

Tuesday 23 December 2025

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**Extended use of fluid repellent surgical masks (FRSMs) – ARI and RACH** On 12 December the request was made of all staff in – and visitors to – clinical areas of ARI to wear FRSMs. This recognised the high level of ‘flu admissions and the prevalence of ‘flu in the community. To give all staff certainty, this will remain in place at ARI across the Christmas/New Year period, to be reviewed in the w/c 5 January.

The extended use of FRSMs at RACH is being kept under regular review. Any changes to this will be communicated directly to the relevant teams.

Our strong advice to the public is not to visit relatives or friends in hospitals/care homes if they are experiencing respiratory symptoms (cough, sore throat, runny nose) or if they have had diarrhoea and/or vomiting.

**Pay and Conditions of Service 2025-26 Policy for the Career Progression/Regrading of Specialty Doctor/Dentist** Following publication on 2 December, we have now received Circular PCS (DD) 2025/02), [available via this link](#). As such, planning is underway to develop processes to assist individuals, services and managers in preparation for the regrading process. We will work alongside our People and Culture colleagues, BMA colleagues and the medical directorate at the earliest opportunity in early January and will continue to communicate and inform you as the work progresses.

If you have any questions or require further information, please contact your line manager in the first instance or [gram.jobplans@nhs.scot](mailto:gram.jobplans@nhs.scot)

**To flush, or not to flush** The only items which should be flushed down any toilet are pee, poo, and (toilet) paper. Paper towels, wipes of all kinds, and period products should never be flushed; these materials do not break down like toilet tissue and are repeatedly causing significant blockages within our wastewater infrastructure.

Each blockage requires estates staff to be diverted from essential planned maintenance tasks to clear the system and prevent further damage. This reactive work not only increases operational costs but also reduces the time available for critical preventative maintenance that keeps our facilities safe, compliant, and functioning reliably. Wipes (even those which say they are safe to flush), paper towels, and period products must be disposed of in the appropriate bin.

**Salary sacrifice scheme - green cars** We are pleased to confirm all governance and contractual requirements have now been met for this scheme. Furthermore, we can announce we are partnering with Zenith to offer the purchase of a green car via a salary sacrifice scheme. There will be more information, including a target launch date, in the next month. Work on this scheme has taken longer

than initially expected; we are very grateful to you for your patience and your continuing interest in this scheme

**Interpretation Services** From tomorrow until 5 January 2026 the out of hour procedure will be in place due to limited access to face-to-face interpreters. Please visit the [Equality and Diversity](#) intranet page and go to the 'Out of Hours' section for further information.

**Values Based Reflective Practice – dates for 2026** We are delighted to offer new dates for 2026 for Values Based Reflective Practice (VBRP®) Essential Toolkit training in Aberdeen. This is open to all health and social care staff with no pre-requirements. We plan to set a date for Elgin in Spring/Summer 2026 and additional dates can be set for other venues if sufficient demand.

After completion, participants can use the tools to reflect on their own practice and participate more fully in groups led by a trained VBRP® facilitator. This training is also a pre-requisite if you would like to progress your skills and move onto VBRP® Dynamics and Processes (Facilitator) training.

A flyer with dates and a factsheet about VBRP [are available via this link](#), alternatively, you can contact June, our VBRP® Lead Facilitator, via [june.gordon@nhs.scot](mailto:june.gordon@nhs.scot)

**ICYMI - virtual carol service** With support from the NHS Grampian Charity, the spiritual care team have produced their annual carol service video. The service focuses on the reality that peace doesn't happen above the complex grid of life but amid it. The ups and downs of the original Christmas story illustrate that thought very well because things were far from easy for Mary and Joseph on the long journey that led them to Bethlehem. [You can watch the service and share it with patients via this link](#).

**NHS Grampian Charity** Did you know the NHS Grampian Charity has a quarterly newsletter where we share stories of some of the projects and activities which we have supported across NHS Grampian? It's a great way to keep up-to-date with what is happening in other wards, departments, and hospitals, and it might spark an idea for an enhancement you want to make in your own area. It's easy to sign up, just email [gram.charities@nhs.scot](mailto:gram.charities@nhs.scot) with 'Newsletter' in the subject line and you'll be added to the list.

**Tune of the day** Firstly, we want to wish Helen Jaques, phlebotomy supervisor at ARI a very happy birthday for Thursday (none of this 'one big present' carry on, please!). She turns 60 this year and the whole phlebotomy team have asked for [Happy Birthday](#) by Stevie Wonder.

Ann Sebastian, part of the CSS3 quality team at ARI, dedicates the [Macarena](#) to colleagues Laura and Kasia who have made this year so cheerful and fun. Today is their last working day together, reports that they will be leading the team in the dance are currently unconfirmed...

Shona McLeman from the sexual health service requests [Lullaby](#), a charity collaboration between British and Palestinian artists.

King Riddell, staff nurse in Recovery/MTS at ARI, takes us to the halls of Whamhalla (if you know, you know) with her request of [Last Christmas](#), dedicated to their team, especially those working over the festive season.

Consultant midwife Amanda Gotch requests [All I Want For Christmas Is You](#), dedicated to all those in maternity services, especially those on the Christmas Eve night shift.

Finally, I know we played it on Friday, but with yesterday's news that Chris Rea has left the stage for the final time, we need to give [Driving Home For Christmas](#) another spin (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](mailto:gram.communications@nhs.scot)