

Health Protection Newsletter – Spring Edition



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Health Protection and Aberdeenshire Council at The Spring Show 2025

Spring Show

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In Grampian, the farming community are seeking new innovative ways of diversifying to continue to make their farms sustainable. This is reflected in the increasing popularity of seasonal pop-up and permanent farm animal attractions available to the public, such as animal petting, lamb bottle feeding and pumpkin picking. Lamb feeding around the Easter holidays is becoming very popular.

These attractions are well documented to provide educational value and can have a positive impact on people's wellbeing. However, direct contact with animals and their environment poses a risk to human health and can result in gastrointestinal illnesses such as *Cryptosporidium*, *E Coli* O157, *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter*. Symptoms can range from symptoms such as diarrhoea to more severe symptoms such as renal failure.

Please continue to enjoy these attractions and below are some handy tips that can be taken to minimise the risk.

Handy Tips when visiting a farm animal attraction

- Wash hands with warm running water, liquid soap and dry hands with paper towels. This should be done **after** touching/feeding animals and their environment such as gates/fences, **before** eating, **before** leaving the premises and **after** handling/removing footwear.

Contact:

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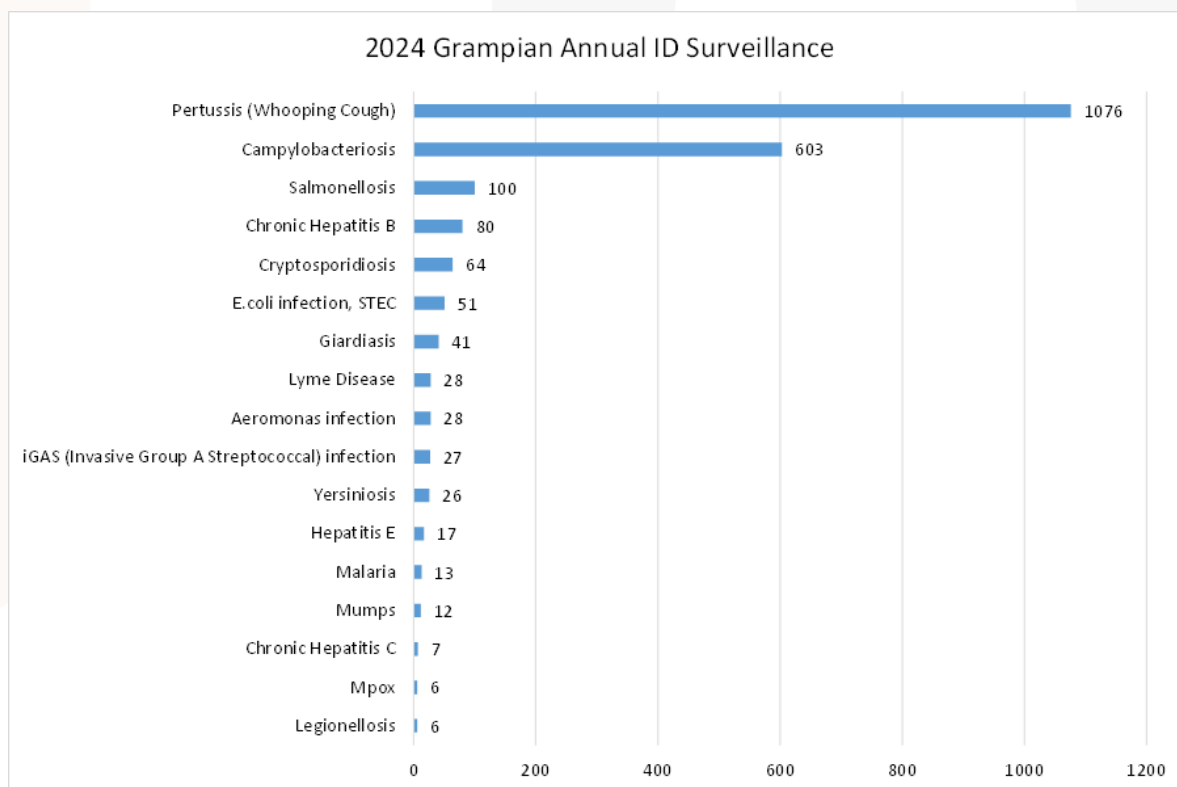


