

Wednesday 23 August 2023

Many of you will have seen or heard media coverage today, highlighting concerns about safety in our Emergency Departments. We want to share with you the full statement we have provided in response:

A spokesperson for NHS Grampian said: “We recognise that the Emergency Departments in NHS Grampian are under tremendous pressure – as is the case across Scotland. Thanks to the dedication and flexibility of our staff we are confident in the services they provide to the public in Grampian.

“We do know that waiting times are longer than we would wish - these impact on patient experience and lead to a delay in admission or discharge. However, we continue to provide specialist care including our role in the North Region Major Trauma Network.

“Service and staffing pressures have been with us for several years and we have worked hard to expand our multi-professional workforce in the Emergency Department and redesign unscheduled care services. This includes consultants, doctors in training, nursing staff, allied health professionals (AHP) and additional roles such as physician associates and emergency nurse practitioners.

“Our consultant workforce has expanded but is not yet at full capacity. Our nursing and AHP staff numbers have also increased and are fully recruited.

“The key recent pressure area has been the recruitment of doctors in training who are entering higher specialist training. These are nationally recruited and the levels across Scotland have been particularly low this year leading to a significant shortfall. This group of doctors are particularly important in the provision of night cover which is supported by a resident on-call consultant.

“We have been working with colleagues across the system to reduce this shortfall and again would like to thank staff both within the Emergency Departments as well as across the hospital who have gone above and beyond to help.”

In addition, we want to reassure all of you reading that concerns about safety are taken extremely seriously by the organisation. Concerns can be raised via the HR team, via your staffside rep, or through the formal whistleblowing process. You can find more information on whistleblowing here:

[Whistleblowing \(nhsgrampian.org\)](https://www.nhs.uk/whistleblowing).

Finally, we want to acknowledge the very great pressure all teams have worked under, and are continuing to work under. Providing health and social care services is more complex and challenging now than it has ever been. Some of these challenges will be specific to certain services or areas of Grampian, others are being experienced right across the NHS. At all levels we are committed to meeting these challenges and resolving them. This is neither an easy nor a quick task, but it is one we will strive to complete.

Autumn vaccination programme This year's programme will officially get underway on 4 September, with invitation letters already being issued. There will be a change in the order members of the public are called forward this year; we will be starting with those aged 50-64, not otherwise in an at-risk group, and they will be offered the 'flu vaccine only. From the middle of September, appointments will be issued to those adults eligible for both COVID-19 and 'flu vaccine. The change in order follows JCVI guidance and aims to ensure those groups most at risk from COVID-19 have the highest protection possible during the Christmas and New Year period, when social mixing tends to be at a peak.

- What about health & social care staff?

The table below, published by PHS, explains the staff groups eligible for vaccination:

Eligible groups for winter vaccinations 2023



www.nhsinform.scot/wintervaccines

Information correct at time of publication: 15 August 2023



*includes independent contractors & support staff who are patient facing (GP, dental, optometry, community pharmacy)

** includes all independent contractors & support staff (GP, dental, optometry, community pharmacy), available via NHS Occupational Health Scheme

You will be able to book your appointment using the national booking portal; previous users of the portal will shortly receive either an email or a text to remind you of your username. If you have forgotten your password, this can easily be reset once on the site. You are welcome to book an appointment at any centre, but there will be specific staff clinics, at a range of locations, and we'll be sharing details of those very soon. Remember, if you book into a local vaccination clinic e.g., FEVC in Elgin, Peterhead, or Aberdeen City Vaccination Centre, they will not be operating staff only queues

Robertson Family Roof Garden and the Sandpiper Sanctuary We want to remind everyone reading that both the roof garden and the Sandpiper Sanctuary at ARI are not meal break areas. These facilities are provided to give both patients and staff a space for quiet reflection, or a much-needed breath of fresh air. Please do not eat in either area. The Staff Rest Area (old Boardroom next to General Office) and Staff Garden, both Level 1, Purple Zone – are available for you to use and you can eat and drink in both these welcoming spaces.

We Care Wellbeing Wednesday

- **Introduction to Coaching** After the overwhelming response to the recently advertised 'Coaching Skills for Manager's' course, and to deal with capacity, the Organisational Development team are now offering a new session 'Introduction to Coaching Skills' as part of the #PlanForTheFuture commitment to 'All managers are confident and competent as coaches and managers of people ... enabling development & empowerment of others.' For more information regarding the course and to find out how to book on please click here [New Course 'Introduction to Coaching' now live! \(nhsgrampian.org\)](https://nhsgrampian.org)
- **Menopause Awareness Male only Session- Spaces Available** The next Menopause Awareness Male only Session scheduled for Wednesday the 13th of September at 3pm. The session will be held via MS Teams. The session has been designed to support you in exploring:
What the menopause is and how it can affect women's lives
Understand why it is important to raise awareness of the menopause in the workplace
Identify ways to support women at work who go through the menopause
Receive a menopause manager's toolkit to support staff who are experiencing menopause symptoms at work. For more information or to book on please visit the Turas page [here](#) or get in touch with us at gram.wecare@nhs.scot

Tune of the day Tracy Milne (clerical officer, Drug & Alcohol Care team) has asked for some Nick Drake. He died in 1974, at the age of just 26, having been mostly unrecognised during his lifetime, but he has influenced countless artists in the years since. I've plumped for [Northern Sky](#) to round off Wednesday. (EP)

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