system. Challenges include the level of staff absence from covid self-isolation and where we cannot move people to the next stage of care when

a facility may be closed to admissions because of a covid outbreak.

Due to unprecedented pressures on the Health Visiting and School Nursing Service in Moray, it is unable to provide the full universal programme at this time.

If parents or guardians have any concerns about their child's development, they should contact their Health Visitor Monday - Friday between the hours of 8:30am and 5:00 pm.

If they have any concerns about their child's health, they should contact their GP, Community Pharmacist or NHS Inform on 111.

Covid spring booster

People aged 75 and over, residents in care homes for older people, and individuals over the age of 12 who have a weakened immune system, are being offered a spring booster of coronavirus vaccine, with over 75s currently being appointed.

So far, 1,705 people have taken up the offer and with case numbers still high across all age groups, it is really important that those eligible for the booster come forward as soon as they are invited.

Coronavirus infection may be more serious in older people and people with a weakened immune system. Protection from the vaccine may be lower and may wear off more quickly in these groups. The spring booster dose is being offered as a precaution to reduce the risk of serious illness from coronavirus or of being admitted to hospital.

Transport links improved

An enhanced dial-a-bus service is now operating between Burghead, Hopeman and Lossiemouth. Passengers can access a Dial M bus allocated just to the zones covering the coastal areas.

The change has been introduced by Moray Council following discussions with Health & Social Care Moray and community representatives. It will make travel easier for patients who have appointments at the Moray Coast Medical Practice in Lossiemouth.

The bus will service the locality from 10am to 2.30pm, Monday-Friday. Passengers can show their national concessionary card to travel for free or pay the driver.

Registration for Dial M is free. All journeys must be booked by calling the booking line on 0300 1234565 between 8.45am and 5pm Mondays to Fridays. Bookings can be taken up to 14 days in advance but should be made no later than 3pm the day before travel.

Passengers travelling for a medical appointment should inform the call handler. This will ensure they get to the medical centre 10 minutes before their appointment time.

Details on the service can also be found in the locality engagement update on the Health and Social Care Moray website [here](#).

Easter weekend

Over the Easter weekend, some pharmacy opening hours may differ.

NHS Inform publish a dynamic list of pharmacies online so that you can check when your local pharmacy is open over the spring break. You can filter results by postcode to help with planning prescription pick-ups or getting routine medicines for yourself and others.

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/scotlands-service-directory/pharmacies>

Sexual Assault Response Coordination Service

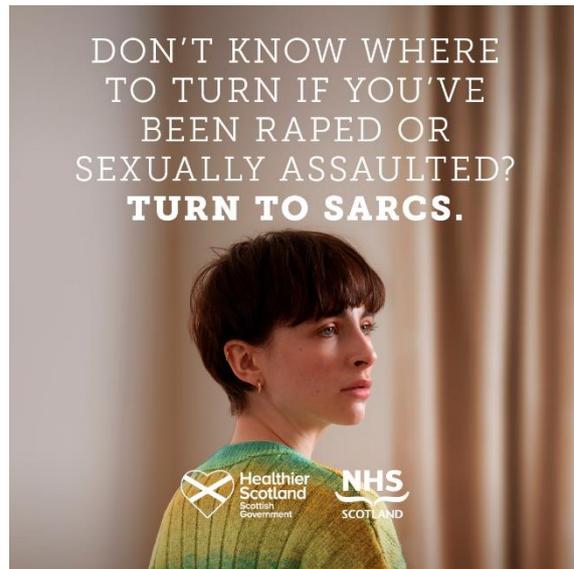
A new campaign has been launched to raise awareness around an NHS self-referral service for people who have experienced rape or sexual assault.

The Sexual Assault Response Coordination Service (SARCS) is a dedicated NHS service which can arrange healthcare, forensic examination and support to people who may not wish to or who are not ready to make a police report.

Sandy Brindley, Chief Executive of Rape Crisis Scotland said:

“This is a huge step forward in improving responses to rape in Scotland. Immediately following rape or sexual assault can be a really difficult time to make a decision about whether to report what has happened to the police, but there are time limits involved in being able to capture forensic evidence. Self-referral means that if someone doesn't feel ready to make the decision about reporting they can ensure all the evidence is captured and make the decision when they are ready.”

Details on SARCS can be found at <https://www.nhsinform.scot/SARCS>



Health & Social Care Strategy for Older People consultation

The views of older people, and the people and organisations who support them, are needed to set the direction for a national strategy to ensure older people are afforded the opportunity to age well and be resilient

Scotland's population is ageing - in 2020 there were an estimated 1 million Scotland residents aged 65 or older. By 2040, this will rise to an estimated 1.4 million, or 25% of our population.

Old age offers great opportunities for us as individuals, for communities, for society and for our economy. Older people provide a valuable contribution to our society through employment, spending, volunteering and often through unpaid caring.

However, older age can bring disadvantage, too. Currently in Scotland people aged over 70 years live with an average of three chronic health conditions. People aged 65 years and over account for 70% of emergency admissions to hospitals. Over time, older people are taking a greater number of medications, attending more healthcare appointments and being admitted to hospital more often and despite all this, are experiencing poorer health and more delays in discharge than younger people.

The Scottish Government's consultation paper can be found [here](#).