- Alcohol hand gel/hand sanitiser is **NOT** effective against pathogens found in farm animals and their environment, such as E-Coli O157 and Cryptosporidium.
- Carefully read the information detailed on the owners website before booking.
- Don't eat or drink while touching animals or in their environment and only eat and drink in designated picnic areas or cafes.
- Don't kiss animals or allow children to put their faces close to animals.
- It is recommended to take an extra pair of footwear and extra outer clothing to change into after visiting the animal area.
- Consider taking a bag/box to transport used footwear and clothing in when leaving the premises.
- Clean wheels of prams, scooters, bikes etc. before bringing back indoors.
- When home, place outer clothing into the washing machine and thoroughly clean footwear that would have been in contact with animals and their environment, immediately wash hands after handling.

Due to the risk of gastrointestinal illness, it is advisable that agricultural animals do not visit care home settings.

The Health Protection Team and Aberdeenshire City Council had a day out at the Spring Show at Thainstone Agricultural Centre on the 26th of February to raise awareness of 'how to keep visitors safe when opening up farm animal attractions'. We met lots of interesting people and a fair amount of discussion and networking was generated around keeping visitors safe.

Annual Infectious Disease Data 2024



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Food Hygiene Training: A Crucial Step for Safety in Scotland

Why Food Hygiene Training Matters

Food hygiene is essential for protecting public health and ensuring the safety of food. In Scotland, food poisoning and foodborne illnesses remain a significant concern, making it crucial for businesses and individuals involved in food handling to adhere to strict hygiene practices. Food hygiene training equips individuals with the knowledge and skills needed to prevent contamination and ensure that food is safe to eat.

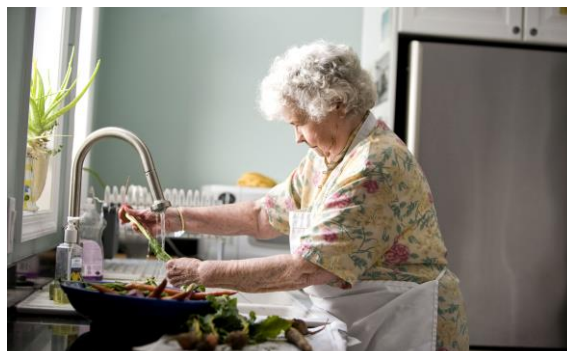
Key Benefits of Food Hygiene Training

1. **Ensuring Food Hygiene Standards:** Training helps maintain high standards of food hygiene by teaching proper food handling, storage, and preparation techniques.
2. **Preventing Foodborne Illnesses:** By understanding and implementing hygiene practices, food handlers can significantly reduce the risk of food poisoning and foodborne illnesses.
3. **Compliance with Regulations:** Food hygiene training ensures that businesses comply with legal requirements, avoiding legal notices, convictions and reputational damage.
4. **Building Consumer Trust:** Businesses that prioritise food hygiene are more likely to gain and retain customer trust, leading to better business outcomes.

Legislative Requirements in Scotland

In Scotland, food law is regulated by Local Authority Environmental Health departments. Food law outlines the hygiene practices required for businesses that handle, prepare, or serve food. Key legislative requirements include:

- **Mandatory Training:** All food handlers must undergo food hygiene training appropriate to their role. This ensures they understand the importance of personal hygiene, safe food handling, and the prevention of cross-contamination.
- **Regular Updates:** Businesses must ensure that their staff training is up-to-date, reflecting any changes in legislation, best practices or business operations.



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Training Providers

There are many providers of the Royal Environmental Health Institute for Scotland (REHIS) Food Hygiene courses. REHIS has created courses at elementary, intermediate and advanced levels depending on the staff members job in the food business. Approved training centres can be found at: <https://rehis.com/training-centres/>. Aberdeen City Council, Environmental Health has recently been registered to provide Elementary Food Hygiene with face-to-face courses occurring monthly. Any enquiries regarding Elementary Food Hygiene Courses being organised by Aberdeen City Council, Environmental Health can be directed to Alice MacLaren on commercial@aberdeencity.gov.uk.

