



COVID PRACTICE COMMUNICATION NO 45

24th December 2021

To All GPs and GP Practices

We wanted to give GPs and practice teams a brief update just before the Festive break. The last 2 weeks have seen a number of developments and changes impacting on general practices and the health service. These include changes to the immunisation programme, lateral flow testing, and self isolation guidance. There is also targeted deployment of new Covid-19 medicines in GGC.

General practices continue to operate under high workload and staffing pressures. We are extremely grateful for all our colleagues who will be supporting the Community Pathway, CACs, and GP Out of Hours over the festive period.

The LMC office will be closed between 24th December and 5th January inclusive. If you have a query, please fill in a contact us [form](#). These will be responded to during this time.

We wish everyone a safe and peaceful Christmas and Happy New Year.

New Covid-19 Medicines

GGC has a Boardwide deployment for new nMAB and anti-virals effective against severe Covid-19 disease for non-hospitalised patients. The inclusion criteria for these medicines are-

- SARS-CoV-2 infection is confirmed by PCR testing within the last 5 days

AND

- Onset of symptoms of Covid-19 within the last 5 days

AND

- They are a member of a “highest” risk group

Exclusion Criteria are-

- Patient requires hospitalisation for Covid-19
- New supplemental oxygen required specifically for management of Covid19 symptoms
- Weight <40kg for sotrovimab
- Children aged under 12 years (sotrovimab) or under 18 years (for molnupiravir)

From Wednesday 22nd December eligible patients will be able to access this service by calling **0800 121 7072**. Please see the Document Highlight list for full information.

New Self-Isolation Guidance

The Scottish Government has updated the guidance for self-isolation exemption and lateral flow testing for healthcare workers.

The detailed guidance documents for health and social care workers-

- [ITEM 002b Winter Pressures - 2021.12.10 - Response Letter To Boards](#)

- [ITEM 002c Winter pressues - self-isolation - letter from Donna Bell - 10...](#)
- [COVID-19 Isolation Exemption Checklist](#)
- [DL & Policy Framework](#)
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The existing isolation policy for staff who are household or passing contacts of covid-19 positive cases, exempts them from the requirement to self-isolate for 10 days when they:

- are double-vaccinated;
- are asymptomatic and remain asymptomatic,
- undertake PCR test (which returns a negative test result before returning to work), and;
- undertake daily LFD testing for the remainder of the 10 day period.

An important addition to this is that staff must be

- **double vaccinated and had their booster (with the booster vaccination at least 14 days from the last exposure to the case).**

Daily Lateral Flow Testing for Healthcare Workers

In response to evidence that Omicron is more transmissible, all HCWs are now advised to increase testing from twice weekly to daily testing using the new Orient Gene 20 LFD test kits (OG20s).

The guidance be accessed through the following link: [DL\(2021\)51 - Healthcare Workers to increase Lateral Flow Device \(LFD\) testing frequency from twice weekly to daily \(scot.nhs.uk\)](#)

Fit Notes

Temporarily, employees will not be required to provide their employer with medical evidence of sickness absence for the first 28 days of absence. GPs will still be required to supply fit notes for periods of absence exceeding 28 days. The Government guidance states-

“If an employee goes off sick on or after 10 December 2021, up to and including 26 January 2022, you cannot ask them for proof of sickness until they have been off for 28 days or more.”

More information is available at [Statutory Sick Pay: employee fitness to work - GOV.UK](#) .

Have a Merry Christmas and festive wishes to you all! Stay safe and see you in 2022!

Yours sincerely,

Dr Alan McDevitt C.B.E.
Chair

Dr John Ip
Medical Director

Dr Patricia Moultrie
Medical Director

Marco Florence
Business Coordinator

Elaine McLaren
Administrative Assistant

LMC Document Highlight List

Please be aware that this is NOT a comprehensive list of all the available guidance that has been sent to GPs. These are the current key documents which we feel are important to GP practices. Please make sure that your practice's generic NHS.SCOT box is monitored daily.

From Week Beginning 13th December 2021

Covid-19 Vaccinations

CMO Letter 12-15 year olds, Flu deprioritising, 5min observation

- [Performance and Assurance – CMO](#)

CMO Letter Pregnancy and Vaccination

- [SGHDCMO\(2021\) 39 Covid19 Vaccination in Pregnancy](#)

Scottish Government – Self Isolation Exemptions for Health and Social Care Staff

- [ITEM 002b Winter Pressures - 2021.12.10 - Response Letter To Boards](#)
- [ITEM 002c Winter pressures - self-isolation - letter from Donna Bell - 10...](#)
- [COVID-19 Isolation Exemption Checklist](#)

Joint letter from Cab Sec and Chair SGPC

- [F20190033086 \(002\)](#)

GGC GP Data Collection summary w/c 6 Dec 2021

- [GP Survey GGC 2021-12-06](#)

Scottish Government - National Wellbeing Hub

- [National Wellbeing Hub](#)

From Week Beginning 19th December 2021

GGC – Targeted Deployment of Covid-19 medicines for non-hospitalised patients

- [Communication for GGC clinicians](#)
- [DL \(2021\) 52 Treatments for Non-Hospitalised Individuals](#)

Covid-19 Highest Risk List (formerly Shielding)

- [Chief Medical Officer - final version - SGHD-CMO\(2021\) 41 – Update on hi...](#)
- [CMO update to clinicians and health boards - Covid 19 Highest Risk List ...](#)
- [Shielding - Community - Over-16s CMO letter December 2021 FINAL - Corpor...](#)
- [Shielding - Community - Under-16s CMO letter December 2021 FINAL - Corpo...](#)

Pausing of Flu vaccinations Poster

- [Final Covid-19 Booster Pausing flu statement 0609 \(1\)](#)

Scottish Government – Lateral Flow Testing for HCWs

- [Covering Email](#)
- [COVID19 - HAI - DL \(2021\) 51](#)

NSS Guidance on Lateral Flow Tests

- [How to use LFT test kit email](#)
- [Manager Brief Primary Care](#)
- [Staff briefing Primary Care](#)

Scottish Government Policy - Return to work following close contact with positive case

- [DL & Policy Framework](#)

Scottish Government-Business Continuity& Mitigating the risks of Covid 19 Plan and Fit note exemptions

- [Business Continuity & Mitigating the Risks of Covid-19](#)
- [Email re. Fit Note Update and Continuity Plan](#)
- [Fit Note Exemptions-December 2021](#)