

Here is the brief for Wednesday 1 September 2021.

**COVID-19 vaccine certification** The First Minister has today announced plans for COVID-19 vaccine certification (sometimes called vaccine passports) to be a condition of entry, specifically for nightclubs, adult entertainment venues, unseated indoor events with a crowd of more than 500, outdoor unseated events with a crowd of more than 4,000, and any events where the crowd will be larger than 10,000. These proposals will be subject to a debate and a vote at the Scottish Parliament next week.

**COVID-19 vaccination and pregnancy** Throughout the pandemic, we have always worked to provide you with robust, evidence based, information. Today, we are particularly focusing on receiving the COVID-19 vaccination in pregnancy. If you, or someone you know, is pregnant, it is of course your choice to be vaccinated (as it is for all of us). The following piece has been put together, based on current evidence, by the Librarians and vaccination team, and we thank them for their input.

**Q. Is COVID-19 vaccination safe and effective for pregnant women and their babies?**

**Robust real-world data from the United States – where over 148,000 pregnant women have been vaccinated mainly with mRNA vaccines, such as Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna – have not raised any safety concerns.**

Public Health England have reported that more than 62,000 pregnant women in England have received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccination and Public Health Scotland have reported that 4,000 pregnant women have received a vaccine, with no serious adverse effects recorded.

Therefore, the **JCVI advises that it is preferable for the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna mRNA vaccines to be offered to pregnant women in the UK, where available.** In Grampian Pfizer vaccine is available across our centres and Moderna is in use, along with Pfizer, at P&J Live.

**Q. Why wasn't the evidence of safety available when the vaccines were launched?**

In relation to safety, all medicines and vaccines come to market on the basis of trials conducted to demonstrate safety and efficacy. These trials are set up to be large enough to capture significant side effects common enough to occur within the numbers in the trial. It is rare for these trials to include pregnant or breastfeeding women and so most new drugs and vaccines at the point of launch are not able to provide data in these groups. That doesn't mean the drug or vaccine isn't safe, merely there is not a set of evidence to demonstrate that safety at the point of licensing or authorisation.

Once on the market the drug or vaccine becomes used by many more people, including those who are sick, have underlying conditions, and including those who are pregnant who perhaps were not in the pre-licensing trials. Any adverse events occurring once a drug or vaccine has been marketed are collected and analysed as part of the yellow card scheme in the UK. This post marketing data effectively helps track rarer adverse events in order to demonstrate whether they are linked with the drug or vaccine or coincidental.

**COVID-19 vaccines do not contain ingredients that are known to be harmful to pregnant women or to a developing baby.** Studies of the vaccines in animals to look at the effects on pregnancy have showed no evidence that the vaccine caused harm to the pregnancy or to fertility.

The COVID-19 vaccines that we are using in the UK are not 'live' vaccines and so cannot cause COVID-19 infection in you or your baby. Vaccines based on live viruses are avoided in pregnancy in case they infect the developing baby and cause harm. However, non-live vaccines have previously been shown to be safe in pregnancy (for example, 'flu and whooping cough). Pregnant women are offered other non-live vaccines, such as those against 'flu.

**Q. What are the benefits and risks of vaccination to a pregnant woman?** *(The following information is based on publications by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists)*

### **Benefits of vaccination**

- Reduction in severe Covid-19 disease for a pregnant woman who is vaccinated but still gets Covid-19.
- Potential reduction in the risk of preterm birth associated with COVID-19.
- Potential reduction in transmission of COVID-19 to vulnerable household members, although this appears to be less of a benefit with the Delta variant.
- Potential reduction in the risk of stillbirth associated with COVID-19.
- Potential protection of the newborn from COVID-19 by passive antibody transfer, although the effectiveness of this transfer in protecting a newborn has not been measured.

### **Risks of vaccination**

- Minor local reaction (pain, redness or swelling at the injection site).
- Mild systemic adverse effects like fatigue, headache or myalgia (aches), typically short-lived (less than a few days).
- There has been no evidence to suggest foetal harm following vaccination against COVID-19, and foetal harm is considered to be extremely unlikely based on evidence from other non-live vaccines. N.B. Risk of foetal harm cannot be completely excluded until largescale studies of vaccination in pregnancy have been completed.

