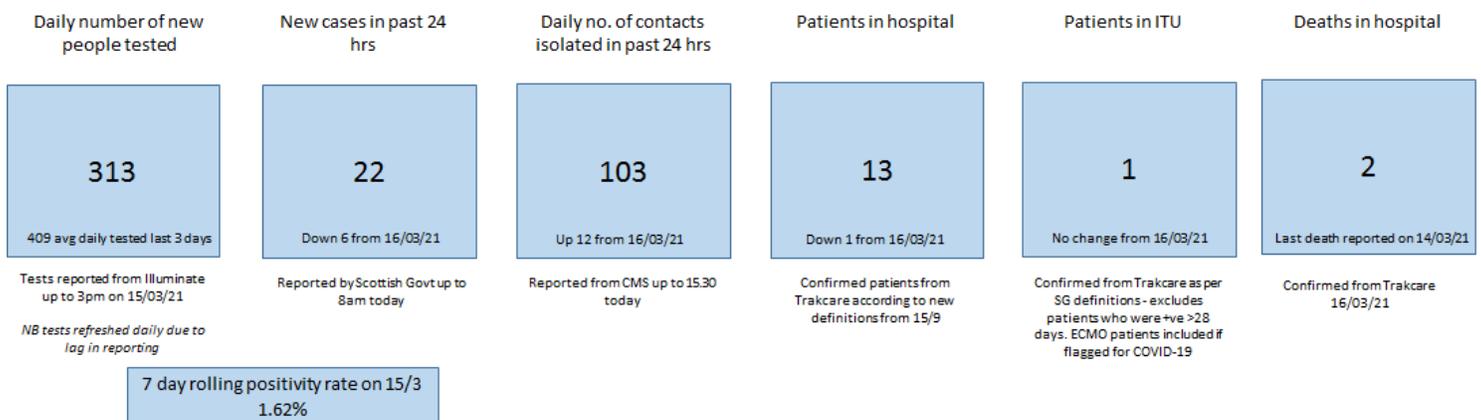


Here is the brief for Wednesday 17 March 2021.

Grampian data The local figures for today (and over the weekend) and the 7 day rolling positivity rate are shown below. As a reminder, this rate is arrived at by dividing the number of positive tests in the past 7 days by the number of tests carried out in the past 7 days. Repeat tests are included in both categories, whereas the figures we show here only record new tests. If you want to see more detailed information, including cases at neighbourhood level, click [here](#) for the Public Health Scotland daily dashboard.



Causality and coincidence If A and B are associated with one another does this mean that A causes B or that B causes A? Not necessarily – it might be that C causes both A and B. For example did you know that ex-smokers are more likely to die of lung cancer than current smokers? This is not because giving-up smoking leads to a greater likelihood of death, but because having a diagnosis of lung cancer leads both to significant numbers of patients giving-up smoking and also leads to a greater likelihood of death from lung cancer. The association is non-causal. Coincidences are also very interesting. Can you imagine a family with three children (not triplets) all of whom have the same birthday? Well, there are around a million families in Britain with three children under-18 and we can calculate that it is probable that eight of these families will have children with the same birthday. This coincidence actually happens around once per year. As with these examples it might be reasonable to conclude that the association between 17 million Covid-19 vaccinations given across Europe and 39 episodes of thrombosis is a non-causal relationship and an unfortunate coincidence.

FFP3 Withdrawal The revalidation of the 3M FFP3 masks will run out at the end of March. NHS Grampian Fit Testers have continued to work hard to face fit test staff to an alternative mask. 1863 and 1873V masks will be withdrawn from March 31.

All stocks of 1863 and 1873V masks must be returned week commencing March 29 as they must not be used beyond March 31.

To return masked, mark the box with the name of the product and “For Quarantine” and return to Central Stores Warehouse.

3M 1863+ which is still a valid product.

As of March 31 all masks used must have an in date expiry date on the box.

Lateral Flow Testing – Recording of Results It is important that the results from lateral flow testing (including all negative, all inconclusive and all positive) results are uploaded regularly to the www.covidtestingportal.scot website portal.

In response to feedback from a number of NHS Boards, users will be able to create user accounts on the www.covidtestingportal.scot portal. This will be available from Monday 15th March.

If you choose to create an account, you will be asked a series of questions about where you work, and the kind of work you do; along with personal information such as contact details for contact tracing purposes. This information will then be retained by the system so that, once signed in, each time you record a test you will only have to input information about the test itself and the result.

This will reduce the length of time manually entering personal data each time and will make it easier for LFD users to report their results.

NHS National Services Scotland, Digital and Security are working hard to continue to improve the portal and have more developments planned, including the ability to see your testing history, and barcode reading functionality .

Thank you for your ongoing patience and participation in the LFD testing programme.

Vaccinating unpaid carers Are you over 16 and provide care for a loved one, friend, family member or neighbour? Or do you know someone who does?

The care given could be due to someone's age, physical or mental illness, disability or an addiction. The type of care provided could be anything from practical stuff like helping with shopping, regularly picking up prescriptions or preparing meals. Or do you provide emotional support to someone with a long term health condition?

Does any of that sound like you or someone you know? If so check here to find out if you/they are eligible for the vaccine as a carer <https://nhsinform.scot/carersregister>

Cardiac echocardiography referral guidelines for use in secondary care are now live on the Grampian Guidance page of the Intranet. These guidelines will be used with immediate effect to vet and triage outpatient and inpatient echocardiography requests. All clinical staff are encouraged to familiarise themselves with this guidance when considering referral of a patient for echocardiography.

For more information [click here](#) from a networked computer

Thought for the day Some days its tough to find inspiration at the moment. Today is one of those days, maybe it's the monotony we currently live with... or maybe I haven't had enough tea. In a desperate search for inspiration for today's Thought for the day, I found myself looking back at the Evening Express on this day last year. The front page headline screamed *COVID-19 WILL 'CHANGE LIFE AS WE KNOW IT'*... and didn't it just?

That got me thinking, as awful as the last year has been, have all the changes been bad? Will some of us, or all of us, emerge from this bettered for it? Some people have transformed their diet or exercise regimes – I for instance lost two stone and then proceeded to put most of it back on, mainly because I found it impractical when my trousers wouldn't stay up and I like pies and dislike running. Some of you will have learned a new life skill that will benefit you in future or just bring you enjoyment – maybe you learned a language or a musical instrument for instance. Others might have finally resolved to get a pet (I can't speak officially on behalf of NHS Grampian on this but I'm fairly sure the corporate position is that dogs are better than cats, if you are interested). Whatever we did we all made some changes, found ways to fill time and get through. Everyone of us will have achieved something, however big or small, at the end of this – even if it is just getting to the end of it and resuming our lives as close to before as possible. If you're uninspired today, find the positive. For me it's been spending much more time with these two wee dudes while working from home



Hopefully tomorrow will be more inspiring, if not it'll be a day closer to hugging those you love. Give yourself a break and take care folks.

Questions to ask? Information to share? If you have particular questions – or are aware of questions coming from friends and family – please share them with us. We may not be able to answer every question and it may take us time to get a proper answer, but we will endeavour to respond and share the answers. You can get in touch with us via gram.communications@nhs.scot. Please also use that email address if you have items for consideration for future briefs.