



Dear Colleagues,

A second mains gas outage in the Keith area this year brought out the best again of Moray Health and Social Care. Thank you to all those who responded to the incident, and to all those that cared for patients and clients in challenging circumstances, whether in the community hospital, care homes or in peoples own homes.

Although the weather was less severe than the previous outage, it was still

very cold, and the teams recognised the seriousness of the incident immediately. We will debrief to ensure any learning is incorporated into our emergency plans so that we continue to provide good responses to incidents. Thank you again to all involved.

As we head towards spring, it's a good time to roll out the e-bikes. I hope the teams enjoy using them - you are setting a good example to us all.

Fresh air and sunshine are a wonderful tonic. As the daylight hours lengthen, I hope folk are able to get out at some point each day and clear the cobwebs.

I'm on leave next week, so there will be a gap in this part of the update. My dog won't be complaining as she gets out for extra walks!

**Simon Bokor-Ingram,
Chief Officer**

Vaccination programme - Vaccination of priority group 6 continues at the Fiona Elcock Vaccination Centre in Elgin. Individuals aged 16 to 64 years with underlying health conditions which put them at higher risk of serious disease and mortality and who are not on the shielding list, are being offered the vaccine as part of group 6. This cohort is being identified by a modified version of the flu vaccine list.

Also included within priority group 6 are younger adults in residential care and unpaid carers who have not been included in an earlier priority group.

Carers identified through GP systems and social security data of those on relevant benefits will begin to be called forward shortly.

A self-registration portal goes live next week for all other carers aged 16-64 who provide face to face care and support to one or more family members, friends or neighbours. The system will offer both online and phone line options.

Quarriers Carers Support Service (Moray) is writing out to all carers registered with the organisation and a dedicated national marketing campaign will be launched alongside the self-referral system to raise awareness and encourage all carers to come forward for vaccination.

Following a rise in the number of people not attending for their vaccine appointment, a plea has been made for anyone who wishes to decline the vaccine or who is unable to attend, to please contact the booking team using the details in their appointment letter as soon as possible, even if that is on the day of vaccination. If we know someone is not attending, we can offer the appointment to someone else, even at very short notice.

Community testing – There has been a good uptake of rapid Covid-19 asymptomatic testing aimed at identifying positive cases in communities and preventing it being passed on.

The Moray mobile testing programme was launched on 22 February in Keith and has now moved on to Forres House Community Centre. In response to requests from the community, an evening testing session will be held in the Scout Hall, Keith, today (Wednesday 10 March) from 1-7pm. There is no need to book. Simply turn up, take the test and await your result.

Local employers can also take advantage of the service by encouraging their employees, without symptoms, to get tested. As well as helping to stop the spread of the virus in the community, testing staff will reduce the risk of outbreaks occurring in the workplace and minimise the effect this can have on employees' health and continuity of the business.

Care homes – Families are being reunited with their loved ones following the resumption of regular indoor care home visits.

After a year of restrictions, Moray care homes are progressing the return of visiting on an individual basis and supporting designated visitors and staff to remain vigilant about the risks. As well as wearing PPE, visitors will be required to take a Covid test before entering homes.

The majority of care home residents have received their second dose of the Covid vaccination, and all care home staff will have been offered by the end of next week.

Re-mobilisation of day services – Internal run day services for older people will resume in Keith and Rothes next week. Staff are providing an outreach service to high priority individuals in the Elgin area in their own homes which is giving unpaid carers some much-needed respite.

Shared Lives carers, who provide day support within their own homes on a self-employed basis, have also started to re-mobilise, while discussions are ongoing with external providers of day services for older people on re-opening buildings when risk assessments have been approved.

Gas outage – Health & Social Care Moray was part of the multi-agency response to last Friday's outage in gas supply to households in the Keith area – the second in the space of a few weeks.

Individuals and families known to services were quickly contacted to check on their welfare and offer assistance with accessing heaters and hot food. By the evening gas supplies had been restored to some priority settings including care homes and

Huntly's Jubilee Hospital, but the majority of affected customers had no gas until the following morning.

E-bikes for staff – Partnership staff are gearing up to use new electric bikes to visit patients and service users in the local community as part of an initiative to improve workforce health and wellbeing and cut emissions from vehicle journeys.

A fleet of four electric-assisted cargo bikes have been delivered to district nursing and home care teams in Keith and Speyside by the Spaces for People Project which is funded by the Scottish Government and managed by Sustrans Scotland.

The versatile and efficient bikes are capable of transporting equipment without too much extra pedal power and will provide opportunities for staff like District Nurse Ally Lister (pictured) to make short trips around the community - although it's likely to be a weather-permitting activity!



COVID-19 vaccination programme evaluation – Public Health Scotland (PHS) are undertaking an evaluation of the COVID-19 vaccination programme in Scotland to help understand what is going well and what can be improved as the programme rolls out. Frontline health and social care staff workers who were in priority group 1 or 2 for the vaccination are invited to take part in an anonymous online survey to share their views and experiences of the programme.

PHS are keen to identify both the barriers and the facilitators to getting vaccinated in order to improve not just this vaccination programme but other schemes as well. The survey should take 10 minutes to complete and is open until 19 March 2021. Please click [here](#) for more information and to access the survey.