**Update for key stakeholders
2 June 2022**

**Vaccination**

As at 30 May we had 79 % take up of spring booster COVID vaccinations (4th dose) for over 75s across the NHS Highland area. This is made up of 87.7% in Argyll and Bute and 75.3% in Highland. We remain on trajectory to complete the campaign within the required time.

Vaccination clinics continue to be updated regularly in the local press, social media and on our [website.](https://www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/COVID19/Pages/Welcome.aspx) Anyone who receives an appointment invitation and needs to change the location or date can call our local Vaccination Enquiry Hub on 08000 320 339. The line is open Monday to Friday, 9:30am to 4:30pm and on Saturday, 10am to 2pm.

**Skye update**

We recently had to suspend services at the Urgent Care Centre in Portree, and we are sorry for the inconvenience and worry this will have caused. This was a difficult decision and a last resort after running with a partial service for some weeks: due to unprecedented staffing pressures it was unable to provide the service safely. Other services will continue to be delivered from Portree Community Hospital as usual and urgent care will be provided from Broadford with the option for ‘see and treat’ in all of Skye as clinically appropriate while we stablise staffing.

These arrangements are temporary: we are completely committed to providing urgent care in North Skye, and will continue to work to achieve sustainable services. We have positions open to recruitment, and are working to publicise these as widely as possible. Some roles currently advertised are for more than one full-time equivalent, so there are currently posts being advertised for up to nine people in and around Skye, with more due to be advertised shortly. We would like to thank the community for their support in promoting vacant roles and the many advantages of living and working on Skye.

**Alness and Invergordon Medical Practice update**

We continue to work with Alness and Invergordon Medical Practice, and are pleased to update that all necessary Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) registrations are now complete. Staffing continues to be challenging; however we have cover in place and are advertising vacant roles.

The practice does have a number of historic and current complaints and we are working through these. We would like to thank practice staff, colleagues in the wider service who have offered support, and the local community who have been constructive and open to sharing their experiences so that we can improve services.

The local practice management team are looking at establishing a Patient Participation Group and information was recently posted on the practice Facebook page.  The team are looking for 12-15 patient volunteers to meet with the practice team quarterly.  The forum will be to discuss practice issues and listen to positive suggestions to improve patient experience.  Interested parties were encouraged to contact the practice in writing or via email (nhsh.gp55338-admin@nhs.scot).

**Budhmor Care Home update**

The Board of Crossreach, who own and operate Budhmor Care Home, were due to meet yesterday to decide whether to extend the period before closure. We await an update from them on this, and also hope to hear soon the results of their structural survey of the building.

The Care Inspectorate inspection is complete and we expect the Care Inspectorate to publish their report from the inspection in due course.

**Action to reduce waiting times for surgery**

Currently, waiting times for some day case surgical procedures could be particularly long as we are working through the backlog of high priority cancer and emergency operations that has built up due to the COVID pandemic. In our other hospital sites, patients may be offered dates within the current 3-month (12 week) target.

We now offer new patients a choice of hospital for their procedure. We will shortly be writing to patients who have been waiting for a surgical procedure at Raigmore, and may have been waiting since before we started offering this choice, to offer them the same opportunity. All of our hospitals offer the same high levels of care and treatment for these procedures.

We know some people will have concerns about travelling for surgery, and are offering reassurance that a clinical assessment will precede any change of hospital, as well as information about our travel expenses policy, to help with the costs of travel and accommodation.

Patients will be given a choice of:

* Caithness General Hospital, Wick
* Belford Hospital, Fort William
* Lorn and Islands Hospital, Oban
* Any site or combination of the above

Patients who do not respond will remain on the Raigmore waiting list for treatment at the earliest opportunity.

**Feedback**

If you have comments or queries please contact nhshighland.feedback@nhs.scot