

Here is the brief for Wednesday 24 February 2021.

**Interim pay increase – Agenda for Change staff** It has been announced today that all NHS Agenda for Change staff will get an interim pay increase of 1%, backdated to 1 December 2020, ahead of full pay negotiations being concluded in the coming months. While pay increases are usually effective from 1 April both the interim rise and the full pay settlement, once agreed, will be backdated to 1 December 2020 benefitting 154,000 Agenda for Change employees including all NHS nurses, paramedics, healthcare support staff and allied health professionals. The 1% increase will be included from March pay onwards, with the backdated arrears from December 2020 being included in the April pay. Please do not contact the Payroll Team; we will share further information once the formal circular has been received.

To announce the pay increase, the Cabinet Secretary for Health & Sport, Jeane Freeman, has written a letter to all NHS Scotland staff which has been attached to the email used to send out this brief.

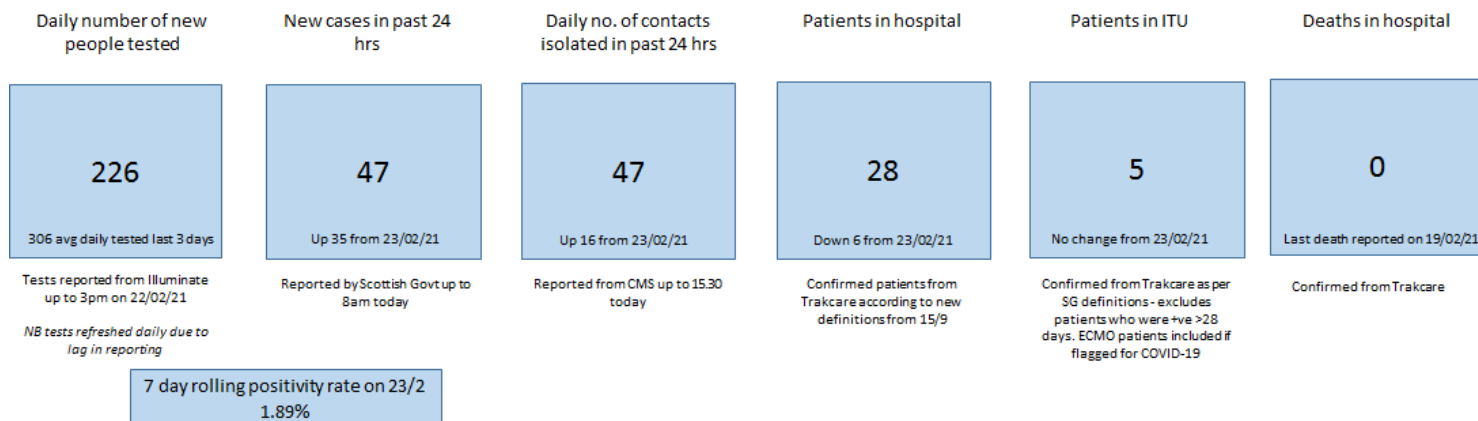
**COVID-19 vaccination – public programme** Nearly 145,000 people in Grampian have received their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine. This includes the majority of people aged over 65 years and those in the clinically extremely vulnerable group. Our community nursing teams continue to work hard to vaccinate individuals who are unable to leave their homes and deliver the second doses to care home residents. If you know anyone aged 65 and over, or defined as clinically extremely vulnerable, who HASN'T been offered a vaccine appointment, please advise them to contact the national call centre on 0800 030 8013 or visit the NHS Inform website [here](#).

Clinic activity resumed today, following a pause due to a national slow down in vaccine supply. The focus is now on priority group 6 - individuals with 'at risk' medical conditions and carers. Appointments will be sent in a phased way over the next 2 weeks. There are some differences in this group for COVID-19 vaccination when compared to the 'flu programme. These have been outlined in a letter from the interim Deputy CMO, Nicola Steedman, which is attached to the email used to send out this brief.

