

COVID-19 Brief

coronavirus



Here is the brief for Thursday 9 December 2021.

COVID-19 booster/flu vaccination If you haven't had an opportunity to book your booster or 'flu vaccination appointment, it's not too late! [The online portal remains open](#), with appointments available at the vaccination centres across Grampian. In addition, some clinics are offering drop-in vaccination this weekend, as follows:

- Banchory - 11 December, 9am - 5pm
- Peterhead - 11 & 12 December, 8.30am - 5.30pm
- Inverurie - 11 & 12 December, 10am - 4pm
- Fiona Elcock Vaccination Centre - 11 December, 2.30 - 4.30pm and 12 & 13 December, 1 - 4pm

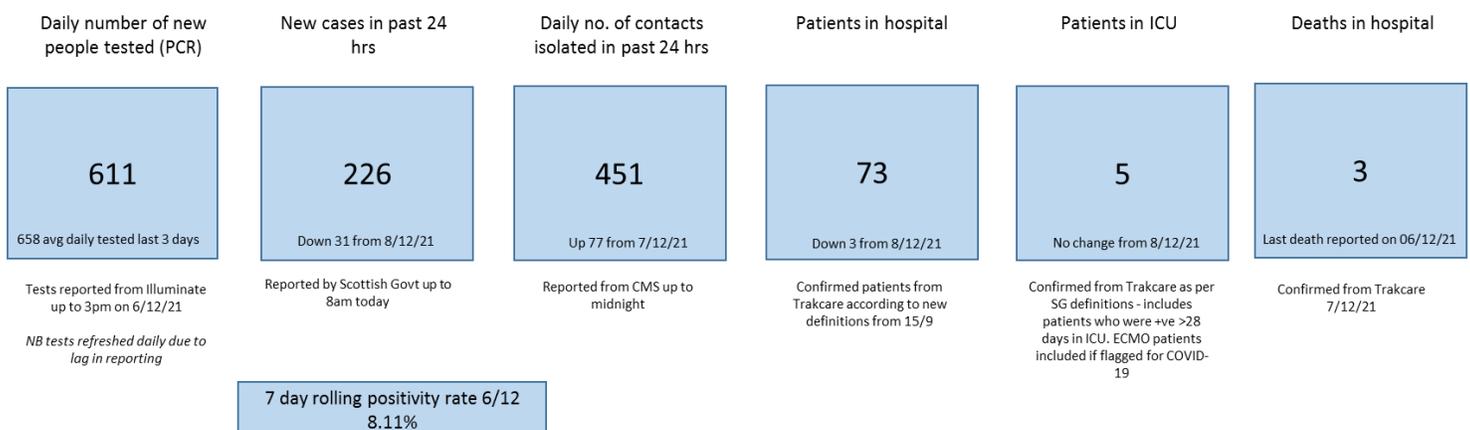
All other clinics are appointment only at present.

If more convenient, you can get both your 'flu jab and COVID-19 booster at participating community pharmacies. The following pharmacies are running clinics this weekend (11/12 December) – these are by appointment and you should book directly with the relevant pharmacy:

- Aberdeen City – Webster's (King Street), Kingswells pharmacy.
- Aberdeenshire – Baird's, Fraserburgh; Webster's (New Deer and Peterhead); Michie's, Laurencekirk; Buchanhaven, Banff, Kemnay.
- Moray – Cullen pharmacy.

Remember, as health & social care staff, you do not need to wait for your age cohort to open for booking, you can arrange vaccination right now. COVID boosters can be administered once 12 weeks has elapsed from your second dose. The clinics above are not exclusive to staff, if you know people, aged 40+, who have not yet arranged their COVID booster (or 'flu, if eligible), please share this information with them.

Grampian data The local update for today is shown below.



[The Public Health Scotland daily dashboard is available to view via this link.](#)

New respiratory guidance Further resources have been developed to support you, as we move away from Red/Amber/Green pathways and into respiratory/non-respiratory pathways. A document which highlights the changes between the COVID-19 specific guidance and the new respiratory guidance has been attached to the email used to send out this brief. [There is also a dedicated page on Turas Learn.](#) This will be regularly updated, it currently includes three short videos on the new pathway, you're encouraged to check the page regularly and provide feedback on the content.

Transparent Masks Following a rigorous technical development and evaluation process involving regulatory and advisory groups across the UK, a transparent mask that meets an agreed standard has been approved for use in NHS Scotland. This will be introduced as an option for a **limited number of clinical** environments where fluid resistant surgical masks are used. [Detailed guidance on User Priority Groups and the introduction of these Transparent masks can be accessed here.](#) (Networked devices only). However, it must be emphasised that there are very limited stocks of these masks available. Therefore, the supply and allocation to Health Boards must be controlled. Access to and distribution of this limited stock is being overseen by NHS Grampian's PPE Cell in accordance with the Priority User Group guidance. The initial batch of Transparent Masks allocated to NHS Grampian can be distributed to Priority User Group areas from this week. Supply requests should be directed to:

Acute areas – please collect a box from the Acute PPE Store, Green Zone, ARI

All other areas – please email your request to gram.covid19supplies@nhs.scot

Should staff wearing these new transparent masks develop skin irritation or respiratory issues or previously 'controlled' symptoms worsen, they should stop wearing the transparent mask and wear the standard type 11R fluid repellent mask. Management may need to review their role/duties if wearing transparent masks would be essential. Staff can also refer to the following document: [Pages - COVID-19-Skincare \(scot.nhs.uk\)](#) for preventative measures (networked devices only).

