



15 - 21 January 2022



bulletin

A row of four overlapping circles in shades of grey, teal, blue, and purple, with the letter 'A' in white on the purple circle.

# Adult and Health

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## Covid-19 - General

### [Omicron restrictions to be removed](#)

The remaining statutory measures introduced in response to Omicron will be lifted from Monday 24 January, the First Minister has confirmed. These include limits on attendance at indoor public events and the requirement of 1m physical distancing between different groups indoors. The guidance to keep social interaction at home and in indoor public places to a maximum of three households is also being lifted, but the public are being asked to be cautious and to limit contacts where they can. People will continue to be asked to work from home whenever possible, with employers asked to facilitate this. A return to a more hybrid approach from the start of February may be possible, if case numbers continue to decline.

### [Covid guidance updated](#)

Guidance on staying safe and protecting others during Covid has been updated by the Scottish Government. The 'meeting people' guidance has been clarified and the guidance on travel to events in other parts of the UK has been removed. The Scottish Government has also [updated](#) the overview page of guidance for people at the highest risk of COVID.



### [Students to assist in delivery of health and social care](#)

Around 12,000 students will assist in the delivery of health and social care, the Scottish Government has announced. Over 3,000 nursing and midwifery students are heading out on placements this month and 7,000 students will be placed across the service in February, complemented by around 1,500 Allied Health Professional students and more than 500 paramedic students.

### [ALLIANCE calls for human rights to be prioritised in Covid-19 inquiry](#)

The ALLIANCE has called for further steps to be taken to “explicitly embed” human rights, intersectionality and equalities in the approach taken to the Covid-19 inquiry. Writing to the Chair of the inquiry, Lady Poole, the ALLIANCE called for this approach to be reflected in participation, communication and analysis processes, and in the outputs from the inquiry. The letter also outlines a series of other key issues raised by members, which it believes should be included in the inquiry’s remit.

## **Alcohol and Drugs**

### [New drug deaths taskforce chair and vice-chair announced](#)

The new Chair of the Drug Deaths Taskforce has been announced as David Strang, a former Chief Constable who previously chaired the Independent Inquiry into Mental Health Services in Tayside. Chief Nursing Officer Professor Fiona McQueen has been appointed as Vice-Chair. Both take up their posts with immediate effect.

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

### [Omicron restrictions eased for care home residents](#)

Most people admitted to adult care homes will no longer have to self-isolate for two weeks under new guidance issued to care home operators, the Scottish Government has announced. People transferring from hospitals to care homes will no longer need to isolate if they have had a negative PCR test in the previous 48 hours, so long as they have no symptoms of a respiratory virus and have not been exposed to Covid-19 over the previous 14 days. The isolation period for care home residents testing positive for Covid-19, or for close contacts of Covid cases, is also being cut from 14 days to 10 days to bring restrictions closer to those for the general public.

### [Guidance for care homes on additional treatment options for Covid](#)

The Scottish Government has published guidance for care homes on additional treatment options for people with Covid who are thought to be at greater risk. New treatments include neutralising monoclonal antibodies (nMABs) and antivirals, including the recently authorised oral antiviral molnupiravir. Individuals over the age of 50 or those 18-49 with an eligible underlying medical condition, may be able to access oral antivirals through the PANORAMIC national study, while eligible high-risk adults and children will be able to access Covid therapies directly via the NHS. The letter notes individuals who meet both criteria should be supported to access the direct access arrangements.



### [Scottish Government letter to care at home settings on minimising the risks of Covid](#)

The Scottish Government has published a letter to care at home settings summarising the updated protection measures to minimise the risk of Covid, including the Omicron variant. The letter highlights infection prevention and control measures that should continue to be taken within care at home, housing support, supported housing and building-based day services sectors as well as advice on vaccination, testing, isolation and social encounters for all social care staff. Additional protective measures for supported housing settings are also outlined, with a focus on continuing to support indoor visits for tenants.

### [Care at home awards deadline extended](#)

Scottish Care has taken the decision to extend the entry deadline for its 2022 Care at Home and Housing Support Awards, to 25 February 2022. It is hoped an in-person awards ceremony will take place on Friday 13 May 2022.

