



[COVID-19 - General](#)

[Child Protection](#)

[Human Rights](#)

[Justice](#)

[Looked After and
Accommodated Children](#)

[Mental Health](#)

[Other Health and Social
Care](#)

[Other](#)

COVID-19 - General

[Guidance for festive period agreed by four nations](#)

A four nation approach to the festive period has been agreed by Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The joint agreement was described by the Scottish Government as a “cautious and limited relaxation of the rules” on household meetings to support people over Christmas. A maximum of three households are to be able to meet in a “bubble” between 23 and 27 December. Households will be able to travel between local authorities and between the four nations during this time to form a bubble, and must only join one bubble. [Additional guidance](#) is available online.

[Scottish guidance for festive period](#)

The Scottish Government has published Scotland specific guidance for the festive period on forming ‘bubbles’. They states that whilst they “are providing guidance on how people can spend Christmas time with others to help prevent loneliness and isolation, our advice is that wherever possible you should keep in touch with friends and family members from other households through technology - or, if you decide to meet in person, you should minimise the numbers and duration, and if possible meet out of doors.” Recommendations include keeping any bubble to a maximum of eight people, children under 12 years old do not count towards that maximum, and members in a bubble should not change once it has been formed.



[Testing expansion update](#)

The Scottish Government has confirmed plans for the expansion of COVID-19 testing for hospital patients, health and social care staff, and communities in level 4 areas. The plans include:

- From next week, all emergency admissions will be tested for COVID, and twice-weekly lateral flow testing will be introduced for all patient-facing healthcare staff working in hospitals, COVID-19 Assessment Centres and the Scottish Ambulance Service. Testing will be introduced for all elective admissions to hospital from mid-December.
- In the social care sector, testing will be expanded over the coming months for designated visitors, visiting professional staff, and care at home workers.
- Care home visitor testing will be initially introduced in up to 12 care homes across four local authority areas from 7 December, with full roll-out planned for January.
- To facilitate Christmas visiting in all care homes, PCR testing will be provided for those that do not have access to lateral flow testing by that time, with guidance on visiting arrangements over Christmas to be published shortly. Testing for the other two social care groups will also commence in January.

[Joint letter expressing support for professionals](#)

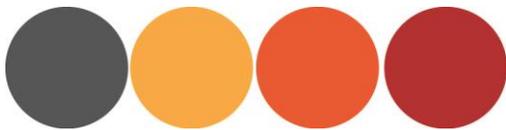
The four chief nursing officers and the Chief Executive of the Nursing and Midwifery Council have published a joint letter on supporting professionals during the second wave of COVID-19. They expect employers, educational supervisors, professional bodies, national NHS and health and social care organisations to be flexible in their approach and the expectations of routine requirements. Healthcare professional regulators, including the NMC, remain committed to taking into account factors relevant to the environment in which the professional is working.

[Survey of third sector organisations supporting people](#)

The Scottish Government's Population Health Directorate has published the findings of a survey of 530 third sector organisations in Scotland who supported people through the COVID-19 pandemic over March to August 2020. The survey was designed to explore what kinds of support were being requested, who was being supported, how support was being delivered, as well as how the third sector itself was feeling about their ability to support those in need now and in the future.

[Guidance for provision of third sector family support](#)

The Scottish Government's Children and Families Directorate has published a summary of guidance relevant to the provision of third sector family support during the pandemic. It is not new guidance, but a helpful tool to signpost those delivering family support to the guidance that is most applicable to them.



[Latest data on COVID-19](#)

Public Health Scotland has released its weekly COVID-19 statistical report. By Sunday 22 November, there had been 89,084 confirmed cases, with 6,903 in the latest week. In the week ending 22 November, there were 522 admissions to hospital with confirmed COVID-19 and 44 patients were treated in intensive care. 589 people aged 5-17 tested positive.

[Walk-through testing centre opens in Glasgow](#)

The UK Government has opened a new COVID-19 walk-through testing centre at the St Francis Community Centre in Glasgow.

[UK Government winter plan](#)

The UK Government has published their plan for managing COVID-19 through the winter. The plan sets out the Government's approach to ending the national restrictions on 2 December, and their programme for suppressing the virus, protecting the NHS and the vulnerable, keeping education and the economy going and providing a route back to normality.

[Regional approach to restrictions \(England\)](#)

The UK Government's Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock made a statement to the House of Commons setting out the regional approach to COVID-19 restrictions with a tougher tier system.

Child Protection

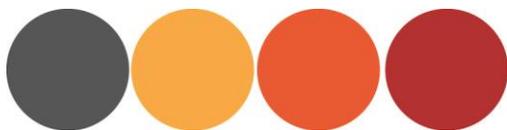
[Framework for implementation of 'smacking ban' legislation](#)

The Scottish Government has published 'Children (Equal Protection from Assault (Scotland) Bill: framework for statutory bodies', which explains the effect of the Children (Equal Protection from Assault) (Scotland) Act 2019 and establishes a framework for implementation of the Act for statutory bodies in Scotland.

