



Dear Colleagues,

Thank you to those who are braving the weather to deliver vital services across Moray.

With covid conditions and then challenging weather on top it can start to feel a bit personal. Please do use the resources that are advertised whatever the challenges you are facing if you need support.

I reminded myself a few times today to just pick up the phone and call folk. Much more personal than email, which of course has its place, but it is easy to feel cut off from the world as we socially distance for work and in any time off. I will be using the phone, and Teams, a bit more as this lockdown goes on.

Great to see the Fiona Elcock Vaccination Centre running more smoothly. The team took on board the issues that arose last week and rapidly put in place changes that made improvements. Brilliant example of rapid quality improvement methodology that benefited our residents immediately. Thank you.

**Simon Bokor-Ingram,  
Interim Chief Officer**

**COVID-19 vaccination programme** – Clinic teams have been working extremely hard over a very challenging week of poor weather to keep things running smoothly at the Fiona Elcock Vaccination Centre (FEVC) in Elgin and at satellite venues out in the wider community.

Almost 700 people were vaccinated at the FEVC on Monday with almost all appointments taken up. The vaccination team has been bolstered by staff from a range of professions including dental, primary care, nursing and allied health professions. Many individuals have come out of retirement to answer the recruitment call and we are grateful to them all.

Feedback given by those attending the clinics is overwhelmingly positive and this is down to the hard work of teams on the ground.

There have been a number of issues, however, with people turning up early for their appointment or running late due to travel difficulties, and we have seen some long queues at clinics. We apologise sincerely to anyone affected by this. Staff on site are working extremely hard to get people through the clinics as quickly as possible and are advising those arriving of any potential waiting time. Anyone who chooses not to wait, particularly in light of the weather conditions, will be issued with a new appointment.

We are working closely with the Grampian Transport to Healthcare information Centre (THInc) to support people who need advice on getting to their appointment and with Moray Council Public Transport around additional services.

NHS Grampian has launched a dedicated website supporting the public vaccination programme – [www.covidvaxgrampian.com](http://www.covidvaxgrampian.com). This will be regularly updated as the programme progresses.

**Care homes** – Admissions remain suspended to a number of care homes where covid has been detected. Residents are being supported to self-isolate and staff are working hard to ensure their comfort and wellbeing while continuing to deliver high quality care.

**Changes to MRC** – Following an options appraisal of possible sites in Moray, we will be converting part of the Moray Resource Centre (MRC) in Elgin to provide a temporary clinical space for the provision of primary care to shielding patients.

A range of testing and treatment services essential for clinical care will be provided from the MRC for this cohort of shielding patients. This will be the safest way of delivering the service to a vulnerable group. Prior to the pandemic, MRC housed a number of services including a day service for adults with a physical disability. The service was paused in March at the start of the first lockdown and remains suspended in line with government guidance.

Once internal alterations for the clinical space are completed, planning will commence in preparation for when we can safely restart the day service, which also takes into account the current lockdown measures and any lifting of those measures.

The planned enhancements will see day service provision extended from three days to five days a week and for a wider range of client groups including older people, as it may not be an option to re-open the day services which operated elsewhere in Elgin and Forres pre-COVID due to environmental limitations.

In line with health and safety and infection control measures that will need to be in place to keep people safe, MRC will operate with the physical distancing measures, and capacity and places will be prioritised for individuals whose circumstances see them in greatest need. Social Workers continue their dialogue with service users and their families to review support outcomes and help them to consider if their needs can best be met by a return to a day service or in alternative ways such as the flexible use of Self Directed Support options or through community resources once these are available again.

In order to prioritise service delivery, staff continue to work from home where that meets service need, and those who had remained working at MRC will be relocated to other bases.

Blue Badge applicants will be advised where to access assessments as soon as alternative arrangements have been made. Community groups which used MRC for meetings will be supported to access alternative venues.

**Breaks for carers** – Access to short breaks to give carers much-needed respite from the routine of caring has been limited since the start of the pandemic.

Contract arrangements have been put in place with three local care homes to provide planned short breaks with places allocated through the social work teams. Cared-for individuals will require a covid test before admission and will not be able to mix with other residents during their stay.

**Supporting our staff** – Covid-19 has put unprecedented pressure on our health and social care services, and front line and key workers have been outstanding in their response throughout. We cannot provide the services without them and we need to make every effort to look after their mental and physical wellbeing to ensure their continued resilience and the resilience of health and care services.

Staff health and wellbeing remains a key objective of the Operation Snowdrop civil contingencies model which the partnership and NHS Grampian are working to.

A number of partnership projects have secured funding to support the Moray workforce around the theme of mental health and staff are being asked to complete a short survey to shape future activity [here](#).

Support for anyone unable to access the link is available from NHS Grampian Library & Knowledge Services: [gram.drgrayslibrary@nhs.scot](mailto:gram.drgrayslibrary@nhs.scot)

**Snow days** – Here are just some of the photos taken by our fantastic frontline staff out in the community ensuring elderly and vulnerable residents receive essential care, support and treatment. Head to our Facebook page to see more.

