

**AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccine** – NHS Grampian has moved to provide information to staff and the public on the safety of the AstraZeneca vaccine after several countries, including France, Germany and Ireland, paused their use of the vaccine over concerns about possible side effects.

More than 11 million doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine have now been administered across the UK. Reports of blood clots received so far are no greater than the number that would have occurred naturally in the priority groups had they not received the vaccination. The European Medicines Agency and the World Health Organisation have stated there is no indication of a link between the vaccine and reports of blood clots.

The UK has one of the most sophisticated medicines adverse events monitoring systems in the world, and we are confident that there is no need to be concerned at this time. NHS Grampian will follow the evidence and the advice of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency and the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation who continue to objectively assess the rollout of vaccination.

Vaccinators have been issued with information to support them to respond to questions on the issue which may be raised by people attending for a vaccine appointment.

**Vaccine programme** – The vaccine programme in Moray continues to make steady progress and thanks go to everyone working to support its roll out.

Second doses are being delivered in care homes to residents and staff, and in GP practices to the over 80s, while the District Nursing Teams continue to carry out home visits.

Unpaid carers aged 16 and over who provide vital care and support for others and haven't already been given an appointment, are now being invited to self-register for the Covid-19 vaccine using the website <https://nhsinform.scot/carersregister> or by calling 0800 030 8013.

Some 765 vaccinations per day are being undertaken at the Fiona Elcock Vaccination Centre in Elgin which runs seven days a week. We remain grateful to the Red Cross for their help to co-ordinate and support volunteers.

Travelling to a vaccination appointment is regarded as an essential journey. A Stagecoach shuttle bus operates between Elgin bus station and the vaccination centre on Edgar Road. Car sharing is permitted if it is the only way to attend an appointment.

Anyone experiencing difficulty attending the Elgin centre is advised to contact the THInC helpline which can provide information on the community transport options available. It is open Monday-Friday, 9am-4.30pm and can be contacted on 01467 536111 or by email [travel@thinc-hub.org](mailto:travel@thinc-hub.org).

**Moray figures** - The continuing fall in the number of Covid positive cases in Moray is encouraging. From 7-13 March, 23 cases of Covid were detected. The seven day test positivity rate dropped to 1.4% which was lower than Aberdeen City (1.9%) and Aberdeenshire (1.5%).

Together with good progress in the vaccination programme, we can start to have real optimism about the continued easing of lockdown restrictions in the coming weeks. But we're not there quite yet and we would urge people to continue to stick to the current guidance to keep each other safe.

**Community testing** - If you live in the Lossiemouth area you can get tested for Covid-19 at the mobile testing centre which will remain at the town hall until 26 March.

Community testing is for those without any symptoms, helping to stop the spread before it starts. It is quick and easy with rapid results available. No appointment is needed and opening hours are 9.30am - 4pm (Mon, Tues, Thurs & Fri), 1 - 7pm (Wed).

**Staff testing** - Asymptomatic testing for front facing health and social care staff continues. Testing is voluntary but to keep patients, service users and colleagues as safe as possible, best scientific advice is that staff test themselves twice weekly.

Each member of staff will be receiving their second testing box which provides enough lateral flow kits for 25 tests so will last 12 weeks. Staff are reminded that they must record every test result.

**World Social Work Day** - Health & Social Care Moray joined in yesterday's international celebrations for World Social Work Day 2021 - a day when social workers worldwide stand together to recognise the achievements of the profession and raise awareness of the contributions social workers make in their communities.



The past year has proven challenging for social workers as it has for the individuals and families they support. Against the backdrop of a constantly developing situation, teams responded with dedication and resilience in order to continue to safeguard the vulnerable from harm and support people with social care needs to experience positive personal outcomes.

Jane Mackie, Chief Social Work Officer for Moray, acknowledged the valuable contribution of all social workers.

She said: "Our social work teams have shown incredible resilience, resourcefulness and resolve to support those who have needed their skills and support during an extremely difficult year.

"Our social workers have risen to every challenge and deserve recognition for the key role they play in improving the lives of the people they work in partnership with."

