



Dear Colleagues,

As the evenings start to get lighter, there's another glimmer of hope as the route out of lockdown is announced. Yes we have been here before, but with the early evidence showing hope around the effectiveness of the vaccines on transmission, we can be more exuberant this time.

There has been a lot of hope over the last year, and we need to be careful to

be realistic and avoid the swings between euphoria and disappointment that can be so damaging.

Important that we remember to be kind and to recognise when those around us might need additional support, because it is just as we run into the sunlight of a better time ahead that we can easily forget that not everyone will be able to shake off the last year so easily.

Thank you for the care and kindness you show each other - I see lots of it across the workplace. When we are at that point of being able to reflect on what is behind us, we should remember what we did to make a better workplace and vow to continue in that way.

**Simon Bokor-Ingram,  
Chief Officer**

**Vaccination update** – Across Moray over 25,000 people have received their first dose of the covid vaccine. Our vaccination clinic team will also be focusing on delivering second dose vaccinations to care home staff and residents along with front-facing health and social care staff within the partnership and across commissioned services this week.

Activities at the satellite vaccination centres in Keith, Forres, Buckie, and Dufftown are currently paused as we match capacity to the available vaccine supply, and the position will be kept under review. The majority of appointments for Moray residents are taking place at the Fiona Elcock Vaccination Centre in Elgin which is ready to welcome the next cohort of people for their vaccinations from today (24.02.21).

Appointments are currently being sent out to all those aged 16 to 64 with underlying health conditions which put them at higher risk of serious disease and mortality. This includes people with mild or moderate learning disabilities and severe mental health conditions.

Unpaid carers who receive carers' benefits or who have been identified by their GP will be offered an appointment as well. Carers who do not fall into these categories

will be asked to register for their vaccine at a later date through an online portal or by using the national helpline.

**Local figures** – Moray has recorded the highest level of covid positive results per 100,000 population in Grampian for the third week in a row, with an infection rate 132% and 200% higher than Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City respectively.

For much of last year, Moray had the third lowest infection rate of any Scottish local authority and typically recorded 6-8 cases per week, per 100,000 of population. As a result Moray was placed in Level 1 in the first review of Scotland's then five-level Covid alert system back in October.

The acceleration in community transmission sees Moray now sits in 18th place out of 32 Scottish councils, recording 72 cases per week, per 100,000 population.

Rapid Covid-19 testing is now available in Moray for people without symptoms. The walk-in mobile setting site is currently set up at the Scout Hall on Fife Street, Keith, and is open Monday – Friday from 10am – 3.30pm.

**Care providers** – The partnership works very closely with care providers in ensuring safe delivery of care across Moray. The Oversight Group continues to meet daily to discuss the status of each service, provide guidance and support and to respond to areas of concern through the provision of assurance visits.

Providers continue to participate in regular testing for asymptomatic staff, thus ensuring the minimisation of spread.

Meaningful contact between care home residents and relatives, friends and carers will be able to resume from early March with care providers supporting residents to have up to two designated visitors each and one visit a week for each visitor.

Protecting the wellbeing of staff is essential in ensuring the ongoing delivery of safe and effective services across all sectors. Psychological resources continue to be made available to support all staff in their emotional wellbeing.

**Care home closure** – Social Work are supporting the five Moray residents of the Lythe Care Home, near Cullen, following the decision by the home's owners to close.

Staff have been working closely with residents and their families to identify alternative homes that can fully meet their needs and to manage their transfer so that they can get settled into their new home as quickly as possible.

**Covid Assessment Hub** – The Assessment Hub was established at The Oaks in Elgin last March to provide people with a straightforward route to clinical advice and support when experiencing symptoms associated with Covid-19.

Calls continue to be triaged through NHS 24 however activity within the hub remains low and moving forward this is likely to move across to the GMED service.

**Staff appreciation** - Staff resilience has been significantly tested with the ongoing pressure of living and working through a global pandemic. As a mark of appreciation for staff, NHS Grampian commissioned Operation Rainbow commemorative coins

and these are available for all partnership colleagues whether employed by the NHS or the council.

To ensure the commemorative coins reach staff, team leads or managers are asked to contact Nicola Staunton [nicola.staunton@nhs.scot](mailto:nicola.staunton@nhs.scot) with the numbers required.