Infection Prevention & Control Team – Christmas advice Following on from yesterday's item about fire safety and Christmas decorations, the Infection Prevention & Control Team want to share their top tips for spreading cheer, while also keep ourselves, patients, and visitors as safe as possible:

-  Christmas trees are acceptable within non-clinical areas. Examples include day room / reception, or larger corridor space displays, which don't cause obstruction nor trip hazards. Remember real trees are not permitted in any NHS Grampian premises.
-  Decorations are acceptable but should be kept to a minimum and outwith bed / treatment spaces, or anywhere else where clinical procedures are taking place.
-  Festive pictures on the walls and windows are acceptable, but do avoid products with fake snow, or glitter which tends to fall off and may cause additional work for the domestic or clinical team
-  Decorations that you would usually place on shelves, window ledges or other flat surfaces will hinder increased frequency cleaning regimes and should therefore be avoided
-  Displaying donated gifts for raffles may also hinder the increased frequency cleaning regime. Why not consider an online raffle or vouchers instead, or perhaps display a wipeable photo of the prizes you have on offer?
-  Sharing of open foodstuffs should be avoided. Please remember to maintain physical distancing & wear FRSMs if less than 2 metres from each other.
-  After this year's season is complete, please dispose of your pictures, window stickers and hanging decorations.
-  Remember to "Think before you Clink" when it comes to staff parties. We might wish to be finished with COVID, but it is not finished with us!

Near Me Group Consultations The latest update to the Near Me Video Conferencing Platform has seen the beta release of the Group Consultation function. This will allow calls of up to 30 participants within specially created waiting areas. This will increase to 75 participants in the final release.

Whilst we appreciate this has been a widely anticipated feature, the Near Me Project Team are currently working with a couple of early adopter teams to resolve any teething problems. We're also working with colleagues in Information Governance to ensure all necessary information security assessments have been completed. We expect this feature to be widely available early in the new year. Meantime, the process for requesting the setup of a group consultation waiting area is to use the link below to register your service or team's need for a Group Consults waiting area. In the meantime, we would request that those staff with Organisational Administrator roles in Near Me **do not** create their own group consultation waiting areas, while we work to develop naming conventions and user guidance for staff and clients. Thank you for your understanding and patience.

[Registration of Interest form for a Near Me Group Consults waiting area](#)

eESS project [The latest newsletter from the eESS project is available to view online](#) (networked devices only). eESS is a single, national NHS Scotland approach to HR systems that is intended to enable a high quality, standardised HR function.

Value Improvement Fund – open for bids The Realistic Medicine Programme Board is pleased to announce applications for funding from the Value Improvement Fund are now open. The Value Improvement Fund can support you to take forward initiatives which will help to deliver value-based healthcare across Scotland. An application form, with guidance notes, is attached to the email used to send out this brief. The deadline for applications to be submitted to the NHS Grampian Realistic Medicine Programme Board (email: amanda.gotch@nhs.scot) is **Friday 14 January**, with the Programme Board scoring and submitting the three top scoring applications to Scottish Government by 31 January (late applications will not be considered).

Fire Safety at Home As the Christmas holiday nears and celebrations take place we would like to remind everyone to take extra care and enjoy the festivities safely. Although it is a time to celebrate and spend time with family, unfortunately it is also statistically a time when an accidental fire in the home is more likely to occur. With this in mind, the Fire Safety team are encouraging all of us to consult the [Scottish Fire & Rescue Service advice on home safety](#).

In addition, the law on fire alarms is changing. By February 2022, all homes require to have interlinked fire alarms. This means if one sounds, they all sound. [More information on the change is available here](#).

Advent Achievements Robert Gordon University have been holding their Winter graduation ceremonies this week. These are always special events, but Tuesday's ceremony was extra special, because 60 nurses, working across Grampian, received their BSc in Professional Nursing Practice. This is an amazing achievement, not least because every graduate completed their studies while also working during a period of unprecedented pressure for the NHS. As an organisation, we are committed to supporting the development of everyone who works for us – well done to ALL the graduates. To say we are proud is putting it mildly!

Tune of the day We've got a special extra request today, going out to everyone working and learning in the NHS Grampian nurseries. We hear the children are getting ready for their Christmas parties and the only song which matters is Jingle Bells, as that's the tune that brings Santa Claus in. There are obviously countless versions of this, but we've plumped for [Andrea Bocelli and The Muppets](#) (any excuse to include Kermit!)

If you want to request a song for tune of the day, follow up on items included in this brief, or suggest an item for sharing, drop us an email via gram.communications@nhs.scot