

Dear Colleagues,

Whilst we remain uncertain as to how much exactly our services will be affected through Omicron, what we do know already is that winter, plus covid, plus staff absences as a result of covid, is now putting an intolerable strain on, particularly, our social care services.

Existing teams across our independent and in-house providers are doing an amazing job, but we need help in order to meet the needs of our residents in full.

Please do put the message out through your own contacts - we are looking for folk to strengthen social care, particularly over the next few weeks. It might be a return to the social care profession, or volunteering from an existing role in our statutory services (that doesn't take you away from a vital front line client/patient facing role).

Folk will be matched to their skill set and we are geared up to provide intensive training. If you'd like to volunteer please let your line manager know and contact HR as soon as possible by emailing hr@moray.gov.uk or the HR helpline on 01343 563261.

And to all our social care workers across Moray, thank you for the amazing job you are doing in such challenging circumstances.

Simon Bokor-Ingram
Chief Officer Moray Portfolio

Jane Mackie
Chief Social Work Officer

Request for support

A renewed appeal has been made by Health & Social Care Moray to Moray Council staff to come forward for redeployment to assist our efforts to support people requiring of social care.

A request issued last week though the local authority's incident management team drew just a handful of responses and while each and every offer is appreciated, many more volunteers are needed in order to tackle the unprecedented situation within social care where we are now not able to adequately support all vulnerable people and their carers in Moray.

With HR support, letters have been sent to all social care assistants who left the Care at Home service within the last three years, asking them to consider returning to the service even for a short period.

Staff within the partnership have responded magnificently to the ask to do more to address the level of unmet need and efforts continue on a daily basis to reprioritise resources in an effort to bridge the gap.

Support for external service providers who are experiencing the same staffing challenges is being maintained.

Covid cases in community hospital

The number of Covid-19 cases associated with Stephen Hospital in Dufftown has now risen to 20, with both staff and patients affected.

The hospital remains closed to new admissions with essential visitors allowed only. Patients are receiving care as normal within the hospital.

Rinnes Medical Group, which operates from the adjoining health centre, continues to be open as usual.

Covid vaccination programme

The Booster Bus pop-up clinics are proving popular, with over 400 people taking the opportunity to grab a jab in their neighbourhood over the past few weeks.

The outreach activity continues to support increased uptake in “cold spots” to push up Moray’s vaccination rates. To date, 83.2% of the eligible population has come forward for their booster or third dose.



All young people aged 12 to 17 can get their second dose of the vaccine, as long as at least eight weeks have passed since their first dose and they haven’t had Covid in the last four weeks.

The vaccination programme in Scotland continues to be rolled out in line with the advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI). In December, the JCVI announced five to 11-year-olds who are clinically vulnerable or who are a household contact of someone who is immunosuppressed should be offered two doses of the Pfizer vaccine. Letters will be sent from this week onwards to those who are eligible, inviting them for vaccination.

Count us in for Scotland’s Census

The next census in Scotland will take place on Sunday March 20, 2022. The population count - usually carried out every 10 years - has been delayed by a year because of the pandemic.

For more than 200 years, Scotland has relied on the information the census provides to plan for every element of public life, from building homes, school and roads to health and care services.

Paul Lowe, Registrar General and Chief Executive of National Records of Scotland (NRS), said: “The census is a unique count of every household in Scotland and in the next census, for the first time, the majority of people will be encouraged to complete their questionnaire online. This will require a significant field force and face-to-face engagement in an effort to support digital participation.”

SSSC register consultation

There are more than 203,000 people working in social services in Scotland. This includes social care workers, social workers, social work students and early years workers in a range of care services, in residential and day centres, community facilities and in people's homes.



The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) is the regulator for the sector. It seeks to protect the public by registering workers, setting standards for their practice, conduct, training and education and by supporting their professional development.

The SSSC is currently seeking views on proposals to improve and streamline the way people apply to register. As social work, social care and early years services and the way people access and use them have

changed over the past 20 years, so too have the skills, knowledge and qualifications the workforce needs to be able to deliver the high quality care we want for Scotland. Integrated care and health service delivery and emerging developments - such as the design of a new National Care Service and the commitments outlined in The Promise in response to the findings of the Independent Care Review - will also have an impact.

Details of the consultation, including how to respond and sign up for online consultation events, can be found on the SSSC website.

The Scottish Government is to fund PVG checks (£59) and SSSC registration (between £25-80 depending on role) until the end of March 2022 to encourage more people into the profession.

OK to ask campaign

After a difficult couple of years, and as food and fuel prices rise and Christmas repayments become due, this winter has brought yet more challenges and put many families under even greater pressure.

Child Protection Scotland has launched its new OK to ask campaign to encourage parents struggling to look after their children to reach out for help and support before things get worse. It also urges family members, friends and neighbours to be aware and offer to help out. Sources of support include:

- PARENTLINE – 08000 28 22 33 or www.children1st.org.uk
A free helpline for parents which offers a helping hand for every family in Scotland.
- PARENT CLUB or www.parentclub.scot
A webpage offering advice and articles about all aspects of being a parent.
- NSPCC helpline – 0808 800 5000 or www.nspcc.org.uk
A free helpline if you're concerned about a child, or if you're a parent or carer looking for advice

