




# Adult and Health



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## COVID-19 – General

### [Vaccination update](#)

The Scottish Government has provided an update on the vaccination programme, confirming invitations to vaccine appointments for people aged 70-79 have been delivered to homes this week. Ministers confirmed Scotland is on track for all those aged over 80 to have received their first dose of the vaccine by the end of the first week in February. No-one aged 80 or over should expect a vaccine invitation because they will be contacted directly by phone or letter.

### [Update on COVID-19 variants](#)

Public Health Scotland has issued an update on the three COVID-19 variants which emerged during December 2020 in the UK. They are working with other public health agencies and academic partners to learn more about the variants and how they may be transmitted, as well as the effectiveness of the currently licensed vaccines against them. The updated confirms that three cases of the variant discovered in South Africa are in Scotland, and no cases of the Brazilian variant have been identified in Scotland.



### [Evaluation of shielding programme](#)

Public Health Scotland has published a rapid evaluation of the COVID-19 Shielding Programme. It shows that the programme made a difference but there are lessons to be learnt for future support for people at risk. The evaluation found clear evidence that the shielding advice changed people's behaviour and that the shielding support addressed real need. It also found that the Shielding guidance was neither necessary nor sufficient to change behaviour in all instances. Among the issues for further consideration in future were opportunities for person-centred informed decision-making and how different risk factors combine to determine individual risk.

### [Weekly COVID-19 statistics published](#)

Public Health Scotland has published the weekly COVID-19 statistical report. As at 24 January 2021, there have been 172,951 confirmed COVID-19 cases, with 8,344 in the week ending 24 January. During the week ending 24 January, there were active confirmed cases of COVID-19 in 235 out of 1,054 care homes that returned data (1,065 care homes in total).

### [Updated PPE statistics released](#)

The Scottish Government has published statistics on PPE distribution, showing the latest number of Personal Protective Equipment items which have been issued to the health and social care system in Scotland by National Services Scotland.

## **Care Homes/Care at Home**

### [Concern over care home staff working with COVID-19 \(England\)](#)

The Guardian has reported on the Care Quality Commission's investigation of concerns that staff with COVID-19 have been working with care home residents. After concerns were raised about staff facing pressure to return to work, as a result of high absence rates, the CQC issued a warning to all care homes in England with the Department of Health and Social Care and council social services chiefs that "under no circumstances should staff who have tested positive for Covid-19, regardless of whether they are displaying symptoms or not, work in a care setting" until their self-isolation has ended.

## **Other Health and Social Care**

### [Extra funding to support staff wellbeing](#)

Additional funding of £500,000 is being allocated to provide practical measures of support for health and social care staff. The funding will support local provision of hot drinks and snacks and other measures to aid rest and recuperation during shifts, which will support their wellbeing and ease some pressures they face at work.



### [Health inequalities monitoring report](#)

The ALLIANCE has highlighted the latest [annual update](#) on health inequalities from the Scottish Government. The data pre-dates the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting the gap in health outcomes between the most and least deprived areas for a variety of indicators, including: healthy life expectancy, premature mortality, mental wellbeing, baby birthweight, self-assessed health, limiting long-term conditions, and a range of morbidity and mortality indicators relating to alcohol, cancer, coronary heart disease and drug-use.

### [Guidance on ethical issues related to pressure on services](#)

The British Association of Social Workers has published new guidance on ethical questions for social workers when services are not able to cope with demand due to COVID-19.

### [Funding for regeneration projects](#)

The Scottish Government has announced more than £25m will go to disadvantaged and remote communities to support regeneration and employment projects. Funding from the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund will go to 26 projects to tackle inequalities, benefiting an estimated 400 business and organisations, and supporting and estimated 1,220 jobs. A list of the projects recommended for funding in 2021-22 has been published, alongside a complete list of projects supported by the fund since 2014.

### [CQC launches proposed changes to regulatory work \(England\)](#)

The Care Quality Commission has proposed specific changes to the way it regulates, to improve flexibility and responsiveness in the context of the pandemic and beyond. The CQC wants to introduce changes which would allow them to assess and rate services more flexibly, so ratings can be updated more often, and ratings are easier to understand for everyone. A consultation on the changes has opened, closing on 23 March 2021.

## **Other**

### [Scottish Government Budget 2021-22](#)

The Scottish Government has published its Budget for 2021-22. Headlines include:

- an increase of over £800m to the core Health and Sport budget, taking it to over £16bn
- total investment in health and social care integration to over £883m, including £34m for delivery of the Living Wage
- £145.3m (an increase of £50m) for action on alcohol and drugs
- investment exceeding 1.1bn on mental health services
- £567m for delivery of the early learning and childcare expansion.



The Scottish Government has also published its [2021-22 Public Sector Pay Policy](#), which includes a headline basic pay increase of 1% for public sector workers who earn less than £80,000 and a guaranteed cash underpin of £750 for public sector workers who earn £25,000 or less.

### **Disclaimer**

This weekly bulletin is produced as an update on the key issues concerning adults and health.

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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