

Here is the brief for Thursday 27 January 2022.

ASK CAROLINE

CHIEF EXECUTIVE STAFF QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION



Thank you for another fantastic response to the recent request for staff questions for Chief Executive, Prof Caroline Hiscox.

Caroline joined Mike from Corporate Communications to record a second “Ask Caroline” video yesterday to answer those questions.

[You can watch the video here.](#)

We know lots of you may not have time to watch the video in full, so we have put links to each question below (with the person who asked them, where appropriate), allowing you to get straight to the topics of most interest.

[01:35](#) Caroline's motivation

[06:18](#) Tracey Macbeth: Protected Time for mandatory training

[03:41](#) Denise Forrest: Extra Public Holiday for Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June

[09:55](#) Leanne Kitchener: Overtime enhancements for part time staff

[14:15](#) Physio rehab space reinstatement

[17:21](#) What actions are being taken to retain more staff

[23:45](#) Workforce cell expanding the deployment of staff from non-essential services

[28:23](#) Better Staff Secondment Advertising Internally

[30:59](#) Sick Pay for people who return to the NHS

If you want to put your question to Caroline, give feedback or suggestions, please email: gram.communications@nhs.scot (Please also indicate if you would like your question to be anonymous)

In the first session Caroline said she would ask members of the wider team to have a look at a couple of the questions and that they would be published in the daily brief. Please see the first two answers below:

[Will NHS Grampian sponsor potential HCSW under the Health and Care Visa Scheme that allows medical staff to come to the UK?](#)

Sarah Dalgarno, Recruitment Team Manager: "It's difficult to give a one size fits all response in what is a complex area in which sponsorship eligibility changes regularly. However, generally speaking, NHS Grampian are keen to look at all potential applicants, including HCSW's based abroad, who meet the requirements of the UK Government's Health & Care Visa Scheme."

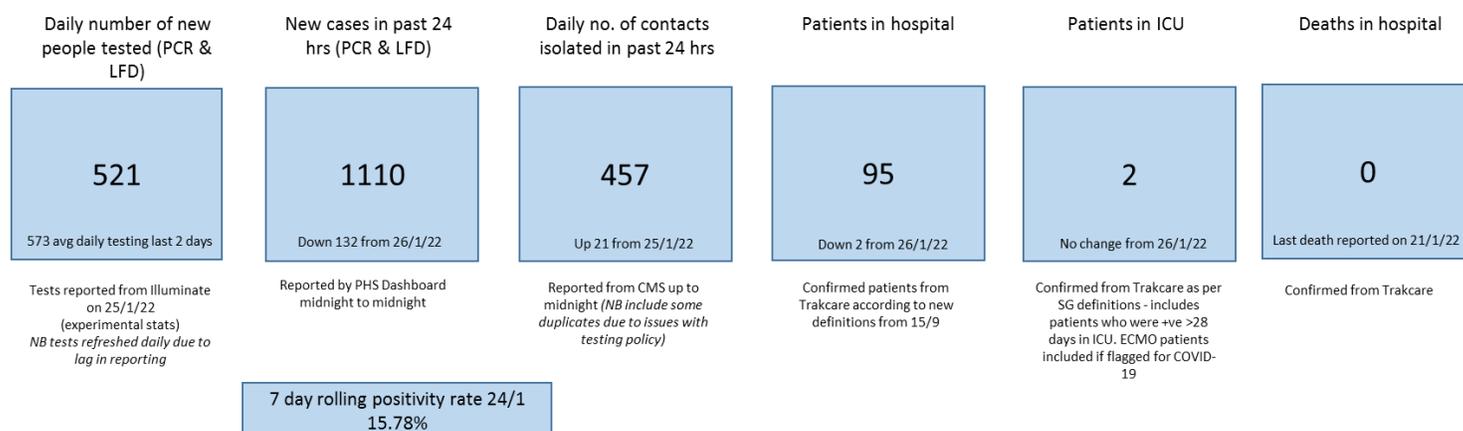
[Given that Omicron spreads much more easily than previous variants, is the use of FFP3 masks for staff across the organisation something that NHS Grampian would consider.](#)

June Brown, Executive Nurse Director: "As Caroline mentioned in the video, we're indeed aware of various articles and evidence in relation to use of FFP3 masks circulating in the media. Locally, we ensure that we follow national guidance from Public Health Scotland. This guidance is developed by national subject experts using all the most recent, relevant and available evidence and reviewed on a regular basis. I would also always say that if staff have individual concerns, professional judgement should be used and, where required, individual risk assessments can be undertaken. These assessments should be informed by the national guidance with support from Infection Control Team if needed."