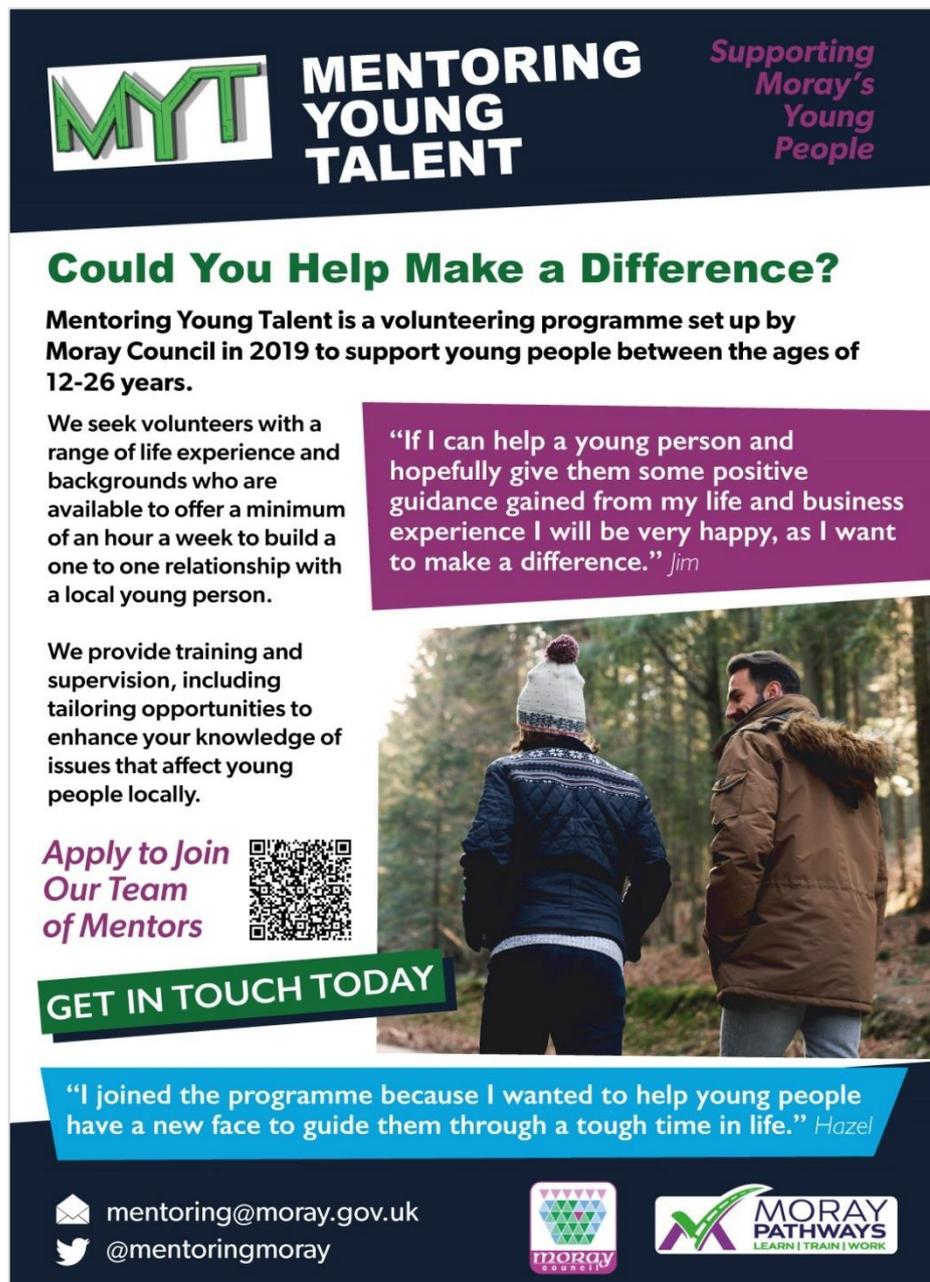
Mentoring Young Talent (MYT) seeks volunteer mentors

During the pandemic we have seen many young people's future plans dashed, unemployment rise and increased insecurity for this age group.

The MYT programme works with young people between the ages of 12-26, supporting them 1-1 to gain confidence, explore their strengths, help make future plans to either increase their educational attainment or secure a destination like work, training or further education.

Each young person is matched with an individual mentor as an impartial adult to talk to and build a positive relationship with.

Everyone is welcome to apply to be a mentor - it's a great way to give back, support local young people and share your knowledge and experience.



The poster features a dark blue header with the MYT logo (green 3D letters) and the text 'MENTORING YOUNG TALENT' in white. To the right, it says 'Supporting Moray's Young People' in pink. Below the header, the main text is on a white background. A green banner asks 'Could You Help Make a Difference?'. The text describes the program as a volunteering initiative by Moray Council for young people aged 12-26, seeking volunteers with life experience to offer one-to-one support. A purple quote box contains a testimonial from Jim. A photo shows a man and a young person in winter gear talking in a forest. A blue banner at the bottom has a testimonial from Hazel. The footer includes contact information for mentoring@moray.gov.uk and @mentoringmoray, along with logos for Moray Council and Moray Pathways.

MYT **MENTORING YOUNG TALENT** Supporting Moray's Young People

Could You Help Make a Difference?

Mentoring Young Talent is a volunteering programme set up by Moray Council in 2019 to support young people between the ages of 12-26 years.

We seek volunteers with a range of life experience and backgrounds who are available to offer a minimum of an hour a week to build a one to one relationship with a local young person.

We provide training and supervision, including tailoring opportunities to enhance your knowledge of issues that affect young people locally.

Apply to Join Our Team of Mentors 

GET IN TOUCH TODAY

"If I can help a young person and hopefully give them some positive guidance gained from my life and business experience I will be very happy, as I want to make a difference." *Jim*

"I joined the programme because I wanted to help young people have a new face to guide them through a tough time in life." *Hazel*

 mentoring@moray.gov.uk
 @mentoringmoray