JCVI group 6 also specifies vaccination for adults who are deemed carers. This will capture all unpaid carers set out in the JCVI definition (those who are eligible for a carer's allowance, or those who are the sole or primary carer of an elderly or disabled person who is at increased risk of COVID-19 mortality and therefore clinically vulnerable) and other carers whom people rely on for day-to-day support. This will reduce the risk of caring situations breaking down due to carer illness from COVID-19, placing further pressure on NHS and Social Care services. Work is underway to identify those who may be deemed carers and not identified through records. These people will be invited to self-register for their vaccination as part of group 6 via an online registering registration form or by calling the national contact centre. Further communications will be sent shortly on this registration process and individuals in this situation should await this information.

**Asymptomatic community testing – Moray** The community asymptomatic testing pilot in Moray is, like Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, designed to meet the needs of the local community. A mobile testing unit will be based in a number of towns over the coming three months; operations commenced in Keith on Monday. Based at the Scout Hall (old Ogilvie school) on Fife Street, it will be open Monday-Friday, between 10am and 3.30pm for the next fortnight. The unit is being run on a 'drop-in' basis and details of future locations will be added to the Moray Council [website](#).

**Grampian data** The local figures for today and the 7 day rolling positivity rate are shown below. If you click [here](#) you can visit the Public Health Scotland website, which includes neighbourhood figures for all local authority areas in Scotland.



**Opportunity alert!** In line with NHS Grampian's NMAHP strategy, commitment to our workforce development, and improvement of patient outcomes, nurses and midwives across the organisation within the roles of clinical leadership are embarking on topping up their current qualification to a BSc degree. The course will be over a period of one academic year with the aim of receiving a BSc in Professional Nursing Practice award on successful completion. Here comes the opportunity part - we are looking for staff across all Professions who are highly motivated, enthusiastic, and committed to the professional development of staff, to act as a "Buddy" to any of the Nursing and Midwifery staff topping up on qualification to Bsc degree. If you have a Masters degree, are working towards or have undertaken post registration degree modules, and will be willing to offer informal, friendly support to promote the wellbeing and resilience of individuals undertaking this programme, please contact: [amy.ross4@nhs.scot](mailto:amy.ross4@nhs.scot)

**Cyber Security Week** Many of us are working at home - are you aware of some simple safety guidelines to protect you and your family? Hackers are well known to impact businesses but what about your own data? Can you and your family spot a suspicious email? Do you know how to protect your home computer devices from malware? [February 22-28 is Cyber Security Week - Please follow this link for useful advice on Staying Safe at Work and at Home](#)

**Thought for the day- The call of the holiday** Ever since the news that lockdown, might, ever so slightly, maybe, start to ease, my personal email inbox has overflowed with eager holiday companies selling the dream of white sandy beaches and SUNSHINE!! It is lovely to dream whilst sitting at in front of my laptop, staring out of the window, making plans to do 'not much' this weekend again... I can just see myself strolling along the beach at sunset with the warmth of the day still tickling my bare feet, delicious fruity drink in hand... But that is where it comes to a screeching halt and reality bites again, would I have to quarantine on the way to the white sandy beach? Will I have to quarantine on the way home? What about vaccinations? Will I need a COVID test? What about infection rates at my destination? The answer, of course, is that we cannot possibly know and until we do it is probably best to plan a wee staycation.

For many of us it is not the lure of some guaranteed sunshine that makes us look abroad but rather the fervent wish that we might see our families and friends again. So many of us are blessed to be able to live 'international' lives, but this has come at a cost of not being able to wave over a garden fence at loved ones...

For me, a staycation will also be a wonderful thing, much of my family live in the South of England and not seeing them in the flesh has been one of the hardest aspects of this pandemic. So, to be able to, maybe, see them this year really is something to look forward to.

**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](mailto:gram.communications@nhs.scot). Please also use that email address if you have items for consideration for future briefs.