

Here is the brief for Wednesday 1 December 2021.

Aberdeenshire Council Mutual Aid request – call for volunteers Aberdeenshire Council is continuing their emergency response to Storm Arwen and are now asking if any NHS Grampian staff are willing to volunteer to support their efforts by helping with door knocking to check on welfare needs of more vulnerable residents still without power.

The Humanitarian Assistance Centre, Health & Social Care Partnership and Housing Services have been making contact with vulnerable individuals, but there is need to contact a significant number of residents across Aberdeenshire which will necessitate house to house attendance to confirm welfare. To deliver this alone is beyond the capability of Aberdeenshire Council, which is why they are seeking voluntary support from our staff to help check that all residents are safe and accounted for.

With immediate effect, (from now until 10pm tonight, and from 8am to 10pm tomorrow, 2 Dec) they are seeking help with knocking on the doors of those in the affected communities, to check that they are ok and if they need any support. Offers of help need only be for an hour or two or whatever people can manage. You will not be required to go into anyone's home, only to check if they need any help, hand out self-help leaflets and pass on the details of anyone needing further support.

As above the volunteer support they are looking for is to:

- knock on doors and drop leaflets as directed across Aberdeenshire.
- Cover from now – 10pm tonight (01/12/2021) and 8am-10pm (02/12/2021)
- It is preferable if people have their own mode of transport

If you are able to help, please email Paul at – paul.macari2@aberdeenshire.gov.uk and copy in gram.volunteer@nhs.scot. Our thanks in advance to any staff who are able to support these efforts.

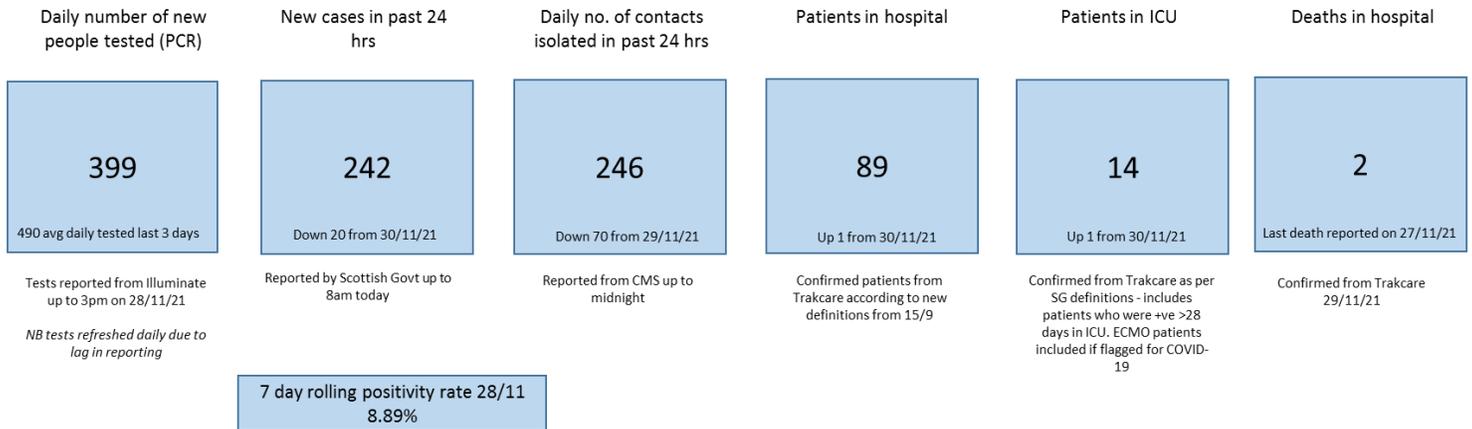
The new variant – what can we do? Omicron – a word I imagine most of us had never heard of this time last week – now dominates the headlines. Urgent work is underway to understand this latest variant of COVID-19; does it spread more easily? Is it more resistant to vaccines? Will current treatments remain effective? It will likely be some weeks before we can answer these questions for sure. In the meantime, we know the following things do work:

- Good, thorough, hand hygiene. We all have the skills and knowledge to perform this, let's make sure our technique is up to scratch.
- Use of face masks/face coverings. There are obviously differences between the personal protective equipment we use at work, and what we may use if we're nipping to the shops. However, ensuring that your mask is properly worn, covering mouth and nose, and never under the chin or hanging from your ears is vital. Single use PPE is just that – single use. Bin it, don't reuse it.
- Keeping our distance. The requirement to physically distance is still in place in many of our workplaces. Even if it isn't required, keeping physically distanced is still a smart move, as it makes it harder for the virus to spread.

