



12 – 18 March 2022

[Covid-19 - General](#)[Alcohol and Drugs](#)[Alzheimer's/Dementia](#)[Care Homes/Care at Home](#)[Disabilities](#)[End of Life/Palliative Care](#)[Health](#)[Older People](#)[Other Health & Social Care](#)

Covid-19 - General

[First Minister Covid update to parliament](#)

The legal requirements to wear face coverings on public transport and most indoor public settings will continue until at least early April given the current increase in Covid case numbers, First Minister Nicola Sturgeon has announced. In an update to the Scottish Parliament, the First Minister also confirmed that the remaining legal requirements for businesses and service providers to collect customer details for contact tracing, and to have regard to and take reasonable measures set out in Covid guidance, will end as planned on Monday 21 March.

[Updated test and protect transition plan published](#)

The Scottish Government has published its updated Test and Protect plans for the endemic phase of the Covid-19 pandemic, setting out how it will manage the transition from the current testing position to the end steady state. It notes that the primary purpose of testing is changing from population wide testing to reduce transmission to targeted testing to support clinical care. Testing will still play an ongoing role in health and care workforces, given the clinical risk in those settings, and will be a key part of surveillance. From 18 April, free lateral flow tests will no longer be available for the general population but will



continue to be free where testing continues to be advised – for clinical care, for health and social care workers and for people visiting vulnerable individuals in care homes or hospitals.

[Updated ventilation guidance published](#)

The Scottish Government has published updated ventilation guidance as we move on to a new phase of the pandemic and restrictions and regulations are relaxed. The guidance is designed to support the mixing of individuals safely in indoor settings and is aimed at both domestic and non-domestic properties.

[Impact assessments published for establishment of public inquiry](#)

The Scottish Government has published an [EQIA](#), [ICIA](#), and [FSDA](#) for the establishment of the Scottish Covid public inquiry. The impact assessments evaluate the processes surrounding the ministerial decision to exercise powers under the Inquiries Act 2005 to establish a Scottish public inquiry into the Covid pandemic.

[Research on the experience of Covid-19 for marginalised communities](#)

Voluntary Health Scotland has published the findings of research undertaken by the Inclusion Health Partnership on the lived experience of the pandemic for marginalised communities. The research focused on six cross-cutting issues and found a number of participants were not aware of their right to health, with lockdown measures impeding their ability to access support and services. Concerns were also raised around the removal of face-to-face provision, particularly for those with poor mental health, with digital exclusion also a key feature of loneliness and isolation.

[New medicine approved for use in preventing Covid-19](#)

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has authorised the use of Evusheld (tixagevimab/cilgavimab) for adults who are unlikely to build an immune response from Covid-19 vaccination or who are not recommended for vaccination. Evusheld, developed by AstraZeneca, is approved for use before being exposed to covid infection in order to prevent illness. The results from a clinical trial in adults show that Evusheld reduced the risk of developing symptomatic Covid-19 by 77% and protection from the virus continued for at least 6 months after a single dose.

Alcohol and Drugs

[Latest drug deaths report published](#)

The Scottish Government has published the latest quarterly report on suspected drug deaths for October to December 2021. The report shows a fall of 8% in the number of suspected deaths between January and December 2021 compared to the previous year as a whole and a 21% reduction on the same quarter last year. Of the 1,295 suspected deaths in 2021, more than two thirds were of people aged between 35 and 54, while males accounted for 73% of the overall figure.



[New substance use treatment target to be introduced](#)

Minister for Drugs Policy Angela Constance has set out the government's expectations for delivering the substance use treatment target. A letter to integrated authorities and alcohol drug partnerships notes that almost 90% of all drug-related deaths in Scotland involve opiates, stating that the focus should be on increasing the number of people in opioid substitution therapy. The target aims to increase the number of people with problem opiate drug use in community-based treatment in Scotland to at least 32,000 people by 1 April 2024.

Alzheimer's/Dementia

[Charity launches quiz to mark Brain Awareness Week](#)

Alzheimer Scotland has launched an online quiz app to mark Brain Awareness Week (14-20 March). My Brain Health Plan asks questions about life and routine and uses the answers to generate personalised tips and advice on areas to take action for maintaining brain health.

Care Homes/Care at Home

[Resistance training in residential care effective in improving strength, study finds](#)

Resistance training in frail older adults in residential care is effective in improving functional capacity and strength, according to a study published in the Journal of Aging and Physical Activity. The study, conducted by researchers at the University of Stirling, involved a six-week resistance training programme with 11 frail residents aged 65 or over at Olivet Christadelphian Care Home in Birmingham. It found that those participating in the training experienced a range of physical improvements, as well as reporting a meaningful impact on self-reported functional capacity and physical confidence.

[Fire risk safety assessment documents updated](#)

The Scottish Government has updated its guidance for fire risk safety assessment, updating the care home form, the Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO) form and the fire safety risk assessment record.

[Covid immunity declines steeply in care homes, study finds \(England\)](#)

Covid immunity declines steeply among care home residents in the months after vaccination, according to a study highlighted in The Guardian. The University College London paper studied more than 15,000 care home residents in England and found that protection against hospitalisation and death fell by one-third three to seven months after vaccination. According to the study, this decline is far sharper than that seen in younger people, where protection against severe illness appears to be robust despite immunity against infection waning.



