

Thursday 25 September 2025

Let's prepare for winter Every winter, demand for our services further increases, thanks to a range of seasonal viruses. These include 'flu, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), COVID-19 as well as gastrointestinal viruses such as norovirus. There is lots we can all do to reduce this demand – thanks to our colleagues in infection prevention and control for compiling these handy hints:

- Do not to come into work if unwell with an illness that can be passed on to others.
- Do not attend work until 48 hours after your last symptom of diarrhoea and/or sickness
- Practice good hand hygiene and cough etiquette (e.g., cough into your elbow).
- Ensure you are up to date with your face fit testing (FFP3 mask)
- Get your 'flu jab to protect you, your colleagues, and your friends and families
- Keep your working environment and any shared equipment clean.
- Ensure your area has adequate stocks of PPE and use it appropriately.
- Have all your Transmission Based Precautions Posters up to date and laminated: Contact, Droplet, and Airborne.
- Promptly isolate patients who have symptoms of a respiratory illness and/or those with diarrhoea or vomiting, or both.
- Remind visitors not to visit if they themselves are unwell.
- Provide service users with tissues, plastic bags for used tissues, and hand hygiene facilities as necessary.
- Encourage service users showing symptoms of respiratory illness to wear a surgical (Type II R FRSM) face mask where it is clinically safe and tolerated by the wearer.
- Promote ventilation by opening windows, where possible, in the absence of mechanical ventilation to help with dilution of air and reduce transmission of respiratory infections.

Standard Infection Control Precautions (SICPs) should **always be followed**. Hand hygiene using soap and water should be used where a service user has symptoms of a gastro-intestinal infection (vomiting and/or diarrhoea). Further information is available via the [NIPCM National Infection Prevention and Control Manual](#) and [NHS Inform](#).

Agenda for Change Reduced Working Week - phase two A reduction in the working week by 90 minutes (pro rata) to 36 hours (pro rata) was part of the Agenda for Change agreement in 2023/24. This is being implemented in a phased way, with the first reduction of 30 minutes (pro rata) already in place. We are now getting ready for implementing phase two; [all the information you need can be found here](#) (intranet link, networked devices only). We encourage you to read this carefully. All services will be required to complete and submit a MS Form outlining their planned approach for implementation. The submission window for the MS Form will not open until 1 October and all submissions should be made no later than 30 November. Please remember we are only at the planning stage; reductions must not be implemented until April 2026.

Chief officer appointed - Aberdeenshire Health & Social Care Partnership Leigh Jolly, has been appointed to the role of Chief Officer for the Aberdeenshire Health & Social Care Partnership (AHSCP). Leigh has been in this role, on an interim basis, since May 2025. Prior to this, Leigh served as head of children and families at Aberdeenshire Council. She has been Chair of the AHSCP's Social Care Sustainability Board for the last three years. Further information is available here: [Appointment to the role of Chief Officer for the Aberdeenshire Health & Social Care Partnership](#)

World Pharmacists Day In a world where healthcare can feel distant or complex, pharmacists are friendly, knowledgeable faces we can count on. They're not tucked away in offices or behind closed doors—they're right there, in our neighbourhoods, on our high streets and in our hospitals and GP practices, offering guidance, reassurance, and life-saving expertise. They ensure the availability and appropriate use of medicines, deliver vaccinations and preventive care, support public health campaigns, promote rational antibiotic use, improve health literacy, and serve as a trusted point of contact for millions. Pharmacists are the most accessible members of our healthcare systems—and that's no small thing. So today, let's celebrate their dedication, their compassion, and their impact. Let's thank them for being the steady hands behind the counter, the sharp minds behind the advice, and the warm hearts behind the smile.

Baby loss bereavement care As part of maternity services' ongoing training plans in collaboration with SANDs charity, we would like to invite you to a free half-day workshop on Thursday 9 October. These workshops provide a valuable learning opportunity to explore baby loss bereavement care in more detail and within a multidisciplinary group setting. The morning session will run from 9am-12.30pm and the afternoon session from 1.30pm-5pm. If you're interested in joining us on the day, please email gram.ifpeducators@nhs.scot to confirm your place. Locally, SANDS support both bereaved families and the healthcare professionals who look after them. If you, or someone you know, has experiences with baby loss, you can find the details of the local support groups here: [Baby Loss Awareness Week | Sands - Saving babies' lives. Supporting bereaved families.](#)

NHS Grampian Charity's Annual Review This event will take place on Wednesday 8 October at the Suttie Centre, Foresterhill, from 2pm until 5pm. Staff are invited to attend the event, which provides an overview of the charity's work from the past year, followed by the chance to speak to other staff who have received charity funding. The event will be of most benefit to staff who are unfamiliar with the charity and would like to learn more about its work and how to apply for funding. If you would like to attend, please contact gram.charities@nhs.scot by **Thursday 2 October** to register your interest. Please note, numbers are strictly limited due to venue capacity.

Tune of the day Kim Cruttenden makes today's request, dedicated to her pharmacist colleagues, who she's missing due to her current secondment, to mark World Pharmacists Day. We can be safely assured the one thing they don't dispense is [Bad Medicine](#) (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