This year's #WSWD2021 theme is 'Ubuntu' which means 'I am because we are', a philosophy that resonates with the social work perspective of the interconnectedness of all peoples and their environments. Nelson Mandela described Ubuntu as: "the profound sense that we are human only through the humanity of others; if we are to accomplish anything in this life it will in equal measure be due to the work and achievements of others."

We asked colleagues to tell us about their calling to a career in social work.

*"There are many reasons I was drawn to social work as a profession, but the primary reason comes from wanting to work in a career that allows me to help others. I enjoy working in a job in which I know the work I am doing is having a positive impact on people's lives. I often work with people facing crisis and in my role I can enable them to change their circumstances for the better and know that my efforts have had a positive difference for them. I am motivated in my job because I have learned a lot from my experiences which has benefitted me on both a professional and personal level."* – **Kate Baillie, West Team.**

*"I am proud to be a social worker and being part of making a positive difference to Scottish society and promoting rights and equality."* – **Jo Fergusson, Community Mental Health Team.**

*"I wanted to be a social worker in order to help people, and social work appealed as it gives you the flexibility to work with a wide array of clients within the social work field. Each day is varied and challenging, but achieving positive outcomes for clients is rewarding and makes the challenging days worthwhile."* – **Nicola Quick, Hospital Discharge Team.**

*"I was drawn to the social work profession due to personal experiences that made a difference to me and my family's life. I wanted to make a difference for other individual's life however big or small. I wanted to be that person that could voice people's view and wishes if they could not do this themselves and be able to provide them the best quality of life".* – **Michelle Barr, West Team.**

*"I want to be a social worker because I have a lifelong belief that everyone matters. Everyone should have the opportunity to experience empathy and guidance when in need. The complexities of working with varied needs of people will provide me with the personal challenges and growth that I aspire to overcome and achieve."* – **Claire Macgillivray, Social Worker in Training, Hospital Discharge Team.**

*"I was drawn to a career as a social worker because I believe all people have worth and value. Life can consist of many challenges that impact on people being able to achieve their full potential. As a social worker I work alongside individuals to offer support, provide encouragement and guidance so they feel empowered to grow in their independence and to increase their self-esteem achieving a better quality of life as a result. I now line manage a team of dedicated social workers who promote the rights and strengths of the people using our service. I am particularly interested in breaking down stigma and discrimination around mental ill health and promoting recovery and wellbeing for all by recognising the lived experience of all people*

*whatever their circumstances. 21 years into the profession I feel the role of social work is as important as ever.*” – **Kirsteen Pyett, Social Work Team Manager, Community Mental Health Team.**

The following comments come from members of the Community Learning Disability Team.

*“It is a career which each and every day offers new experiences, the opportunity to see someone grow in both belief and achievement and where you never stop learning about yourself and others.”*

*“I have always been drawn towards helping people. I saw from a very young age the difference that social workers made in my community and I, too, wanted to be part of that. I am proud to be part of a profession that makes me feel valuable to society.”*

*“I was drawn to a career as a social worker because I stand by the social work values and wanted to play my part in preventing and counteracting oppression and social inequalities. I love working with people and aim to empower them to improve their quality of life.”*

*“I am proud to be a social worker because I help vulnerable people get their voices heard and support them to have a meaningful life.”*

*“I was drawn to a career in social work so that I could work with people, recognising the many factors that can affect an individual’s life and support them to bring about changes. I am proud to be able to support people to be part of their community, to access their rights as citizens while promoting safety, equality and a just society.”*

**Walk right back** – Under the current Scottish Government Covid-19 guidance, groups of up to 15 adults are allowed to take part in organised exercise outdoors. Staff who support Walk Moray and Baby Steps Moray have been arranging to get their programmes safely restarted.

Walking is a simple, free way of getting more physical activity and is ideal for people of all ages and fitness levels. It is easy to build into your daily routine. As well as many mental and physical health benefits, walking can help you feel part of your community and reduce loneliness and isolation.

Join the Dr Gray’s lunchtime walk on Tuesdays - get a breath of fresh air and enjoy a chat with colleagues.

**Lunch break**  
**20 minute**  
**staff walk**

**Meet on Tuesdays**  
**at 12.30 under**  
**Dr Gray's clock**

**Breakaway.....**  
**for a walk and talk around the**  
**block**

**Re-commencing Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> April 21**

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