



From left to right - Alasdair Pattinson (Dr Gray's Hospital General Manager), Sam Thomas (Chief Nurse for Moray) and Jamie Hogg (Clinical Director for Dr Gray's Hospital).

## A warm welcome to the first edition of the new Dr Gray's Hospital Newsletter!

It is clear to us that our local communities feel a great deal of fondness for and place a great importance on the services provided here at Dr Gray's Hospital.

This newsletter will be the first of a number that we plan to send to you over the coming year to share information and tell you about a range of activities and initiatives at Dr Gray's.

We also hope that it will encourage you to contact and share with us your experiences as a patient, a family member or a visitor. This is important to us.

As the leadership team for the hospital, we are very proud to be leading a team of skilled and committed health care professionals who work to deliver

the best possible care for our patients and their families. This past year has been a challenge for us all and we have been impressed by the way our teams have responded.

While we still need to continue to live with COVID-19 and the measures that are required of us all to stay safe, we feel positive about recent developments and future improvements planned at Dr Gray's. Our hospital continues to have a crucial role in health and social care in Moray and beyond, and plays its part in Scotland's recovery from the pandemic.

We hope you find this newsletter informative.

Alasdair, Jamie and Sam

## Tell us how we are doing!

Did you know that you can tell us about your experience at Dr Gray's Hospital using Care Opinion?

Whether it's to tell us that you had great care, or to tell us that we did not get it right, or anything in between - we would like to hear it.

You can submit your feedback anonymously at <https://www.careopinion.org.uk/tellyourstory> and it will be responded to.



If you would like to give us any feedback about this newsletter, you can do so by emailing us at

[gram.involve@nhs.scot](mailto:gram.involve@nhs.scot)



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# #ProtectMoray

We want you to #ProtectMoray and get tested, even if you have no symptoms (asymptomatic).

Deputy director of Public Health at NHS Grampian, Chris Littlejohn said: "We are urging everyone to #ProtectMoray and get a COVID-19 test, even if you have no symptoms (asymptomatic). We need to identify people who have the virus before they start spreading it and hope that by intervening further now we can stop community transmission and the possibility of further restrictions in Moray. But we need to act quickly and we need the people of Moray to act with us. It's been a tough time, but be assured we are in this together: please keep your guard up and keep up the testing."

Those with both classic and extended symptoms in Moray should immediately book a test via

[www.nhsinform.scot](http://www.nhsinform.scot) or call 0800 028 2816 if you cannot get online.

## Extended symptoms include:

- General weakness
- Sore throat
- Shortness of breath
- Diarrhoea
- Headache
- Chills



- Muscle pain
- Runny nose
- Dry or productive cough



When booking a test due to these symptoms, individuals should select the "My local council or health protection team has asked me to get a test" option. While the individual experiencing the symptoms should self-isolate until the test result is returned there is no need for the rest of the individual's household to self-isolate.

## Classic symptoms include:

- Continuous cough
- Fever
- Loss of taste of smell

The individual and their whole household, including any extended or bubble members, should self-isolate immediately self-isolate until the test results are returned.

protect yourself, protect your loved ones and #ProtectMoray.

# COVID-19 UPDATE:

*The COVID-19 situation in Moray has significantly improved since our newsletter went to print two weeks ago. Thank you all for playing your part in this.*

Health chiefs are paying tribute to the people of Moray for their reaction to the spike in cases of COVID-19 in the area. The Incident Management Team (IMT) dealing with the outbreaks met on Tuesday 18 May and heard of the excellent response to both expanded testing and the accelerated vaccination programme.

Chris Littlejohn, deputy Director of Public Health and IMT chair, said: "We have seen a really impressive response from people, right across Moray, to the increased availability of testing and the early extension of vaccination to all those aged 18 and over.

"We heard that around 50% of those 18-29 in the area, and around 60% of the 30-49 age group, have now had their first dose of COVID-19 vaccination. This reflects not only the willingness of people to come forward for vaccination, but also the very hard work of the local team. Praise must go to both groups for their efforts. In addition, the number of people seeking testing, either at community sites offering asymptomatic testing using Lateral Flow Devices, or at the Mobile Testing Units based in Elgin, Keith, and Aberlour is truly impressive.

"I believe there is now cause for some cautious optimism in Moray – though I must stress the job is not done yet. We are still seeing cases numbers sitting around the 50 per 100,000 of the population mark – much higher than neighbouring Aberdeenshire and Highland. We are still seeing hospitalisation as a result of COVID-19. The IMT continues to monitor the situation very closely and will meet again later this week to consider its recommendations to the Scottish Government.