Human Rights

[Progress update on action plan](#)

The Scottish Government has published 'Progressing the Human Rights of Children in Scotland: An Action Plan 2018-21. Progress Report 2020', providing an update on progress made towards the actions set out in the Action Plan. It also includes an update on the actions taken during 2020 to protect and promote the human rights of children and young people in the specific context of the coronavirus pandemic.



Justice

[Website launches to support and promote advocacy for Children's Hearings](#)

The Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA) has launched a new website for children and young people attending Children's Hearings, giving more information about what an advocate is, how they can help and where children and young people can access one.

[Advocacy service to reinforce rights of children](#)

A national advocacy service has been launched by the Scottish Government to offer support to children and young people to express their needs and views on decisions that affect their lives.

Looked After and Accommodated Children

[Research and suggestions for a better care system \(England\)](#)

The Children's Commissioner for England Anne Longfield presents new research during a speech on her vision for a better care system. Whilst discussing flaws in the social care system, one of the suggestions for improvement is a national care system, with decisions taken locally but issues such as children's social care tackled nationally to ensure children receive the same standard of care.

Mental Health

[Update to COVID-19 advice note](#)

The Mental Welfare Commission has updated their advice note for practitioners who are using the Mental Health Act and Adults with Incapacity Act when caring for patients.

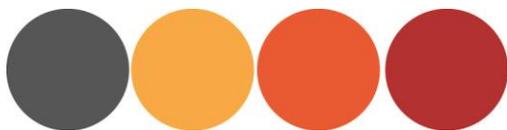
Other Health and Social Care

[Regulating managers of registered services](#)

The Care Inspectorate and the Scottish Social Services Council have issued a joint statement to set out their policy on the regulation of managers and clarify the position regarding applications for managers who do not hold relevant qualifications.

[Sharing Intelligence group publishes annual report](#)

The 2019-2020 annual report of the Sharing Intelligence for Health & Care Group has been published. The group includes Audit Scotland, the Care Inspectorate, Healthcare Improvement Scotland, Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland, NHS Education for Scotland, Public Health Scotland and the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. The Group is a mechanism that enables the seven national



organisations to share, consider, and respond to intelligence about health and care systems across Scotland.

[Draft SDS standards published for consultation](#)

Social Work Scotland has published draft standards for Self-Directed Support and is seeking views from support people, carers, support organisations and practitioners who would be expected to implement the standards.

[Final report on strategy to prevent violence against women and girls](#)

The Scottish Government has published the final progress report for Equally Safe, its strategy to prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls (alternatively known as gender based violence). The report looks at key actions and achievements over the life of the strategy.

[Update on work of Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry](#)

The Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry has published its latest newsletter on their work during autumn and winter of 2020. The newsletter also includes an update on the Child Migrations case study, Scottish Government evidence and future case studies.

[Annual report for Welsh inspectorate \(Wales\)](#)

Care Inspectorate Wales has published their Chief Inspector's annual report for 2019-2020. The report shows that they regulated 5,873 services, and carried out 2,297 inspections across adult and children's services, and childcare and play in Wales.

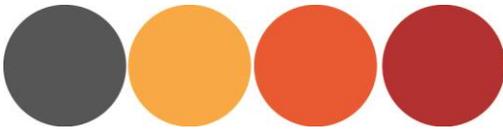
Other

[2020 Spending Review](#)

The Treasury has published the 2020 Spending Review and related documents. Speaking in the House of Commons, Chancellor Rishi Sunak announced an extra £3bn for the NHS and said public services would receive £55bn in total next year to deal with the consequences of the pandemic. NHS staff will receive a pay rise next year, but other public service workers will not.

[Accounts Commission report on City of Edinburgh Council](#)

A report by the Accounts Commission has found services provided by the City of Edinburgh Council have improved over the last four years, but more could be done to "maximise its potential to improve the city and the lives of local people". The Best Value Assurance report notes the council must continue to lead and progress its commitment to reducing poverty and inequality across Edinburgh. It also found Edinburgh Integration Joint Board has not yet developed the detailed plans needed to address significant financial pressures.

**Disclaimer**

This weekly bulletin is produced as an update on the key issues concerning children and young people.

Each item in the bulletin has a hyperlinked headline that will take the reader to the original source.

We collate items from our parliamentary and Scottish Government monitoring covering health and social care news from throughout the UK, and current research and policy development. We use a variety of sources for the bulletin, including alerts from [Newsdirect](#), [Community Care](#), [Children & Young People Now](#) and [ISD Scotland](#).

We aim to be representative rather than comprehensive, so we try to cover only the main Scottish stories, along with some stories from the rest of the UK. The purpose of the bulletin is to alert readers to items of interest. It should be noted that these items are the works of others and are neither authorised nor endorsed by the Care Inspectorate, with the exception of publications which are identified as Care Inspectorate publications.

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