



Update for key stakeholders

3 December 2021

COVID cases

We had 802 new cases in the seven days to 28 November. The infection rate is 250/100,000 across the NHS Highland area: 259.9/100,000 in Argyll and Bute and 246.4/100,000 in North Highland.

We have 17 patients in hospital with COVID-19, including 5 in ITU. We have 7 ITU beds, of which 5 are occupied with COVID-19 patients and 2 with other patients.

There have been 239 recorded deaths of people with COVID in the NHS Highland area since the start of the pandemic: 147 in Highland and 92 in Argyll and Bute. This represents an increase of 3 in the last 7 days.

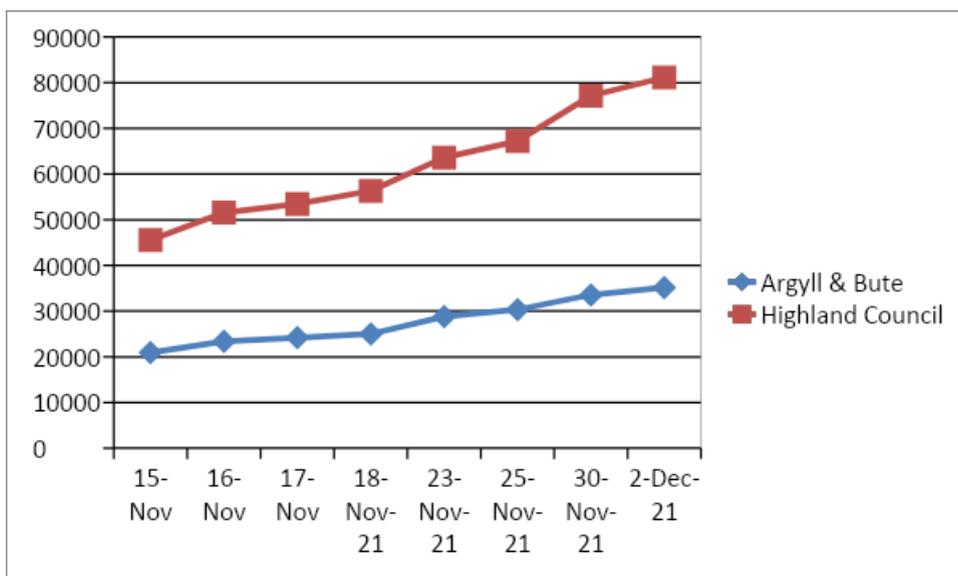
Omicron

A small number of cases of Omicron have been identified in Highland as part of a household cluster. Enhanced contact tracing has been carried out in keeping with guidance for the management of a new variant.

The Omicron variant is a new COVID variant which we are still learning about. Until more is known about it we need to be cautious and do everything we can to prevent spread. As such, enhanced isolation advice is in place. Contacts will be asked to isolate for ten days irrespective of their vaccination status and PCR test result. Their households will also be asked to take additional action in order to try to reduce transmission within our communities.

Vaccination

This graph shows the number of third doses or boosters administered.



The COVID booster programme was extended this week with the addition of all adults, and a reduction in the gap between doses from 24 weeks to 12.

People in their 40s are being asked to book COVID boosters online on the national portal, other than for patients on Coll, Colonsay, Jura, Tiree, Bute, and the three practices on Islay, and the Small Isles of Rum, Eigg, Muck and Canna, where vaccination will be delivered by GPs. We are adding further clinics at a range of locations across Highland and Argyll and Bute. Anyone not booking via the portal will be contacted with an appointment later in the programme.

Moray Maternity Services Review

A [report published today](#) reviews maternity services across Moray. The review was requested by the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport. The Review Group spoke to women and their families, staff from NHS Grampian and NHS Highland, political representatives, advocates and other stakeholders.

The Group considered six models:

Model 1: Current model (*status quo*)

Model 2: No intrapartum services (services provided during the act of birth) in Moray

Model 3: Community Maternity Unit in Dr Gray's, linked mainly to Aberdeen

Model 4: Community Maternity Unit in Dr Gray's, linked mainly to Inverness

Model 5: Rural consultant-supported Maternity Unit in Dr Gray's

Model 6: Consultant-led maternity unit in Dr Gray's

The Review Group considered Models 1 and 2 inappropriate, so concentrated on Models 3 to 6.

Short term recommendations:

NHS Grampian to implement a "Community Maternity Unit" (Model 4) at Dr Gray's. Elective (planned) Caesarean sections to be offered at Dr Gray's. More women in need of specialist care to give birth in Raigmore rather than Aberdeen.

Longer term recommendations:

NHS Grampian to consider moving to a "Rural Maternity Unit" (Model 5) supported by a consultant (senior doctor) and with 24/7 medical cover.

It is for Scottish Government to decide whether and how to implement the recommendations. We will work with them, NHS Grampian and other partners.

We welcome the recommendation that maternity provision at Raigmore Hospital is increased to encompass some parents in the Moray area. This represents a significant expansion of services, that would need to be planned and resourced appropriately. It is also an opportunity to further improve the environment and facilities for families using maternity services at Raigmore, to the benefit of all. We have an outline business case for extending provision at Raigmore. This would involve both extending and improving the facilities within the building and recruiting and training more staff. We would expect it to take up to two years to be fully operational.

We note the longer-term recommendation for a rural maternity unit supported by a consultant at Dr Gray's Hospital. We are keen to learn from this review and how its recommendations can be safely implemented.

We are committed to retaining our valued midwifery teams and incorporating their experience and expertise into any future service changes.

Feedback

If you have comments or queries please contact nshighland.feedback@nhs.scot