Conclusion

Investing in food hygiene training is not just a legal obligation but a wise decision for anyone involved in the food industry. It ensures the safety of consumers, helps businesses comply with regulations, and builds a reputation for quality and safety. By prioritising food hygiene, we can contribute to a healthier, safer Scotland.

Infection Prevention and Control in Childcare Settings Webinar

Members of the Health Protection Nursing team led a session hosted by the Care Inspectorate for nurseries and childminders. This session was to remind childcare staff about the importance of maintaining good and consistent standards of infection prevention and control precautions linking to the Public Health Scotland guidance, "Health protection in children and young people settings, including education" which was issued last year.

Well over 400 sites tuned in to the live session. Questions were asked and answered in the chat whilst the session was ongoing. The recording of the session can be found here : [Preventing and managing infection in childcare and education settings](#)

Scabies

Over the last year we have noticed an increase in the numbers of scabies diagnoses. We have also been aware that there have been issues with access to treatment and treatment failures.

The main causes of treatment failure are poor application of permethrin cream (which is currently the first choice for treatment of scabies) or not treating those exposed at the same time as the affected person.



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Points to consider for effective treatment and to prevent reinfection are:

- Apply treatment evenly to cool, dry skin - **not** after a hot bath/shower which will increase absorption reducing efficacy.
- Apply it to the whole body including skin folds; scalp and face, avoiding eyes. Pay attention to the web spaces between the fingers and toes as well as under the nails and areas where there are skin folds. Cream can be applied under fingernails and toenails using an old toothbrush/cotton bud which should then be disposed of in a bag.
- The cream will vanish completely once applied, so will not be visible on the surface of the skin. Do not vigorously rub the cream in.
- Once the cream is applied, put on clean clothes or nightclothes.
- You should change bed linen and wash the removed bed linen and clothes in a wash that reaches at least 50 degrees. Clothes that are not suitable for washing at such temperatures should be placed in a plastic bag and set aside for 72 hours before laundering.
- Permethrin must be left on for 8 to 12 hours. If you wash during this time (e.g. handwashing), you should reapply the treatment to the washed area.
- After 8-12 hours you should wash the cream off in a shower or bath if no shower is available.
- Follow-up treatment after seven days is required to kill any mites that have hatched from existing eggs. The second treatment should be used in exactly the same way as the first.

There are other treatments available in case of failure and can be discussed with your GP however, it must be remembered that it is not uncommon to still experience itching up to 6 weeks after treatment.

Scabies Mite



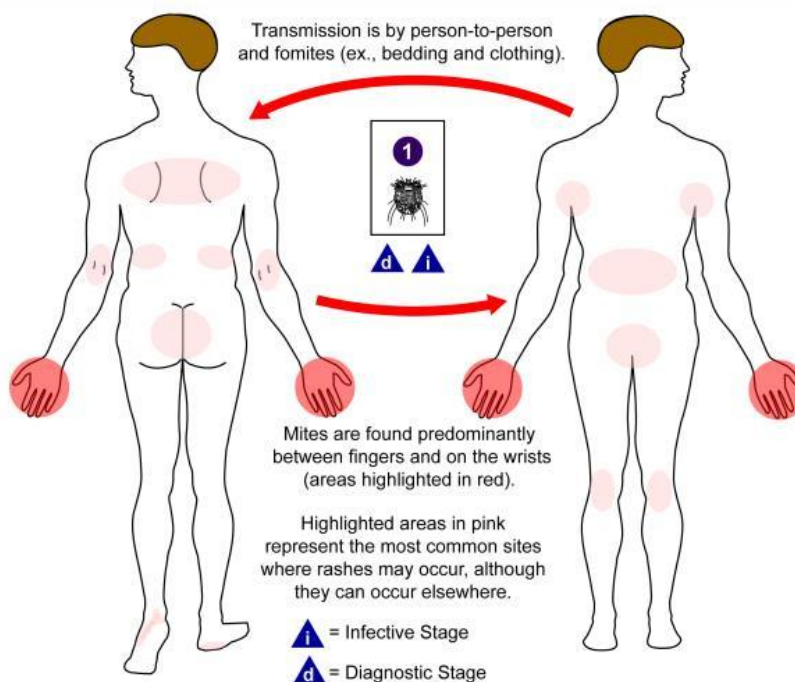
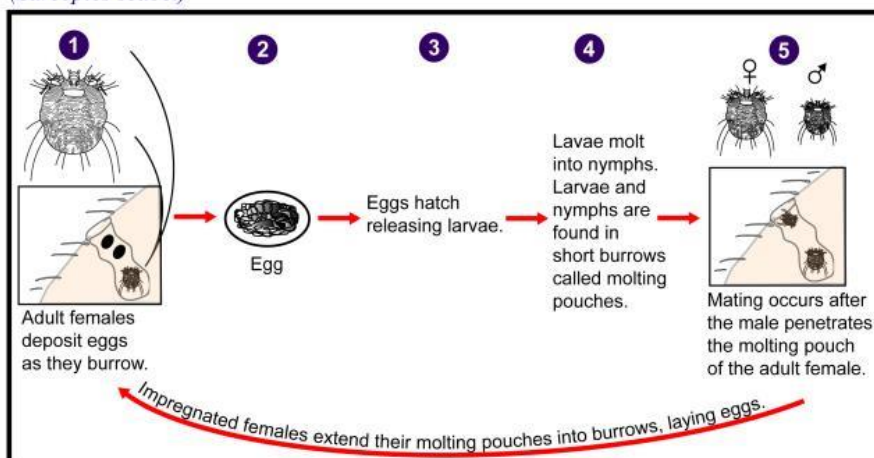
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Scabies (*Sarcoptes scabiei*)