We'd like to talk with you Early on in the pandemic we organised a series of focus groups with staff mainly, but not only, to find out what you wanted to get out of our communications efforts. These proved to be invaluable in informing us about many of people's concerns and, even more importantly, their advice to us. We would like to re-establish some focus groups with an emphasis on recovery. So we are appealing today for volunteers who would be willing to give up an hour of their time to take part in these groups. It would be really good if we could get staff from the three health & social care partnerships as well as staff from the NHS. A wide spectrum of staff from all disciplines and grades will add richness to the discussions. All you need is an hour of your time in the first instance and access somehow to Microsoft Teams. If you would be interested in taking part please send an e-mail to derek.cox@nhs.scot indicating your interest, mentioning your job and place of work. We look forward to talking with you.

Proper use of FRSMs Whilst we are all likely to experience PPE and pandemic fatigue occasionally, lets continue to keep ourselves and our teams safe by wearing, donning, and doffing our facemasks correctly. [A helpful guide to the dos and don'ts is available here.](#)

Grampian data The local update for today is shown below.



The table shared in the last two briefs, along with a host of other useful data, is available to view [on the PHS daily dashboard.](#)

Pensions We have two important items on pensions to share with you today

- **Consultation on amendments to NHS Scotland pension scheme**

A Scottish Government consultation on amendments to the NHS pension schemes in Scotland is now open. This consultation is seeking views on a new member contribution structure which makes changes to recognise that all members of the NHS Pension Scheme (Scotland) will be building up career-average benefits from 1 April 2022. The proposal includes making changes to the existing members contribution structure to base contribution rates on members' actual annual salaries and to rebalance contribution rates between higher and lower earners. The consultation will run until Sunday 27 February and is available at the link below:

<https://pensions.gov.scot/nhs/scheme-governance-and-legislation/consultations>

- **Pension Reforms April 2022**

The NHS Scotland pension scheme is changing from 1 April 2022, and many pension scheme members may have recently received a letter about this from the Scottish Public Pensions Agency (SPPA).

In 2015 the NHS Scotland pension scheme, along with most public service pension schemes, was reformed and a new Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) scheme was introduced. At that time some scheme members were protected from moving to the CARE scheme e.g. if within 10 years of retirement as at 1 April 2012, and therefore remained in their existing 1995 or 2008 scheme. All other scheme members were transferred to the CARE scheme from 1 April 2015. From 1 April 2022 all scheme members will move to the CARE scheme, with no protection arrangements. The change from 1 April 2022 is due to a legal case – known as McCloud – which found the move to the 2015 CARE scheme as discriminatory, in that it provided protection for some scheme members, but not all. Legislation will address the discrimination for the period 1 April 2015 – 31 March 2022, known as the remedy period.

What does this mean? Moving to the CARE scheme from 1 April 2022 does not affect any pension entitlements accrued in legacy schemes i.e. the 1995 or 2008 schemes. Pension benefits built up during the remedy period will be moved back into the relevant legacy scheme. 1995 and 2008 scheme members can still access their pension and lump sum in the same way and at the same normal retirement age as per their legacy scheme rules. On retirement scheme members will be given the choice to have their pension entitlement based on their previous (legacy) scheme i.e. 1995 or 2008 scheme, or the CARE scheme. This option – known as Deferred Choice Underpin (DCU) - will not be available until October 2023. From this date your annual benefit statement will track both your final salary scheme (1995 and/or 2008) and reformed scheme (CARE) to help you make an informed choice on retirement.

Do I need to do anything? No. SPPA are working on the scheme changes and will contact scheme members again once these have been finalised.

Want to know more? [The SPPA's website contains information on the CARE scheme.](#)

A presentation for NHS Grampian scheme members, which provides an overview of the 1995, 2008 and CARE schemes and details regarding the April 2022 Pension Reforms, has been attached to the email used to send out this brief.

[The NHS Business Services Authority produced this short video to explain the changes](#) – this is an NHS England organisation but the pension rules are exactly the same.

Outpatient Parenteral Antimicrobial Therapy Service (OPAT) From next Monday (31 January) the first phase of the evolving OPAT service in Grampian will see the OPAT clinic facility re-established at ARI. The aim of the OPAT service is to provide treatment to patients who require intravenous antibiotic therapy but who do not have a clinical requirement to be a hospital inpatient. Re-establishment of the service, located in Ward 301, Orange Zone, ARI, will enable patients to return home whilst still receiving their intravenous antibiotic treatment, reducing their risk of hospital acquired infections as well as releasing inpatient bed capacity. Details of the inclusion/exclusion criteria for the OPAT service can be found on the Infectious Diseases Section of Grampian Guidance and a referral to the service can be made through Trakcare Order Coms.

Tune of the day A quiet moment of reflection today, with [Once I Was by Tim Buckley](#). We note that today is Holocaust Memorial Day and we stand with all those marking the occasion.

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