**Important role of COVID assessment centres highlighted as Winter begins**

As we enter the Winter months and Covid cases continue to rise across Scotland, medics at NHSGGC are reminding patients with the virus how to access help if their symptoms worsen.

The Community Assessment Centres (CACs) – in Barr Street (Glasgow), Clydebank, Renton and Linwood – operate on an appointment-only basis and ensure COVID-symptomatic people can be cared for within the community, while also ensuring hospital capacity is used for those with the most serious illnesses.

They also reduce the exposure of patients at GP surgeries and allow GPs to focus on providing care to patients with other health issues.

Dr Kerri Neylon, Deputy Medical Director for Primary Care at NHSGGC, said: “The CACs do a great job and ensure that patients who feel their symptoms are getting worse and need to be seen by a doctor, will be seen in a safe, effective, clinical environment. It also ensures Covid patients do not mix with other patients or enter Emergency Departments and GP surgeries, limiting its spread.

“The CACs do not provide testing facilities. They are staffed by experienced GPs and Advanced Nurse Practitioners, who can assess patients, give patients treatment plans, including medication, and/or a prescription. If they need to go to hospital for specialist care, this will be arranged.

“It is really important that patients who feel they need to be seen do this by contacting NHS24 on 111. If further clinical advice is required, NHS 24 will refer patients onto a clinician who will provide a full telephone assessment and if necessary, an appointment at the patient’s nearest CAC. Patients may still be referred directly to hospital, depending on the severity of their symptoms.”

NHS GGC currently has four Community Assessment Centres:

        Barr Street, Glasgow

        Renton

        Clydebank

        Linwood

Dr Neylon added: “I'd like to thank all colleagues and staff across primary care, community, and acute services, for their efforts in continuing to care for our patients and adapting to changes in demand and delivery. They are all doing an excellent job. For further information either telephone **0141 201 4429** or email press.office@ggc.scot.nhs.uk