



Dear Colleagues,

Marking yesterday as a year from the start of lockdown will undoubtedly have brought a myriad of emotions for us all, shaped by personal experiences and those of others around us.

I hope that we can continue to talk to each other about how we are feeling

and the support we might need, or can offer, beyond this pandemic.

I have found a positivity in the candid way folk are able to express themselves compared with a year ago. The stock answer of “I am fine” has shifted to something more meaningful; something that gets more to the root of how we can support each other better.

That doesn't mean that you can't be “fine” - when I say I'm fine I really am. But if I'm not, I am definitely more able now to say I'm not.

Look after yourselves, and look out for each other. Thank you.

**Simon Bokor-Ingram,
Chief Officer**

Day of Reflection - Health & Social Care Moray participated in the yesterday's National Day of Reflection to reflect on our collective loss, support those who have been bereaved and share our hope for a brighter tomorrow.

The last 12 months have been unimaginably tough for everyone. On the anniversary of the first UK lockdown, we remembered all those who have lost their lives during the pandemic, all those who have suffered or are still suffering and thanked the countless people who have gone above and beyond to care for and look after us.

In a recorded message, Caroline Lamb, newly appointed Chief Executive of NHS Scotland and Director-General of Health & Social Care, Scottish Government, reflects on the past year and offers her personal gratitude and thanks to those working across health and social care and the voluntary sector for their ongoing commitment, dedication and personal sacrifice in caring for patients, service users, communities and each other.

Her video message can be viewed on the Health & Social Care Moray website [here](#).



Vaccination programme – Covid-19 vaccinations in Grampian are on course to see the vast majority of people aged 50 and above receive their first dose before the start of April.

Although over 37,000 Moray residents have received their first vaccination, the need to deliver two doses means the programme is still only somewhere around a quarter of the way through and we still have a significant part in front of us.

Second doses are also now being delivered at pace. Care home residents and staff have received their second vaccinations and this is underway among health and social care staff, with those aged 80 and over projected to have been provided with the fullest degree of protection by the end of March.

In line with Scottish Government directions, vaccinations are currently focused on those people aged 18-64 with 'at-risk' medical conditions, people aged 50 and over and unpaid carers.

It's key that people recognise the importance of taking up the opportunity to be vaccinated (where possible accepting the date and time offered), that they receive both doses, and that they continue to follow the national FACTS guidance aimed at protecting one another and preventing the spread of the virus.

Information on vaccinations is available on the NHS Inform website and through the national helpline which is available between 8 am and 8 pm seven days a week on 0800 030 8013.

Infection rates – Positive Covid cases in Moray continue to fluctuate on a daily basis. 90 cases have been detected so far this month. As of 19 March, the 7 day test positivity rate was 1.5%, down from 2.1%.

There is evidence that people identified as close contacts of cases are developing Covid-19. Social interactions have been the main route where transmission has been identified.

Stay at Home regulations will be lifted on 2 April and replaced with guidance to Stay Local as part of the timetable for easing restrictions and re-opening parts of society over the next two months.

A sustained decline in infection rates will be down to the efforts of the people of Moray to abide by the measures in place to suppress the virus to the lowest possible level and keep it under control.

Community testing – Mobile asymptomatic community testing units continue to be deployed around Moray in response to peaks in cases.

Rapid testing is available at Lossiemouth Town Hall until Friday and at Buckie's Fishermen's Hall until 2 April. No appointment is needed and the units are open 9.30am – 4.30pm (Mon, Tues, Thur & Fri), 1 - 7pm (Wed).

Anyone who feels they may have virus symptoms, such as loss of taste and smell, a high temperature, or new and continuous cough, is reminded that they should arrange a test via NHS Inform.

Health and social care staff testing is carried out at Glassgreen in Elgin by appointment via the internal booking system.

Care homes – The partnership continues to work closely with providers throughout this pandemic and offers support that is both practical and developmental where required.

Assurance continues to be provided through regular meetings of the Oversight Group.

Mental health – Improvement works are being undertaken in Ward 4, the mental health in patient ward at Dr Gray's Hospital, in response to Scottish Government requirements to enhance the clinical environment for patients classed as high risk of self-harm.

The ligature reduction works has meant a small adjustment to the bed base has been needed to allow the works to proceed, with a return to the full bed compliment at the end of April 2021.

Children and Families – The pandemic has increased levels of vulnerability within the population while in many cases masking hidden harm, especially amongst children living in poverty or facing other disadvantages, pregnant women and their unborn babies.

Multi-agency working is being prioritised to help ensure vulnerable parents and children in Moray are adequately safeguarded.

The Oaks – Following the suspension of palliative care services at The Oaks in Elgin last year, teams have worked to support service users remotely as far as possible.

The Occupational Therapy and Physio service continues to provide rehabilitation for palliative care patients across Moray. Support and advice is available either by phone, video call or home visits as required.

A weekly programme of virtual sessions has now started, included self-management strategies for anxiety and fatigue, talks from professionals, relaxation sessions and Q & A opportunities. Additional online activities have enabled service users to enjoy seated yoga, art therapy and coffee and catch ups.

The Oaks is working on remobilising the day service, outpatient clinics and face to face groups in line with the national guidance. New referrals to the service will start to be taken shortly.

Staff will be strengthening their engagement with service users to create and deliver on a future vision for The Oaks as a centre of excellence.

Mental health training calendar – NHS Grampian’s Public Health directorate has organised a range of stress and mental health improvement training courses which are available to health, social care and Third Sector staff and managers.

The virtual sessions aim to raise awareness around mental health and wellbeing problems, explore solutions and signpost participants to related resources. The courses can be attended by any member of staff (clinical and non-clinical) working at any level across the sectors in Grampian. You can see the courses on offer [here](#).

Rights-based care – The Mental Welfare Commission will be holding two virtual events on rights-based care next month. The first event on the 27 April will cover topics related to the care of people in hospital; the second event on the 29 April will focus on people in the community.

This event is targeted at professionals and clinicians working across the range of health and social care settings, including medical, nursing and social work staff, advocacy workers and independent sector employees.

For further details and to register for a place, contact info@redharbour.org.

