

Thursday 11 May 2023

Extended use of facemasks & face coverings in healthcare and social care settings The Scottish Government has advised the current guidance on the extended use of facemasks and face coverings in healthcare and social care settings will be withdrawn from next Tuesday, 16 May.

- What does this mean for me?

If you work in health care – in an acute hospital, community hospital, in primary care, or any other healthcare setting – or you work in social care – for example, in an older adults' care home – you will no longer have to wear a facemask or face covering from Tuesday 16 May. You should continue to follow the existing guidance up to and including Monday 15 May.

From Tuesday 16 May we will follow the standard infection prevention & control precautions and transmission-based precautions as detailed in the [National Infection Prevention and Control Manual](#) (NIPCM) and/or the [Care Home National Infection Prevention and Control Manual](#) (CHIPCM) as appropriate to the setting you work in. PPE will still play an important part in keeping you and patients/clients safe, when needed.

- Why has this decision been taken now?

This decision follows a full review of the current 'state of play' with COVID-19. This recognises Scotland continues to adapt to the pandemic and has entered a calmer phase. This is due to the high uptake of COVID-19 vaccinations, especially amongst residents of care homes, reduced severity of illness and hospitalisations, and availability of treatments for COVID-19. This follows advice from Antimicrobial Resistance and Healthcare Associated Infection (ARHAI) Scotland and Scottish Government Professional Clinical Advisors in Infection, Prevention and Control (IPC).

- What if I am concerned about the withdrawal of this guidance?

If you are worried about the withdrawal of this guidance, please speak to your line manager in the first instance. Further advice can be sought from the Infection Prevention & Control (gram.infectioncontrol@nhs.scot) and Occupational Health (gram.ohs@nhs.scot) teams, as necessary.

- What about patients, their visitors, other members of the public coming into health care or social care settings?

From Tuesday 16 May there is no requirement for patients, visitors, or other members of the public (e.g., contractors) to wear face masks.

While this is a return to our standard, pre-pandemic, practise, we expect it will take some time for this change to bed in. Please remember the NIPCM and CHIPCM documents provide detailed guidance and should be used accordingly. Do not hesitate to contact the Infection Prevention & Control team if you need further support with PPE use, or the Occupational Health team if you have questions about your health, via the email addresses above.

Staff Equalities Network – how to speak to children about race and anti-racism Our children are the next generation, and if we are serious about promoting and encouraging a community, society or workplace which is built on principles of antiracism and antidiscrimination, the conversations we have with children in their early years are pivotal.

In order to better understand some of the challenges and explore opportunities to have the best chance of making these conversations positive ones, the Staff Equalities Network is delighted to welcome NHS Grampian Clinical Psychologist (and mum of 3) Dr Murewa Akintola for an insightful and research-based session where participants will come away with an understanding of child-development in relation to race. This session is for everyone, regardless of if you are a parent, encounter children in your work role, or just want to be better informed about speaking to children about race, racism and antiracism with confidence.

This session takes place on Team next Wednesday (17 May) between 2-3pm. If you would like further information, or would like the link to join, please contact gram.staffequalities@nhs.scot

Spiritual Care Committee – drop-in event A drop-in event will be held next Thursday (18 May) from 10.30am - 2.30pm in the Dugald Baird Conference Room, Aberdeen Maternity Hospital. This will be an opportunity to meet members of the NHS Grampian Spiritual Care Committee, hear about its role and purpose, and learn how you can get involved. There will also be information and examples of the work of the Spiritual Care team across Grampian and you will be able to ask questions and share any experiences you have of accessing their services. All welcome. For further information, please contact gram.chaplaincy@nhs.scot

Scottish Coaching and Leading for Improvement Programme (ScLIP) Applications for the Scottish Coaching and Leading for Improvement Programme (ScLIP), aimed at leaders within NHS Grampian will close on **22 May 2023**. We have 12 places in Cohort 36, which will begin on 23 November 2023. [There's much more information available online here](#); informal enquiries can be directed to Jill Ferbrache (jill.ferbrache@nhs.scot) or Louise Black (louise.black2@nhs.scot)

National Hoarding Awareness Week This annual event gets underway on Monday (15 May). It is an opportunity to highlight to all agencies that hoarding disorder is a serious and very disabling condition, affecting 2-5% of the UK population; it is reported 1/3 of people who die in fires across the UK suffer from the condition. In its most severe manifestation, it can make people's homes uninhabitable posing both a serious health and safety risk in additions to adverse effects on their mental health. The unique role of health professionals and the trusting relationships built with our patients mean we are potentially the first agency to identify hoarding disorder. There are lots of resources you may find helpful on the campaign website: [Resources - Hoarding Awareness Week](#)

Intercompany Hockey The Sports Committee is organising entry to the first intercompany mixed hockey tournament, and we are looking for potential participants. This will be 7-aside games at Aberdeen Sports Village on Wednesday 31 May 2023, 7 - 8.30pm. Our maximum squad size is 10; this can be a mix of men and women. All you will need is shoes suitable for an astro-turf pitch (astro or trail shoes, no studs), shin guards, and a mouthguard, as hockey sticks can be provided. No experience necessary. For more information, or to express an interest, please email siobhan.cowie@nhs.scot

Tune of the day There's been a theme to this week's tune choices, did you spot it? They've all been connected to 1983. Why? Because that was the year the Dandy Dons earned their place in football history with *that* European Cup win. Today is your actual Gothenburg Day, so what else but the [European Song](#)?

Speaking of important dates, tomorrow is International Nurses Day. I'm sticking with the 1983 vibe and dedicating [Cruel Summer](#) by Bananarama to every nurse in Grampian, because it's a cracker and so are they (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