"Our message to people in Moray remains unchanged. Please keep coming forward for testing – around half the cases we are detecting are in people without symptoms. Please also take up the offer of COVID-19 vaccination. As well as issuing appointments, the team at the Fiona Elcock Vaccination Centre in Elgin have been offering drop-in appointments for first doses. Information about this has been – and will continue to be – shared via the NHS Grampian social media accounts.

Finally, thank you to everyone in the area for how they have dealt with this incident. I know it has been an extremely difficult time for individuals, communities, local businesses, the list goes on. They should be reassured their actions are making a difference and progress is being made. Let's keep going!"



## Improvements to Ward 3 are nearly complete!

Some of the rooms in Ward 3 have been unavailable since January while much-anticipated improvements have been carried out. The existing birthing rooms are currently being refurbished to a modern standard and a new water birthing pool room has also been created. The work will be complete and the new facilities available to use from mid-May.

Normal service and birthing choices have remained available at Ward 3 throughout the works and the Maternity team look forward to welcoming women and partners to experience the lovely new surroundings.



From left to right - Priscilla Wozniak (senior staff midwife), Tracy Ellis (health care support worker), Alison Armer (Student), Jade Bruce (Student), Shaye Russell (Student) & Suzanne Wrightman (Midwife).

Gill Valentine, Clinical Midwifery Manager for Maternity Services in Moray, said

'We are all delighted with the improvements to our Labour Suite. Labour and birth are a very special time and the newly refurbished environment will benefit women, their birthing partners and staff alike.'

## WE CARE

...because our staff care

'We Care' treat bags have started making their way to our staff during April. Each bag contains a mug, some fine pignees and messages from senior leaders in health and social care to say thank you to our hardworking staff.

The purpose of the bags has been to give something back, and to promote the launch of the We Care website, a resource for health and social care staff in Grampian with wellbeing information and support.

So far, We Care have already delivered 2,000 bags across Moray and continue to do so.

Professor Caroline Hiscox, NHS Grampian Chief Executive, has been clear in her communications that staff health and well-being is her number one priority.

We Care resources have been designed in recognition that the pandemic effort has taken a toll on all our colleagues, and include tools and information to help staff grow their personal resilience and access appropriate help.







## Upgrades to the Renal Unit welcomed by staff and patients

The Renal Unit, which provides services such as kidney dialysis for patients, reopened in March after undergoing extensive refurbishment.

The unit now has refreshed interiors, a contemporary layout promoting COVID-safe working and new equipment such as a state-of-the-art water treatment plant. The improvements have been welcomed by patients and staff alike.

The unit had a small, socially distanced ribbon-cutting ceremony to mark returning to 'home' from temporary accommodation.

The ribbon was cut by Kimberly Richardson, one of the unit's longest standing dialysis patients.

Moira Shepherd, senior charge nurse, said 'All the Renal staff and patients are delighted to have moved back to our refurbished unit and we are settling in well. It has taken five months and lots of hard work to make the transformation happen. The changes were much needed and both staff and patients are enjoying the improvements. Thanks to everyone involved in this project.'

## Exemplary collaboration to provide urgent urological cancer care

In January 2021, the Scottish Government asked Dr Gray's Hospital to collaborate with NHS Highland and provide urology cancer treatment for NHS Grampian and Highland patients as part of a regional recovery response to COVID-19.

The Government provided support for additional staff for a range of urgent suspected urology cancer diagnostic procedures and treatments. The anaesthetic and post-operative nursing care was provided by staff from Dr Gray's. This fast-moving project was made possible by a great collaborative spirit between different teams and specialities in the hospital.

Between February and April, 136 patients were treated at our hospital, clearing the backlog of NHS Highland patients. Collaborative working between NHS Highland and Dr Gray's worked very well.

Positive feedback on the quality of nursing and medical care was received from patients who were very grateful to be offered surgery and generally happy to travel to Dr Gray's.

The administrative team also received very positive feedback from patients highlighting their supportive and timely communication and ability to answer patient questions or concerns.



*Urology Team from left to right - Eric Borg (urology specialist nurse), Lynne Green (Secretary Supervisor, admin support) Karen Hughes (senior charge nurse for theatres), Claire Edmonstone (Urology staff nurse), Caroline Bell (Theatre Co-ordinator), Nichola Russell (Nurse manager for surgical services), Diane Howland (Staff Nurse).*



## Reflections on volunteering at Dr Gray's Hospital

By Steve Storey

There was a time before the COVID-19 pandemic impacted our lives. Even during those far-off days, I held the belief that voluntary service should be a given for those in a position to contribute. I was a Trustee of Moray's Riding for the Disabled group - a local charity providing horse riding sessions to children and adults with disabilities, aimed at improving their physical and mental wellbeing. In another guise I volunteered at our local Elgin Museum; record keeping and archiving; showing and describing to visitors the Museum's wonderful collection of local artefacts and answering their (sometimes testing) questions; and - more latterly - preparing for the role as the Museum's Art Gallery Co-ordinator. These voluntary activities, important to me, were curtailed by the virus - as was the business I ran as a Technical Author specialising in the aircraft industry. The changes to my life inflicted by COVID-19, and in particular the imposed lockdowns, were dramatic.