Disabilities

[SCLD publishes final reports from 'How's Life?' Survey](#)

The Scottish Commission for People with Learning Disabilities (SCLD) has published the final two reports from its 'How's Life?' Survey. The My Home, My Community, and My Time, My Choice reports highlight the need to build more inclusive communities, including workplaces, with 36% of My Home, My Community respondents stating that they did not feel safe in their local area. SCLD has also highlighted activity where more inclusive communities have been nurtured.

[Scottish Government looks to improve adult disability benefits](#)

The Scottish Government has confirmed disabled people on the highest components of Adult Disability Payment and whose needs are highly unlikely to change will be eligible for an "indefinite award", ending fixed-term reviews. Adult Disability Payment will replace the UK Government's Personal Independence Payment (PIP). It will open for new applications in pilot areas starting this month.

End of Life/Palliative Care

[Universal Principles for Advanced Care Planning published \(England\)](#)

Six Universal Principles for Advanced Care Planning have been jointly published by a coalition of stakeholders in England. The principles have been developed in response to the Care Quality Commission report Protect, Connect, Respect – decisions about living and dying well, and have been endorsed by the Social Care Institute for Excellence, the NHS and the UK Government.

Health

[Mental Health Law Review launches Phase 3 consultation](#)

The Scottish Mental Health Law Review has launched a consultation as it moves into the third phase of its work. The paper outlines some of the proposals for change to the law put forward by the review team, developed in partnership with people with lived experience and mental health practitioners. The consultation closes on Friday 27 May, with the final report due to be submitted to ministers by the end of September.

[Independent report provides lived experience perspectives on health inequalities](#)

A report providing lived experience perspectives on health inequalities and inequity, and on how primary care can address these has been published by the Scottish Government. A Chance to Change Scotland has been published alongside the primary care health inequalities short-life working group (SLWG) [report](#) which recommends the actions to be taken by primary care health services to help reduce health inequalities and improve health equity in Scotland. Chance 2 Change, a community peer support group, were invited to take on the role of an expert reference group to the SLWG.



[NMC and GMC publish updated duty of candour guidance](#)

The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) and General Medical Council (GMC) have refreshed their duty of candour guidance. The refreshed version of the guidance includes updates about reporting systems, terminology, and support available to health and care professionals. It has not created any additional requirements for professionals.

[Public Health Scotland papers link gender to health priorities](#)

Public Health Scotland have published six briefings outlining the relationship between violence against women and girls (VAWG) and Scotland's public health priorities. The briefings highlight the challenges faced by women in relation to six public health priorities and provide recommendations for what a public health response to this issue could look like. The briefings cover the following public health priorities: Safe places and communities; The early years; Mental wellbeing; Alcohol and drugs; Poverty and inequality; Healthy lifestyles.

Older People

[Age Scotland launches guide for reporting on older people and avoiding ageism](#)

Age Scotland has launched a guide outlining good practice on reporting on older people and tips to avoid ageist attitudes. The guide aims to help stakeholders, improve how they talk about older people by avoiding ageist and negative stereotypes in the messages and images they use.

Other Health and Social Care

[Joint statement on National Care Service delivered to Ministers](#)

A Joint Statement on the National Care Service (NCS), and the need to put people at the centre of social care reform, has been delivered to Ministers, the Alliance reports. The statement, signed by 145 people and organisations, calls on the Scottish Parliament and Scottish Government to ensure that the voices of lived experience and the third and independent sectors are at the forefront of the proposed NCS.

[Call for Iriss Insight topic ideas](#)

Iriss has issued a call for topic ideas for its Insights series. Iriss Insights provide a concise summary of evidence on a particular topic relating to social care or social work. Any ideas for topics should be submitted by 1 April.

[BASW calls for appropriate safeguarding for Ukrainian refugees](#)

The British Association of Social Workers (BASW) has called for the UK Government to ensure appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place for children and adults arriving as refugees from Ukraine. In a statement welcoming the generosity of those offering to accommodate refugees, BASW said it was "concerned about how the UK



scheme will be resourced and managed, how people will be matched and how the welfare and social support of Ukrainians staying here over time will be addressed”.

[Work to improve public involvement in research](#)

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency has announced it will make changes to drive up standards in health and social care research. Alongside 13 other organisations, including NHS Research Scotland, the MHRA will listen to and learn from communities, build and share evidence, support improvements in equality and inclusion, and promote UK Standards for Public Involvement.

[Scottish Parliament to appoint new Chair of Scottish Human Rights Commission](#)

The appointment of Ian Duddy as the new Chair of the Scottish Human Rights Commission (SHRC) has been endorsed by the Scottish Parliament. Mr Duddy will take up the post in June 2022, following the departure of current Chair Judith Robertson later this month. Ms Robertson has led the SHRC for the past six years.

[Survey on learning and support needs of public, private and third sector stakeholders](#)

NHS Education for Scotland (NES) are seeking views on the learning and support needs of public, private and third sector stakeholders. The findings from the survey will help NES consider options to support the NHS and public service stakeholders with various education, training and workforce services. The closing date for the survey is 31 March 2022.

[Consultation on implementing Liberty Protection Safeguards \(England and Wales\)](#)

A consultation on implementing the Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) and a revised code of practice on the Mental Capacity Act 2005 has been launched by the UK Government. The LPS is due to replace the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) and the role of the Court of Protection in providing a human rights-compliant way of authorising care arrangements that give rise to a deprivation of liberty to which the person lacks capacity to consent.

**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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