

Thursday 17 November 2022

---

**Industrial action and what it might mean for all of us** The prospect of widespread industrial action across the NHS is more real now than it has perhaps ever been. Recent weeks have seen contingency planning ramp up as ballots closed and results became known. It will probably have been a hot topic of conversation in your teams and it's safe to assume there will be many different opinions out there. The term industrial action is very evocative and for some it may bring to mind a sense of conflict. It's perfectly understandable if you are worried, angry, fearful, frustrated, or some combination of all four – and more.

Whatever the outcome of negotiations, if union members do take industrial action, we need to remember we will all continue to work together afterwards. We might be united by a common goal and shared values in the NHS, but we don't all think the same. For some, the decision to act is easy, others may agonise over their choice. Those decisions rest with you as individuals. As an employer NHS Grampian cannot, should not, would not seek to make them for you.

Whatever the coming weeks and months bring, it is important to adhere to our core values and continue to treat each other with kindness and respect. While disagreements are healthy, it is important to respect the considered choices of others. We can never know for sure what is going on for other people, just as they can never be sure what is going on for us. We have great teams in Grampian, and we are at our very best when we work together.

This brief has always strived to be balanced, to provide you with the facts you need to do your job. That will not change during any period of industrial action. We aim to provide more detailed information early next week, please keep checking the brief each day for the latest updates.

**UPDATE School disruption – 24 November** Moray Council have joined Aberdeenshire council in confirming school closures next Thursday, due to industrial action by two teaching unions. If you cannot put alternative childcare arrangements in place and your ability to attend work is therefore affected, it is important you have an urgent conversation with your line manager to discuss the use of annual leave, parental leave, TOIL, working at home, or rearranging shifts as appropriate.

**Weather warnings** There is an Amber weather warning for rain, covering Aberdeen City and much of central and south Aberdeenshire, from midnight tonight until 3pm tomorrow. There is also a wider Yellow weather warning, covering a larger part of Grampian. [The Met Office website has further information.](#)

**Winter vaccinations** A letter from Chris Littlejohn (Public Health Consultant & Head of Public Health Protection) was sent to you all earlier today. If you've not had a chance to read it, it's also available to [read on the intranet](#) (networked devices only).

**Energy saving workshops** Home Energy Scotland have organised a series of online workshops, providing advice on how to save energy at home. These are completely free and there are a range of dates available, well into the New Year. Each workshop lasts an hour, [you can book your session here.](#) If the workshops don't suit, but you'd still like advice from Home Energy Scotland, you can call them on 0808 808 2282. Their lines are open Mon-Fri (8am-8pm) and Saturday (9am-5pm).

**Fit-Notes test of change** Next week several pilot settings across primary and secondary care will begin a test of change to support the expansion of those who are able to provide Fit-Notes across Grampian. The aim is to move to full implementation in the New Year, meaning registered nurses, pharmacists (excluding community pharmacists), occupational therapists, and physiotherapists will be able to issue Fit-Notes, following a full assessment of a person's fitness for work. Fit-Notes will be issued by those caring for patients, either in a hospital or community setting, as appropriate. The legislation allows a broader range of professions to deliver this aspect of practice, but only if it fits with their role and scope of practice.

As the change is to **who** certifies Fit-Notes, not the underlying purpose or the systems used, the Medical Director has agreed this activity does not require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) at Board level, although an entry has been recorded in NHSG's statutory 'Records of Processing Activity' (ROPA). Independent GPs should consider whether they wish to take the same approach or undertake a DPIA locally for review by the Data Protection Officer. If independent GPs would like a copy of the Board's ROPA entry for consideration for their own records, it can be provided upon request (email [gram.infogovernance@nhs.scot](mailto:gram.infogovernance@nhs.scot) marked 'FAO DPO').

If you would like to learn more, please email [lyndsay.cassie@nhs.scot](mailto:lyndsay.cassie@nhs.scot)

**NHS Scotland communications survey** NHS Scotland wants to better understand the different methods colleagues in different health boards use to communicate so that they can develop systems that support people to connect easier. They are asking as many staff as possible, from any role within Grampian, to fill out the 2-minute questionnaire at the following link: [NHS Scotland - Understanding how you communicate \(office.com\)](#). The survey is open until 5pm next Tuesday (22 November).

**Tune of the day** Today is World Prematurity Day. 1 in 13 babies born in the UK will be premature, receiving vital care at the start of their life from skilled professionals, such as our team in the Neonatal unit at AMH. Our tune today is [Wires by Athlete](#), written about the lead singer's experience of having a premature child (EP).

If you want to request a tune, 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)