### [Scottish Care webinar to explore cost of care model](#)

Scottish Care is hosting a webinar on 27 January to provide members with an opportunity to have a 'walk through' the Cost of Care Model that underpins the National Care Home Contract. The webinar will explore the Model line by line, explaining the baselines where they exist, and any background information. There will also be an opportunity to ask questions.

### [Latest CQC Insight published \(England\)](#)

The latest insight report from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) has been published, with a focus on staff vacancies in care homes, and the quality of ethnicity data recording for mental health services. In relation to staff vacancies, the data shows that vacancies have continued to increase across England, while also giving a breakdown of vacancies by region.

## **Health**

### [Inquiry into primary care access and alternative pathways to treatment](#)

An inquiry into how patients access primary care and alternative routes to treatment has been launched by a committee at the Scottish Parliament. The Health, Social Care and Sport Committee has launched a call for evidence to inform the inquiry, closing on 22 February.

## **Learning disabilities**

### [Charity calls for 'human rights emergency' to be addressed](#)

Enable Scotland has launched a new campaign, which calls for urgent change to end hospital living for people with learning disabilities; and to put immediate plans in place to ensure that all people in delayed discharge or who have been displaced 'out of area' are supported to return to live in the home and community they choose by



2023. The #MyOwnFrontDoor campaign also proposes five key steps for public bodies to take to unlock the right to an own front door for people who have a learning disability. These include: an end to out of country placements; national investment to improve local support; creating a national panel to ensure oversight and accountability of decision making about individual placements; ending the commissioning of multi-unit beds; and maintain a national at-risk register.

#### [Covid self-help booklets updated](#)

Updated Covid self-help booklets (originally released in 2020) to support people with mild to moderate learning disabilities have been published by the Scottish Commission for People with Learning Disabilities. The booklets have been created by people with learning disabilities, with the support of family members, friends, volunteers and carers and are also suitable for social work and health professionals.

### **Mental Health**

#### [CQC survey shows the impact of lockdown on mental health \(England\)](#)

New research from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) has highlighted the impact of lockdown measures on the wellbeing of people who use services, as well as the challenges facing health and social care services in England. Nearly three quarters of carers (73%) said that lockdown restrictions had had an impact on the mental health of the person they care for, while 56% of carers said that they had had an impact on the dignity and independence of the person they care for.

### **Workforce**

#### [Recruiting overseas workers – Home Office events](#)

The SSSC has highlighted two webinars to be delivered by the Home Office on 21 and 25 January to provide an overview of the point-based immigration system, the routes available for the care sector and how to become a sponsor. This will include new information about the Migration Advisory Committee's recent recommendation to add care workers and home carers to the Shortage Occupation List and the Health and Care Visa.

### **Other Health and Social Care**

#### [Ministers seeking new appointments to Care Inspectorate Board](#)

Scottish Ministers are looking to make three appointments to the Care Inspectorate Board. Our Chair, Paul Edie, has made a [video](#) on what the Care Inspectorate does. More information on the appointments and to apply can be found on the Scottish Government [website](#).

#### [IRISS webinar on ethical commissioning](#)

IRISS is hosting a webinar on 9 February to consider how support is planned and purchased, and how strategic commissioning can be more ethical, sustainable and person-centred. The webinar will hear from the Gwynedd social care team in Wales,



who have been redesigning services and developing a people-centred approach to commissioning care at home that moves away from a 'time and task' model to more personalised and collaborative support.

#### [Annual progress report on trafficking and exploitation strategy](#)

A report setting out progress on implementation of the Trafficking and Exploitation Strategy has been published by the Scottish Government. The fourth annual report addresses progress against three key action areas: identifying victims and supporting them to safety and recovery; identifying perpetrators and disrupting their activity; and addressing the conditions which foster trafficking and exploitation.

#### [UK Government announces preferred candidate for CQC Chair \(England\)](#)

Ian Dilks OBE has been named as the UK Government's preferred candidate for the next Chair of the Care Quality Commission (CQC). Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid has invited the Health and Social Care Committee to hold a pre-appointment scrutiny hearing before making a final decision.

#### **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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