

Thursday 5 March 2026

COVID-19 Day of Reflection This Sunday (8 March) is the UK COVID-19 Day of Reflection. This is an opportunity to remember those who died, reflect on the toll the pandemic took on all of us, pay tribute to the enormous contribution of health and social care workers, and give thanks to those who volunteered, in whatever way, during that strange and sad time.

It is up to individuals to mark this day in a way which is meaningful to them; there isn't a planned two-minute silence. You may wish to visit one of our chapels for a moment of quiet reflection or organise something in your team/service. You may not wish to mark the day at all. All colleagues are supported to do what is right for them.

Ask Laura – March session now available Steven Lindsay, our employee director, recently sat down with Laura Skaife-Knight to ask the questions you've submitted for the [latest Ask Laura session](#). In this edition, Laura addresses a range of topics including parking pressures around the RACH site, workload & meeting culture, her approach to openness and communication with staff as well as the reliability of lifts and plans for replacement. As always, we provide links to specific questions, so you can skip to section most relevant to you:

- [00:32](#) – Laura's monthly update
- [04:20](#) – RACH parking pressures
- [06:03](#) – Openness and honesty with staff
- [08:12](#) – Lift reliability at RACH
- [10:17](#) – ARI Staff car park incidents – who to contact
- [12:07](#) – Workload, meetings and workplace culture

If you have a question you would like to raise in a future session, please email gram.communications@nhs.scot. Remember to let us know if you would prefer it to be asked anonymously.

Reduced Working Week – Agenda for Change 1 April is fast approaching. This means the working week for all AfC staff reduces to 36 hours (pro rata for part-time staff). To ensure you are prepared for this change within your service, consider the following areas for action:

- If you manage part-time staff with previous agreement to retain their existing hours from 1 April onwards, [you must complete the form available at this link](#) no later than 13 March. If you need to correct or update information already submitted via the MS form, re-enter the information on a new form. This form is for managers only.
- If you are still awaiting RWW notification for your roster, contact us on gram.RWW@nhs.scot
- If you have vacancies going to advert because of RWW backfill, the code **RWW BF** must be included in the job title on job train.

For guidance on the next steps, [please read the document at this link](#) carefully.

Dress policy We are all expected to follow the [NHS Grampian Dress Policy, available via this link](#). This clearly states uniform should only be worn in the work setting. If you are unable to change at work, you must ensure you cover your uniform with appropriate overgarments. You should not undertake personal activities e.g., shopping while in uniform. This applies to all types of uniform, including scrubs/theatre greens.

Green car salary sacrifice scheme Great progress is being made towards a target launch of April 2026 for a new green car salary sacrifice scheme. Final arrangements are ongoing with our partner, Zenith, and we will let you know via this brief as soon as a launch date is confirmed and how you can sign up to have access to their online portal.

Replacement of wall-piped suction units and flowmeters We are pleased to confirm funding has been received to replace all these units across ARI, RACH, AMH, Woodend, and Dr Gray's. Work will begin next week. The current plan is to begin at the bottom of the Pink zone and work upwards, followed by the Green zone, RACH, AMH, Purple zone, Yellow zone, and Orange zone. Dr Gray's and Woodend will run concurrently with ARI, with DGH expected on Tuesday/Wednesday and Woodend on Thursday/Friday. However, timings may vary and all teams should expect GCE contractors to arrive from Tuesday onwards. Therefore, teams **must** ensure the following:

- All unused suction units and flowmeters are ready for one-for-one replacement.
- If a unit is in use during the changeover, the ward must replace it with new stock as soon as possible and contact MEMS on x52400 for final unit replacement.
- Some niche units may not be replaced immediately; these can be discussed on the day, noted, and replaced once the order is receipted.

Controlled drugs medicine misbalances The Controlled Drugs Team often get reports of controlled drugs (CD) medicine misbalances; this message shares an opportunity for improved practice.

- Problem: Where several tablets or vials cannot be accounted for, and investigations cannot find a cause, the ward area often suggests the missing medicines have been accidentally discarded with, what is presumed to be, empty packaging.
- Why it is important: Misbalances take valuable time to investigate at ward level, take CD Team time to oversee and undermine controls to manage CDs
- What can we do better? To reduce this type of incident CD Team advises all controlled drug medication packets are torn up before being placed in the bin, and the patient information leaflet is checked carefully to confirm that no medication is concealed within it.

We always welcome examples of good practice from sites to support continuous improvement in CD management. The Controlled Drugs Team can be contacted via email at gram.cdteam@nhs.scot

NRS reproductive health and childbirth newsletter The latest edition of this newsletter is out now and [available to read via this link](#).

Tune of the day We're starting to see the runners and riders for this year's Eurovision Song Contest line up, ahead of May's final in Austria. Sebastian Karolczak (CTAC/immunisations co-ordinator in central Aberdeenshire) is a fully paid-up member of the Grampian Eurovision crew and his favourite (so far) comes from Greece; please enjoy [Akylas singing Ferto](#) for a Thursday (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