

8 – 14 May 2021



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COVID-19 - General

[Pandemic inquiry to be launched in Spring 2022, PM confirms](#)

An independent public inquiry into the UK's response to the COVID-19 pandemic will be launched in Spring 2022, the Prime Minister has announced. Speaking in the House of Commons, Boris Johnson said the inquiry will be established on a statutory basis, with full powers under the Inquiries Act 2005. He said he will "consult the devolved administrations before finalising the scope and detailed arrangements so that this inquiry can consider all key aspects of the UK response".

[Next stage of restriction easing confirmed by First Minister](#)

First Minister Nicola Sturgeon has confirmed that the easing of pandemic-related restrictions will continue from next week. Under Level 2 restrictions, which come into effect on Monday 17 May, six people from three households will be able to meet indoors, up to eight people from eight households will be able to meet outdoors and people will be able to hug their loved ones. The new rules will apply to all mainland local authority areas with the exception of Moray, where Level 3 restrictions remain in place. The Western Isles, Orkney, Shetland and remote Highland and Argyll islands are expected to move straight to Level 1.

[Latest weekly COVID-19 stats published by Public Health Scotland](#)

Public Health Scotland has released its weekly COVID-19 statistics. At 9 May, there had been 227,840 confirmed cases, with 1,236 in



the latest week. That week there were 50 admissions to hospital with confirmed COVID-19, while eight were treated in intensive care. In the week ending 2 May, there were 36 positive tests under the school testing programme.

[Latest COVID-19 death figures published by NRS](#)

As at 9 May, 10,104 deaths had been registered in Scotland with COVID-19 mentioned on the death certificate, according to statistics published by National Records of Scotland (NRS). In the week 26 April – 2 May, seven such deaths were registered, a decrease of 12 from the previous week.

[Reported rise in cases in Glasgow](#)

There are reported concerns about rising COVID-19 cases in Glasgow, with clusters of high infection rates in parts of the city, according to the BBC. Scotland's Clinical Director Prof Jason Leitch is quoted as stating that while he is concerned, he is confident Glasgow can still move to level two on 17 May, if hospital admissions, intensive care and mortality remain low.

[Care Inspectorate report on inspections, 12 May 2021](#)

The Care Inspectorate has published a report of inspections carried out in care services in the past two weeks. This report covers inspections we have completed since those detailed in our previous report of 28 April. This report is routinely laid before the Scottish Parliament every fortnight but because of the current election period, it will not be formally laid until the next session of Parliament begins.

[Update on AstraZeneca vaccine](#)

The UK Government's Department of Health and Social Care has released a statement following updated advice on the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine. The statement confirms the vaccine is safe and effective, but that it is "more preferable for people under the age of 40 with no underlying health conditions to be offered an alternative vaccine where possible once they are eligible, and only if doing so does not cause a substantial delay in accessing a vaccination."

[Audit strategy to look at COVID-19 funding](#)

Scotland's public audit agency Audit Scotland has published its approach to examining the allocation and distribution of COVID-19 funding to local government and other public sector bodies. Their work aims to look at the level of funding allocated, as well as the actions taken by organisations in distributing the funding.

Alcohol/Drugs

[Proposal for cross-party summit to tackle Dundee drugs deaths](#)

The Courier reports on proposals by Michael Marra MSP for all North East MSPs to convene a standing committee on Dundee drugs deaths. Reportedly agreeing about the need for a cross-party discussion, Shona Robison MSP and Joe FitzPatrick MSP



have also suggested the group should include Dundee's MPs due to the reserved nature of some drugs policy.

[Resource for assisting families with parental alcohol and drug problems \(England\)](#)

Public Health England has published a toolkit containing guidance, data and other resources to support professionals who are helping families affected by parental alcohol and drug problems. Additionally, there is an online community for people with an interest in parental alcohol and drug use and the impact it can have on children, carers, and families.

Alzheimer's/Dementia

[Resources to reduce concerns and stresses of Coronavirus](#)

The Alzheimer's Society is highlighting video resources produced by NHS Wales called 'Get There Together' for people living with dementia, with the aim to reduce concerns and reassure anyone who is anxious about getting beyond the front door as well as dealing with the stresses of COVID-19. The films feature shops, libraries, cafes, healthcare services and other community settings, and show examples of signs people might expect to see, one-way systems, social distancing markings, clear screens, which could be confusing when first encountered. The videos aim to help individuals familiarise themselves with new safety measures in place.

