

Here is the brief for Thursday 31 March 2022.

**ARI Winter surge wards** As part of Operation Iris (the organisational response to winter pressures) wards 303/304 in ARI were opened as surge beds. The process to close these wards is now underway, with a view to completing the closure by 8pm on Tuesday 5 April. This closure is taking place now because, although staffing has been challenging throughout, the changeover on 6 April means there will be no junior medical cover available. As such these wards cannot continue to safely operate. Closure will allow those staff who were deployed to return to their 'home' wards.

It is anticipated there will be 25 patients on these wards by the end of today and work is underway to support their discharge or move onto an appropriate setting. These wards will not take any further admissions. Removing these beds will place additional pressure on the rest of the healthcare system at a time when it is already working close to capacity. We are working closely with services across ARI, the Health & Social Care Partnerships, and our colleagues in the Scottish Ambulance Service, to try and make the process as straightforward as possible.

It is recognised surge beds have opened in other parts of ARI, in Dr Gray's Hospital, and in community hospitals. These will close in a phased manner and more information will be shared in due course.

**Smarter Workplaces** Earlier this month we shared an update on the Smarter Workplaces programme. As a reminder, tomorrow (1 April) shouldn't be seen as 'return to the office' day. We are treating 1 April – 31 July as a transition period, giving you and your teams time to discuss your future working arrangements, with a move towards hybrid working. Hybrid working means a mix of working at home and in a work base. How this will work in practice will mean different things to different teams; you may be office based 2-3 days a week or perhaps only for pre-arranged meetings. Your team discussions in the coming weeks will determine what this will look like for you.

A number of areas are going to act as pilots during the transition period and as we learn from their experiences, more information will be shared. However, you don't need to wait for this to start your own local planning. The needs of your team may be very particular, and we are encouraging and empowering everyone to come up with the best solution for them. The 'Your Health & Wellbeing' form can assist with this and [it is available to view here](#). As an organisation, we firmly believe offering greater flexibility to you will benefit all of us in the long run. We have already taken the first step – proving our teams, departments, services can still function while working at home. Now we need to embed this and together think about our future choices.

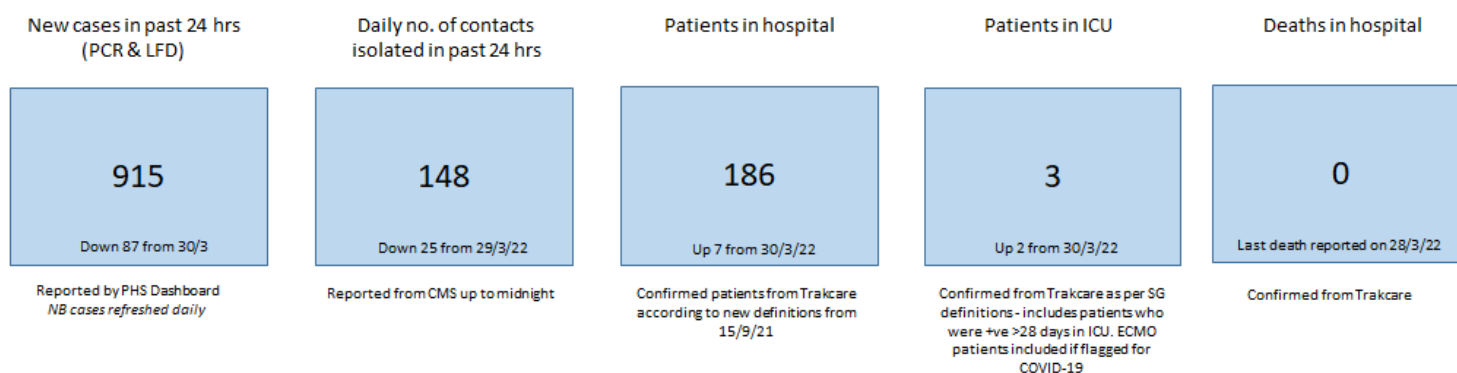
**How we keep our workplaces safer** We've shared these messages many times before, but they absolutely bear repeating:

- Fluid Repellent Surgical Masks (FRSMs) must be worn across healthcare premises (alongside any other PPE your role requires). Masks should cover the nose and mouth, they should be disposed of in the appropriate bin if they become dirty or damp, they should never be worn under the chin or hanging from an ear. FRSMs are single use and should be binned at the end of use.
- If you have any symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 – even if you have a negative LFD test – you must arrange a PCR test. Do not come to work with symptoms. You can request a test for yourself – or a household member – via the [staff testing programme online request form](#).