### **The risks from COVID-19 if the pregnant woman declines vaccination:**

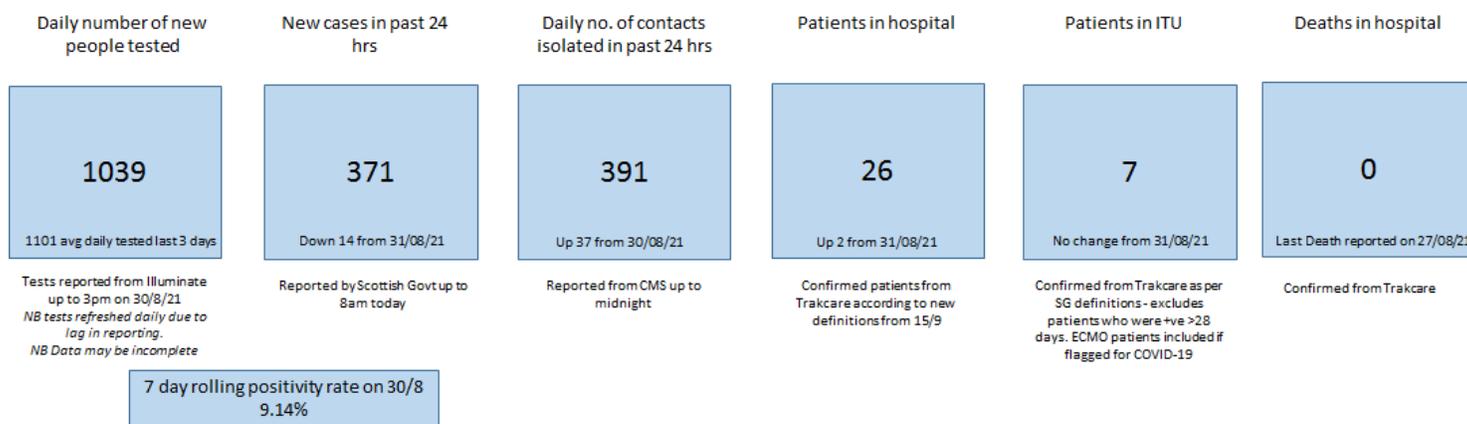
#### Maternal risks:

- Most women with COVID-19 in pregnancy will have no symptoms. However, some women will develop critical illness from COVID-19.
- The risk of severe illness from COVID-19 is higher for pregnant women than for non-pregnant women, particularly in the third trimester.
- There is consistent evidence that pregnant women are more likely to be admitted to an intensive care unit than non-pregnant women with COVID-19.

#### Foetal risks

- Symptomatic maternal COVID-19 is associated with a two to three times greater risk of preterm birth.
- Although the overall risk of stillbirth is small, the risk is approximately doubled with SARS-CoV-2 infection.

**Grampian data** The local update for today is shown below. A national update is available on the [Public Health Scotland daily dashboard](#).



**Top tips for protecting data** Here are today's top tip for keeping data safe at work.

- Close your messages when screen sharing or presenting online

If you're doing an online presentation to a group of people, the last thing you want is for sensitive information to be displayed to others. Close everything not related to the meeting or session you are in including your emails, messaging services documents, file folders etc before sharing your screen with others. It's also important to make sure there's nothing in your background like personal photographs or information on notice/white boards.

- Lock your screen when you're away from your desk

It's a simple measure, but it prevents others from seeing information they're not authorised to see. It's also important to be aware of who is around you and can see your screen when you are working with sensitive information.

If you have any questions or concerns about data protection, please contact Information Governance - [gram.infogovernance@nhs.scot](mailto:gram.infogovernance@nhs.scot) If you think you've had a data incident, please report it via Datix immediately.

**NHS Grampian Endowment Fund newsletter** A regular newsletter is produced to highlight the broad range of projects supported by the Endowment Fund. Did you know it's actually funds plural? 840 of them to be precise. The latest newsletter is attached to the email used to send out this brief.

**We Care Wellbeing Wednesday** The team at We Care would like to thank everyone who took the time to complete our pulse survey, which closed on Sunday night. We had a fantastic response (1947 in total) from you all and will feedback the results in our October Newsletter. Please keep your eyes peeled for our September Newsletter which will be available in the next We Care Wellbeing Wednesday and will contain lots of information, hints, and tips from the We Care team.

Can we please take this opportunity to direct you towards free apps for mental health and wellbeing? These apps will enable you to access a vast range of free resources to help relieve mental health and wellbeing challenges. [There's more information available on the range of apps on the National Wellbeing Hub website.](#)

We want to hear from you! You can email us via [gram.wecare@nhs.scot](mailto:gram.wecare@nhs.scot) or why not check out our social media accounts:

\*Twitter: @GrampianWeCare \*Facebook: @GrampianWeCare \*Instagram: @grampianwecare

And finally, here is one of the questions from the Guided Journaling sessions for you to reflect on:

*How can you ensure you put the wellbeing of yourself and others at the centre of your decision making?*

[If you are interested in taking part in 30 minute Guided Journaling sessions, delivered via Teams, details on upcoming dates and how to book are available on the We Care website.](#)

**Tune of the day** I am nothing if not obvious (some would call me basic, to be honest) when it comes to tune selection, so for today, please wrap your ears around [September by Earth Wind & Fire](#).

We're always on the look-out for your suggestions of a great song to end the day (or start it, depending on when you read this brief) so just drop us a line via [gram.communications@nhs.scot](mailto:gram.communications@nhs.scot) That's also your first port of call if you've got any queries or an item to share.