

Here is the brief for Monday 15 November 2021.

Hospital bed reinstatement At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, beds were closed across our hospitals to allow us to increase the distance between patients. Following very careful consideration – and recognising the continued pressure the NHS is operating under – we will be reinstating these beds. This will not represent an increase in the overall bed base, instead it is a return to the bed base we had prior to the pandemic.

We are reinstating these beds in order to meet the urgent care needs of people across Grampian. People requiring surgical procedures which were postponed 18 months ago and are now no longer able to wait. People ready to move on to care in a community hospital who are unable to do so, because beds are not available.

If you are working in a clinical area where your bed base has remained consistent throughout the pandemic, this change will not affect you. If you are working in an area where beds were closed, please be assured that reinstating them will only happen following a local risk assessment and the identification of appropriate staff.

Increasing the space between beds is just one measure we have, to limit the spread of COVID-19. Regular, thorough, hand hygiene, wearing the appropriate PPE, and participation in the twice weekly asymptomatic testing scheme are also key measures we should all stick to. Many thousands of you have already received your 'flu jab and COVID booster. If you have yet to arrange these vaccinations, we would encourage you to do so. Patients are asked to wear Fluid Repellent Surgical Masks (where their condition allows) and we ask everyone coming into hospital as a visitor to do the same. FRSMs are available at the entrances to all hospitals, along with hand gel. We also strongly encourage visitors to undertake twice weekly LFD testing and to not come into hospital if they are at all unwell.

Sticking strictly to these measures will allow us to reduce the risk of reinstating closed beds. We need to balance this risk, with the risk to the population of Grampian facing further delays to the care and procedures they need. If you wish to discuss this further, please speak to your Senior Charge Nurse/line manager.

New JCVI recommendations The Joint Committee on Vaccination & Immunisation (JCVI) have today issued new guidance, extending the COVID booster programme to those aged 40-49 years. The JCVI have also recommended that 16/17-year-olds should receive a second dose of COVID-19 vaccine.

People aged 40-49 will be offered booster appointments once the earlier agreed priority groups have had their injections, ensuring the most vulnerable groups are offered protection first. It has been confirmed this age group will be able to use the online booking portal (see more on this below).

Scottish Government have confirmed they are considering how best to implement the guidance relating to 16/17-year-olds and will confirm the timetable for this shortly.

You can read the full JCVI guidance via the following links:

[Booster programme extended to 40–49-year-olds.](#)

[Second dose recommended for 16/17-year-olds.](#)

'Flu/COVID booster online booking opens From today, citizens aged 50-59, unpaid carers aged 16 and over, and those aged 16 and over who are household contacts of immunosuppressed individuals, are able to book their 'flu and COVID booster online. This is done via the same website health & social care staff use to book vaccinations. If you know someone in the above groups – or you've still to arrange your vaccinations – [please share this link](#).

Staff testing policy All staff are reminded that they should stay at home and book a PCR test through the NHS Grampian staff testing service if they have any of the three Covid symptoms. LFD tests are **not** suitable for symptomatic testing.

Staff who have a household member with the three Covid symptoms will be required to self-isolate and book a PCR test through the NHS Grampian staff testing service. If they return a 'not detected' result, they can return to work, subject to the criteria already in place, undertake daily LFD tests, and if they develop any of the classic three symptoms **or extended symptoms** they need to self-isolate again and book a PCR test.

Staff who have been notified that they are a contact of a case who is not a member of their household need to follow the above guidance, **except for PCR testing for developing extended symptoms**.

Grampian data The local update for today (and across the weekend) is shown below.



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

Thank you to everyone who submitted further data queries using the form we circulated last week. All your queries have now been passed to the Health Intelligence team for further consideration.

PPE donning & doffing training If your role requires the use of PPE, it is vital you keep your skills sharp. The Infection Prevention & Control team offer regular training sessions on the correct way to don and doff PPE. The following dates have been confirmed:

Tuesday 23 November/ Wednesday 1 December/ Tuesday 14 December/ Wednesday 22 December

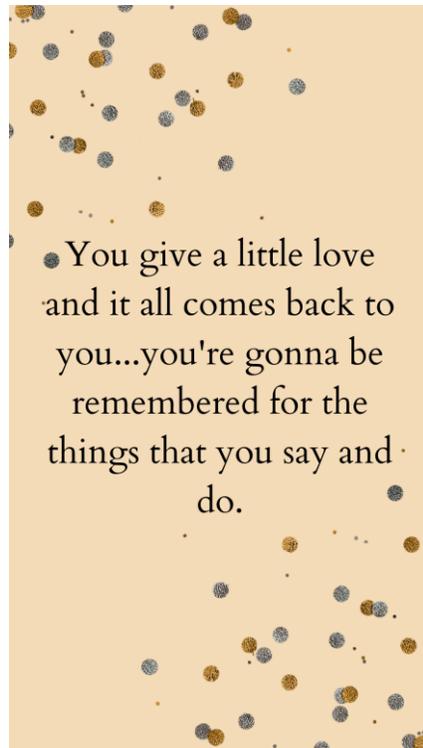
All sessions start at 11am. You can book your place by emailing gram.ipc-donn-doff-training@nhs.scot Remember, these sessions are **as well as (not instead of)** the training on Turas. This comes in two parts - 1) Droplet precautions and 2) AGP precautions - and both should be completed annually.

Monday reflection Here is today's opportunity for reflection, taken from the Guided Journaling sessions, offered as part of the We Care programme:

With the day-length shortening we notice more the importance of light - it helps to guide our way and is necessary for things to grow and flourish. Who, or what, is your guiding light - keeping you on track and helping you grow?

If you're interested in booking onto a Guided Journaling session – or any of the other opportunities offered by We Care - [you can get more information on the dedicated We Care webpages](#).

Tune of the day I'm picking the tune today (writer's privilege?) and it is a feelgood classic that never fails to bring a smile to my face – [You Give A Little Love by Paul Williams](#), from the cinematic gem that is Buggy Malone. Call me corny (you won't be the first) but the song's refrain really strikes a chord with me:



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