Remember, if you have a positive LFD test you no longer require a confirmatory PCR; the LFD result will be accepted, and you should start self-isolation immediately.

- Regular, thorough, hand hygiene – ideally with water and soap, or with handrub if necessary – is vital in limiting the spread of all infections, not just COVID-19.
- Physical distancing remains in place in all our workplaces. Please observe and abide by the restrictions on how many people may be in a particular space (e.g., an office or lifts) at any given time.

**Grampian data** The local report is shown below. [The Public Health Scotland daily dashboard can be viewed here](#)



**Travel vaccinations** From tomorrow, NHS boards will formally take on the responsibility of providing those vaccinations necessary for international travel. Here in Grampian, our travel vaccination service has been up and running since October 2021, with 33 community pharmacies across City, 'Shire, and Moray offering travel clinics. All the information you need on receiving travel vaccinations is available on [our dedicated website](#). We are delighted to be working with our community pharmacy colleagues to offer this service.

**Endowment Fund/staff social fund** The Endowment Fund Staff Social Activities programme will be re-opened as of tomorrow (1 April). There is further information and the latest application form on the [Endowment Fund intranet page](#) (networked devices only).

**Culture Matters survey – prize draw** Thank you to everyone who participated in the Culture Matters staff surveys. All completed entries went into a prize draw. The raffle has been drawn by our survey partners BPA using the unique codes on the password slips. BPA have advised us the two lucky winners of the star prize of one night B&B in Maryculter House Hotel are in the following teams:

- Infant Feeding Team/Specialist Midwives (Nursing and Midwifery)
- Portering – Woodend (Facilities and Estates)

The draw has also taken place for a number of gift sets; the relevant managers have been contacted by email, advised of the winning passcode code, and how the staff member with the matching password slip can claim their prize.

- **What happens next?**

Our survey partners BPA are analysing the survey results. More than 4800 nursing, midwifery, estates and facilities colleagues participated (representing over 53% of the workforce) therefore the analysis of the results will take a few weeks. Team leaders will receive early results at the end of April and team reports will be shared at the start of May. Further information, including details of support available, can be found on the Culture Matters Staff Survey page, the "Getting Ready for your Results" section will continue to be updated with new information as and when it becomes available.

**Culture Collaborative** The Culture Collaborative is a forum open to all colleagues who want to get involved in shaping our organisational culture. It has been running for six months now with a broad range of attendees, and sessions including participants' lived experiences of our culture and learning about psychological safety. Over the past two months the Collaborative has been developing descriptors of what our organisation's values mean in practice. These will be useful to things like recruitment and selection; manager development; giving and receiving feedback; and supporting each other and our patients. More info is in the attached flash report.

The Culture Matters team would like to invite as many of you as possible to get involved and come along to the next session on Wednesday 27 April at 4pm. Please email Brooke Elliott at [gram.culturematters@nhs.scot](mailto:gram.culturematters@nhs.scot) for more info.

**Reminder - #BigMeterRead** Where possible, we're being encouraged to submit gas and electricity meter readings today (31 March), before the 54% increase in unit charges takes effect on 1 April. We know lots of the energy firm websites have been slow – or down altogether – today. [This video](#) from Martin Lewis (Money Saving Expert) gives some more information on what to do if this is a challenge for you.

If energy bills are a source of concern, you can visit the [Energy Action Scotland website](#) for advice and information on potential financial support.

**Tune of the day** We've got a two for one special today – thanks to Moyra Munro for getting in touch to request a song by The Wanted, following the sad death of band member Tom Parker from brain cancer at the age of just 33. We've gone for [Lightening](#)

Tomorrow is April Fool's Day so be on your guard! If it looks too good to be true, chances are it probably is. [The Joker by Steve Miller Band](#) is our second tune of the day (and if anyone can explain what exactly the 'pompatus of love' is, I'd be hugely grateful...).

If you want to request a song for tune of the day, follow up on items included in this brief, or suggest an item for sharing, drop us an email via [gram.communications@nhs.scot](mailto:gram.communications@nhs.scot)