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Vaccination Update

Influenza (Flu) – is a viral infection which can cause serious illness. The virus spreads through the air when people cough or sneeze, or when they touch surfaces where the virus has landed then touch their eyes, nose or mouth. You can catch flu all year round, but it's especially common in winter.

If you are eligible there is still time to get the flu vaccination. [Flu vaccine | NHS inform](#)

The programme ends on 31st March 2025.

You can walk in to any of the [vaccination centres](#) in Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray, or call 01224 555333 to arrange an appointment

Shingles and Pneumococcal Vaccination

Shingles can be very painful and is more common among older people. Those with a severely weakened immune system are also at higher risk of getting shingles, and experiencing further complications from shingles.

The following citizens will be offered 2 doses of the Shingles vaccine during 2025:

- Those turning 65 years of age on or before 1st September 1959
- Those turning 70 years of age on or before 1st September 1954
- Those aged 71 -99 years of age who have not received the shingles vaccine before and remain eligible up to their 80th birthday.

Streptococcus pneumoniae bacteria cause **pneumococcal infection**. These can cause serious illnesses such as pneumonia and bacterial meningitis, as well as severe ear infections.

The following citizens will offered the Pneumococcal vaccine:

- Aged 65 or over – one dose
- Those Under 65 years of age who have certain health conditions will be offered at least 1 dose (some people may need more than 1 dose).

If you are eligible for the shingles and/or the pneumococcal vaccination, you will receive an invitation letter. If you are unable to attend your appointment please let the team know by calling 01224 555333 and they will assist with rearranging your appointment.

Further information:

- On Shingles can be found at [Shingles vaccine | NHS inform](#)
- On Pneumococcal can be found at [Pneumococcal vaccine | NHS inform](#)



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Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)

During 2025 the age-based RSV programme will be delivered from July onwards. The following citizens will be offered an RSV vaccine:

- Those turning 75 within the 12 months from 01 August 2025
- Those aged 76 -79 will remain eligible up until their 80th birthday.

Young people/ Adolescent vaccination programme

Vaccination teams are attending schools throughout the year to deliver the adolescent vaccination programme. Vaccination programmes are essential in the reduction of vaccine preventable diseases in schools and the wider community, helping to maintain a healthy population. **If your child has received a consent form, please ensure this is signed and sent back** to the school in time for the planned clinics at school.

Three vaccines are routinely offered to young people:

- HPV vaccine, which helps protect against cancers cause by the human papillomavirus (HPV)
- MenACWY vaccine, which helps protect against meningococcal groups A,C,W and Y, which can cause meningitis and septicaemia
- Td/IPV vaccine which is a 3 in 1 teenage booster protecting against tetanus, diphtheria and polio

Further information can be found here [Young people from 11 to 24 years | NHS inform](#)



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