Care Homes/Care at Home

[Updated guidance for repurposing prescription only medicines](#)

The Care Inspectorate has updated its guidance for repurposing prescription only medicines (POMs) in care homes and hospices during the COVID-19 pandemic. The guidelines for repurposing prescription medicines have been extended for one more year alongside a recommendation to keep small quantities of medicines.

Health

[Three infection, prevention and control aide-memoires in new WHO guidance](#)

New guidance featuring three 'aide-memoires' on infection prevention and control has been published by the World Health Organization (WHO). The improvement tools relate to: respiratory and hand hygiene, personal protective equipment (PPE), and environmental cleaning, waste and linen management. Each aide-memoire is approximately five pages in length and includes instructions for use and examples.

[Introduction to the Care Inspectorate's Chief Nurse](#)

The Care Inspectorate has published a blog introducing our Chief Nurse Jane Douglas to mark International Nurses Day on 12 May. Jane provides clinical leadership and specialist clinical and professional advice, and will be working to influence national policy and strategy in relation to social care.



[Nursing workforce standards launched by the RCN](#)

Nursing workforce standards setting out what must happen within workplaces to ensure the delivery of safe and effective patient care have been launched by the Royal College of Nursing (RCN). The standards are designed for use by those who fund, plan, commission, design, review and provide services which require a nursing workforce. The standards aim to work alongside setting-specific guidance, in every area of health and social care with a nursing workforce.

[Hub for knowledge of health inequalities launched](#)

Public Health Scotland has launched the Health Inequalities Learning Hub. The Hub is a free, flexible resource for anyone that would like to increase their knowledge of health inequalities in Scotland.

Learning Disabilities

[Campaign promotes preventative approaches for people with learning disabilities](#)

A campaign encouraging preventative approaches for people with learning disabilities and autistic adults has been launched by the British Association of Social Workers. Resources have been launched to promote the campaign, with a focus on commissioning, human rights-based practice, the role of social work and legal literacy to reduce the risk of situations from reaching the point of hospital admission.

Mental Health

[Report highlights benefits of connecting with nature](#)

The Mental Health Foundation has published a report summarising the evidence of how and why our relationship with nature is beneficial to our mental health, and highlighting the unequal access to these benefits for specific groups. The report also makes eight recommendations for action, including the development of national and local Green Spaces Strategies to ensure parity of access to safe green space for all.

Other Health and Social Care

[New MSPs sworn in and Presiding Officer elected following election](#)

The election took place on 6 May, with the SNP emerging with 64 seats, one short of an overall majority. The Conservatives won 31 seats, Labour 22, the Greens eight and the Lib Dems four. MSPs were sworn in to the new Parliament on 13 May, while Green MSP Alison Johnstone has been elected as the new Presiding Officer. Nicola Sturgeon is likely to be elected First Minister on 18 May, before Scottish Government ministers and cabinet secretaries are confirmed in the following days.

[Partnership working report published by SSSC and NES](#)

The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and NHS Education for Scotland (NES) have published a report on their partnership working and approach. The



report shares achievements from their partnership work during 2019-20 and describes their role in supporting the combined workforce through the pandemic.

[Bill to establish regulatory framework for international professional qualifications](#)

Draft legislation designed to establish an effective regulatory framework for professional qualifications and allow international skilled professionals to have their qualifications recognised in the UK has been introduced by the UK Government. The Professional Qualifications Bill will give devolved administrations powers to equip their regulators with the ability to enter into arrangements with international partners and to license skilled professionals from around the world.

[HIS paper sets out approach to support health and care redesign and improvement](#)

A document has been published setting out Healthcare Improvement Scotland's (HIS) approach to supporting the redesign and continuous improvement of health and care services to deliver transformation in health and wellbeing outcomes. The report suggests "innovative and radical rethinking" is required, while success will be dependent on "embedding a culture of continuous improvement".

[Westminster committee reports on social care white paper \(England\)](#)

A committee at Westminster has published a report on the UK Government's [white paper](#) for health and social care reform in England. The Health and Social Care Committee examines the challenges facing integrated care systems (ICSs), proposals for social care, additional powers for the health secretary, proposed public health measures and ways of reducing bureaucracy. Among the findings, the Committee welcomes the commitment to include provisions for independent ratings of ICSs by the Care Quality Commission and calls for new legislation to impose a duty on the Secretary of State to publish a ten-year plan for social care.

**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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