- Testing. [The staff asymptomatic testing programme is open and ready to welcome new recruits.](#) You do not need to work in a clinical area, or have a patient facing role to sign up. You'll be provided with enough kits to test twice a week, for 12 weeks. Remember, if you experience the classic COVID-19 symptoms, don't use a Lateral Flow Device. Book a PCR test, [using the staff testing programme request form](#). This service can also be used for members of your household.

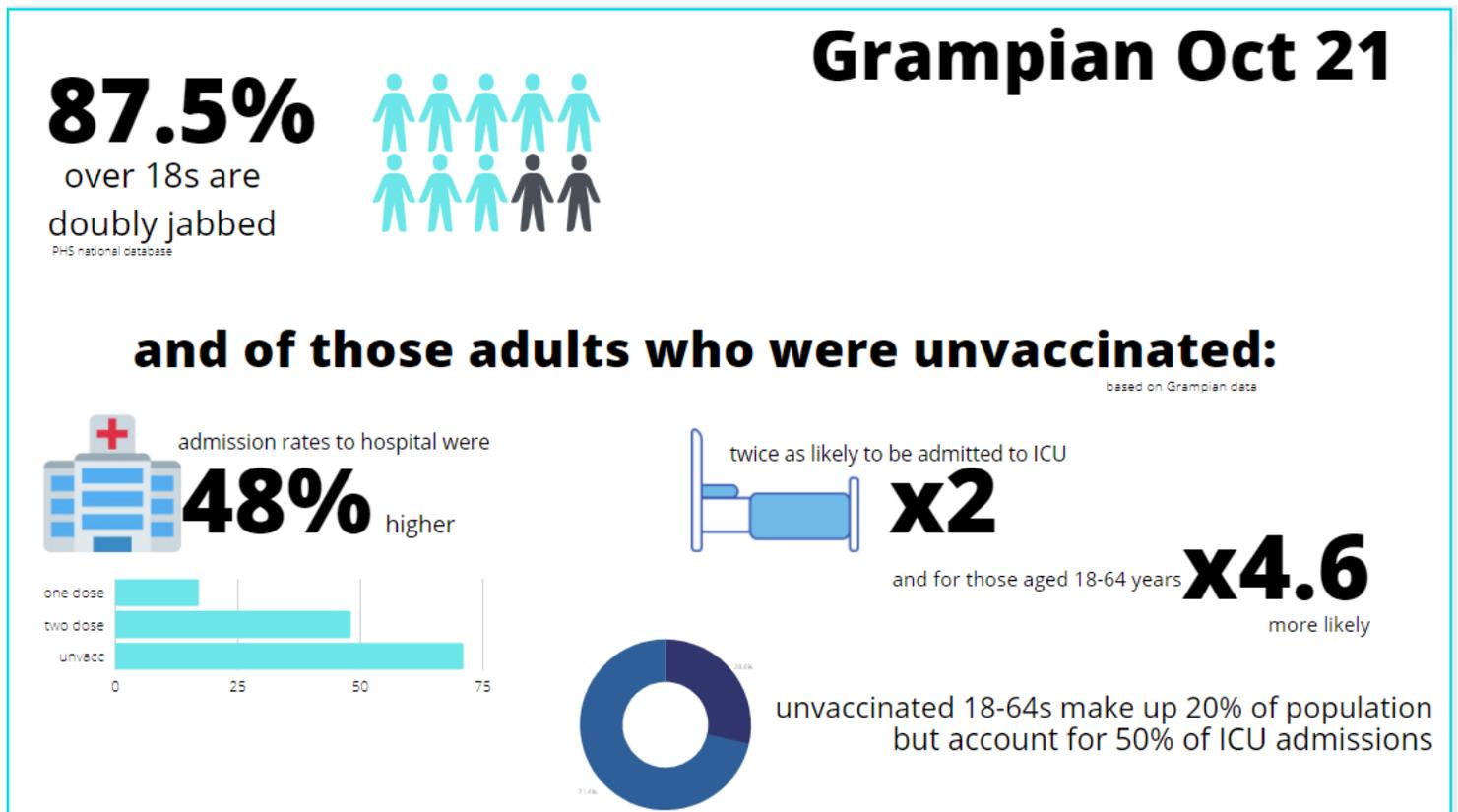
Festive celebrations – think before you clink Many of you will have plans for meals and parties in the coming weeks, both with colleagues and friends. To help you celebrate in the safest way possible, we're sharing the 'Think before you clink' guides again. One is designed for partygoers, the other will help managers/supervisors make contingency plans. The guides have been attached to the email used to send out this brief.