At the end of March 2020, a work colleague of my wife approached us both to ask if we would be interested in supporting a volunteering initiative at Dr. Gray's Hospital. By then, we were looking for a means by which we could make a positive contribution to the fight against COVID-19, so we naturally said 'Yes'. The initiative required a team of volunteers to confirm that anyone entering the hospital

had a legitimate reason to be onsite and ensuring they adhered to NHS Grampian's COVID-19 guidelines.

This team, bolstered by a recruitment drive towards the end of 2020, continues to provide sentry cover seven days a week, between the hours of 7.00am and 8.30pm, at the designated hospital entrances. Volunteers are typically 'on duty' in two hour shifts on multiple days each week.

As National Volunteers' Week 2021 approaches, it is an opportunity to take stock:

- I consider myself fortunate to support the hospital in my sentry role and have long settled comfortably into the position.
- Volunteering has allowed me the opportunity to connect with a variety of staff across the hospital and to witness their combined effort during these testing times.
- I have found, if only in a small way, that I can ably support the hospital by my own actions and positive 'can do' attitude - and by my efforts to put smiles on faces! Indeed, I am repaid by countless acts of kindness by staff who check I am OK; bring me tea and cake; and even my Saturday morning coffee and toast! It is, as they say, the little things which make the difference and are uplifting to the volunteering experience. I must rightly add that I am very grateful
- And then there are the visitors and patients. I have witnessed and been humbled by people at their best - resilient, dignified, full of gratitude and caring. In the more extreme cases, there are the sad and troubled, some relieved and others happy. I have endeavoured to be a good ambassador for the hospital, supportive of each who cross the threshold with empathy and (I hope) correct and proper handling.



for the considerations of the hospital management who have embraced the volunteer team as 'staff' in respect to COVID-related healthcare; in acknowledgement of our role; and in the distribution of corporate 'goodies'.

To conclude: I thoroughly enjoy my role as a hospital volunteer and am satisfied that I am making a worthwhile contribution during difficult times. Significantly, I have developed a fondness and connection with the wonderful Dr Gray's Hospital and its own special community, which I hope will continue long after this pandemic has passed.

# SPOTLIGHT

on a team member:



Advanced Nurse Practitioner  
**Helen McCloughlin**

I am an Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ANP). This is a specialist role with expert clinical knowledge and skills. ANPs have the freedom and authority to make autonomous decisions in the assessment, diagnosis and treatment of patients.

Having been a qualified ANP since 2013, I moved from Raigmore Hospital in Inverness to join the Moray team in August 2018 where my role is an ANP specialising in elderly medicine.

Initially my role was ward-based, providing comprehensive geriatric assessment in an acute area of the elderly unit, as well as orthopaedic geriatric input to frail older adults admitted to hospital. Over time, my role has evolved to working in both community and acute hospital settings.

I provide expert input to multi-disciplinary teams in General Practice and annual care home reviews. I also perform assessments in the person's own home following referral from their GP. My role involves preventing unnecessary hospital admissions and ensuring a timely discharge following admission.

I take great pride in my role and serving my community.

## Discharge to Assess sees patients managing better at home



From left to right: Karen Erskine - Occupational Therapist, Dawn Duncan - Professional Lead for OT (Moray), Kayleigh Gorden - HCSW, Jane Smith - HCSW, Kerrie Hendry - Specialist Physiotherapist

Discharge to Assess ('D2A') is an initiative that was recently successfully piloted over six months in Moray under Operation Home First, a partnership between Health & Social Care Moray and NHS Grampian. D2A involved the early discharge of patients to home from local hospitals with the support of a dedicated team.

Patients were assessed in their familiar home

environment by the D2A team which included Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Advanced Nurse Practitioner and Support Workers. They provided support to patients on discharge, focussing on rehabilitation to maximise safety and independence in everyday activities. The assessment aimed to optimise patients' health and wellbeing, independence and self-management at home.

The pilot was evaluated rigorously. Results showed that patients' ability to carry out their usual activities improved, leading to an increase in independence and wellbeing and reduced need for formal care. D2A has now been fully funded by the Moray Integrated Joint Board and recruitment is currently underway.

Visit the digital Dr Gray's News at <https://bit.ly/3enenMr>

If you would like to continue hearing about NHS Grampian news and development in Moray and beyond, please contact us at [gram.involve@nhs.scot](mailto:gram.involve@nhs.scot)

for bonus content and our latest news!



SCAN ME

