

Here is the brief for Thursday 22 April 2021.

A third wave - what might this mean? There has now been a bit of publicity about a resurgence in cases and hospitalisations indicated through modelling done on behalf of SAGE. The likelihood is that the UK will experience a third wave of Covid-19 towards the end of this summer. This is based on the relaxation of restrictions based on the government's timeline and the efficacy of the vaccination programme. This sounds daunting, but there are things that we can all do to keep increases as low as possible and with everyone's effort, prevent a noticeable resurgence in cases towards the end of summer. So, what are these things?

- The first thing is to go for the vaccine when you get called. The higher the uptake of the vaccine, the lower the height of the peak and the fewer people will die or develop Long Covid.
- Just because you are allowed to meet in a group of six doesn't mean you have to do this. Reducing your contacts really will help - passing the virus on to one or two people is much better than passing it on to four! Why not decide to meet up in groups of less than six?
- Despite the relaxation of restrictions and despite having had the vaccination, keep up all the usual things of social distancing, face coverings as required, try to be outdoors or in well ventilated indoor areas, avoid crowds. (If it looks too busy it is too busy)

As the vaccination programme is rolled out at pace, every day that we delay a rise in infections means a lower resurgence of case and more lives saved. We can all take control of this!

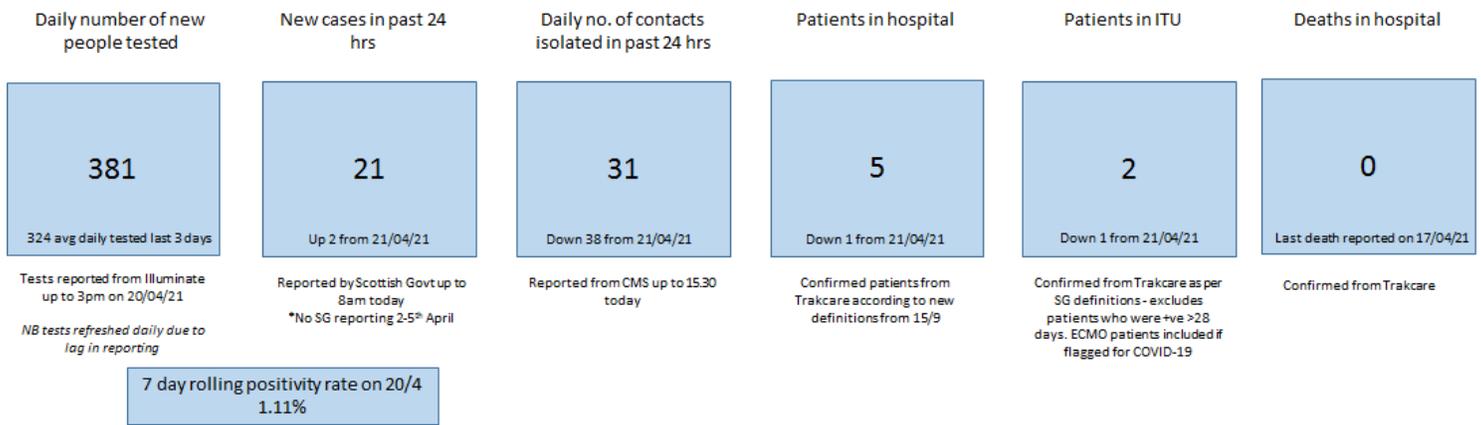
Healthcare Improvement Scotland inspection report – ARI Inspectors from Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS) visited ARI last month, meeting staff and observing practice across a number of wards. Their report has been published today and is available to read [here](#).

We welcome this report, which highlights how hard and how well staff are working. COVID-19 has seen significant changes to the way we work; we hope this report reassures the general public that the hospital is clean and safe. Inspectors identified nine distinct examples of good practice during the inspection. These included separate entrances into the hospital for staff and the public, with staff on-hand to support visitors, a good standard of cleanliness, and the support available to nursing staff from hospital management and the infection prevention & control team.

There are always things we could do better. This report contains three requirements and work is already underway to implement them. As part of the inspection process, we submitted a full action plan to Healthcare Improvement Scotland, and this is available to view via the link above.

Resumption of in-person hospital visiting As previously highlighted, in-person hospital visiting will resume in a phased manner from Monday 26 April. Guidance has been developed to support this and has been attached to the email used to send out this brief. Please read this carefully and share with colleagues as appropriate.

Grampian data The local figures for today and the 7-day rolling positivity rate are shown below. As a reminder, this rate is arrived at by dividing the number of positive tests in the past 7 days by the number of tests carried out in the past 7 days. Repeat tests are included in both categories, whereas the figures we show here only record new tests.



If you are interested in seeing what is happening in your area, this information is published daily by Public Health Scotland. All you need to do is click [here](#) and select the appropriate local authority area.

Occupational Health Service update Due to departmental contingency arrangements and to utilise our resources to support NHS Grampian staff and managers as effectively as possible, we will not be undertaking short-term attendance management until 1 June 2021. We will continue to prioritise management referrals for staff that are at work or aiming to return to work, pre-employment health screening, and all other OHS programmes.

Thought for the (Earth) Day Today is Earth Day, a global event raising awareness of environmental issues, so we are turning the thought over to Debjani Sarkar, NHS Grampian Sustainability Support Officer:

“As we slowly return to normal, we’re easing out of lockdown gradually and we’re all looking forward to getting back to something approaching a pre-COVID way of life. However, as we mark Earth Day, the question to ask ourselves is this: Can we really afford to go back to “business-as-usual”?”

“In the depths of lockdown last year, we saw immense improvements to the natural environment. Clear waters ran through Venice’s canals for the first time in centuries, air pollution levels in major cities dropped significantly, and we saw wildlife boldly returning to our locked-down cities. We obviously can’t - and *wouldn’t want* - to stay in lockdown. It might, however, be wise to reflect on how we’ve changed our behaviour and practices over the past year. Working at home became a feasible option for many of us, and carbon emissions from travelling have dropped as a result. Many chose to incorporate walking/cycling into their daily routine as a result of being at home. We’ve also given more consideration to the food we’re consuming, reducing waste. You might also have put more consideration into your home energy consumption, trying to be a little bit more efficient where possible.

“These are all excellent practices which we should try and continue with as we go back to “normal.” And these aren’t just good for the environment – they’re good for your health, your wallet, and our society as a whole.”

Questions to ask? Information to share? If you have particular questions – or are aware of questions coming from friends and family – please share them with us. We may not be able to answer every question and it may take us time to get a proper answer, but we will endeavour to respond and share the answers. You can get in touch with us via gram.communications@nhs.scot. Please also use that email address if you have items for consideration for future briefs.