Grampian data The local update for today is shown below.



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

Thank you for your patience as we worked to gather other key points of data. This graphic answers some of the most popular questions – we welcome your feedback on this, via the usual address.



Scottish Winter Respiratory Guidance 2021/22 addendum This week we have provided an introduction to this new guidance and discussed what **won't** be changing. Beyond the pandemic response elements we have become used to, there are a few additional things you need to be aware of which are being introduced, and these include

- To support this transition the patient placement tool process and COVID 19 policy are under rapid review and will be with those of you who depend on them in our hospital premises shortly. These will contain all the elements of the new guidance, contained within our pre-existing and long-standing admission process
- The respiratory pathway can be established within any department or facility, and it will wax and wane depending on the numbers of each transmissible respiratory infection present at a given time.
- The respiratory pathway will not necessarily be a fixed nor pre-determined ward or clinical space, nor the sole responsibility of a single set of staff nor department
- The respiratory pathway will require us to enable some flex as it will include single cases and cohorts of viral infections such as Influenza A and Influenza B, Respiratory Syncytial Virus and COVID-19, with one exception. Due to the current volume of COVID-19 requiring secondary care input and intensive support at present, larger cohorts of COVID-19 will continue in the interim.
- FFP3 masks and fallow times are not required for AGPs performed within the non-respiratory pathway if there is a negative PCR test for COVID-19 available from the preceding 48 hours and the patient has not had COVID-19 in the previous 90 days
- The new elective surgery IPC principles - [National Infection Prevention and Control Manual: Appendix 19 - Elective Surgery IPC Principles \(scot.nhs.uk\)](#)

[You can read the new guidance in full online here.](#)

Grampian Housing Association/Foresterhill Court As you may be aware, Grampian Housing Association have been developing two-bedroom flats, for NHS staff, on the Foresterhill Health Campus. In person viewings are expected to commence very soon, in the meantime [a video tour](#) is available on YouTube. [Full details of the flats are also available online](#), applications are only being considered from NHS staff in the first instance.

We Care Wellbeing Wednesday

- **We Care Wellbeing Pulse Survey** [Our third pulse survey is now live and can be completed online](#) or by scanning the QR code. The pulse survey gives us an overview of staff wellbeing which will inform on our staff support approach going into 2022. We hope that you can take a few minutes to complete the last survey of 2021.



- **December We Care Newsletter** - We are pleased to share our December We Care Newsletter, available to [view online](#) and also attached to the email used to send out this brief. Why not share this round your teams or print a copy to add to your staff room to keep everyone up to date on We Care events, information and news? If you would like to subscribe to our newsletter or provide us with some feedback, please email us at gram.wecare@nhs.scot

Advent Achievements In the run up to Christmas, we're going to be sharing big (and small) items of good news. This year has been remarkably difficult but in the midst of all that, there have still been great things achieved. To kick things off, we're spotlighting the Orange Award. This year so far, an amazing 803 nominations have been made. That's 803 examples of great work; of teams or individuals going above and beyond in health & social care. Well done to everyone nominated, everyone who took the time to make nominations, and to the team who look after the award programme.

Tune of the day Today's request comes via Gillian McDonald at Woodend and she's gone for ['Baby It's Cold Outside'](#). There are many versions of this song, but Gillian particularly requested Idina Menzel/Michael Bublé and – as she has just become a grandma – I really couldn't refuse her!

I know, I know. It's December and there are those of you who are desperate for some Christmas songs! We will start sprinkling the festive tunes throughout this feature as we move through the month, but if you really want to scratch that itch, can I guide you towards [our Spotify Christmas playlist](#)? This was crowdsourced with your suggestions last year. You should not (I hope) need a Spotify account to be able to play it.

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