

Here is the brief for Wednesday 8 December 2021.

**Flow before you go** The uncertainty surrounding the new Omicron variant has created a renewed and greater urgency for all of us to be extra vigilant, and the message is clear that it is more important than ever that we continue to test, test and test again. Now is not the time to take our foot off the brakes. We are grateful to those who are already testing and would encourage you to also test before going to any events or places where there may be people gathering. We are hopeful those of you who have not already signed up will [consider doing so now by clicking on this link and completing the relevant form](#) – **remember, everyone working in healthcare is eligible, you don't need to be in a patient/client facing role.**

Additional kits will be supplied should you require extra for increased testing. Information on how to collect extra kits will be communicated through your sector briefs or by email from your local LFD collection point. This includes accessing extra kits for the upcoming public holidays. Acute based staff can collect from the ARI Boardroom (next to the General Office) Monday to Friday, between 10am and 2pm. If anyone is still unsure how to collect please email:

[gram.staffcovidtestingservicemanagers@nhs.scot](mailto:gram.staffcovidtestingservicemanagers@nhs.scot)

[As well as testing, please make sure results are recorded on the staff portal](#) – this means we can continue to provide you with important updates on what is happening with the virus. Once you set up your account, recording results is the work of moments.

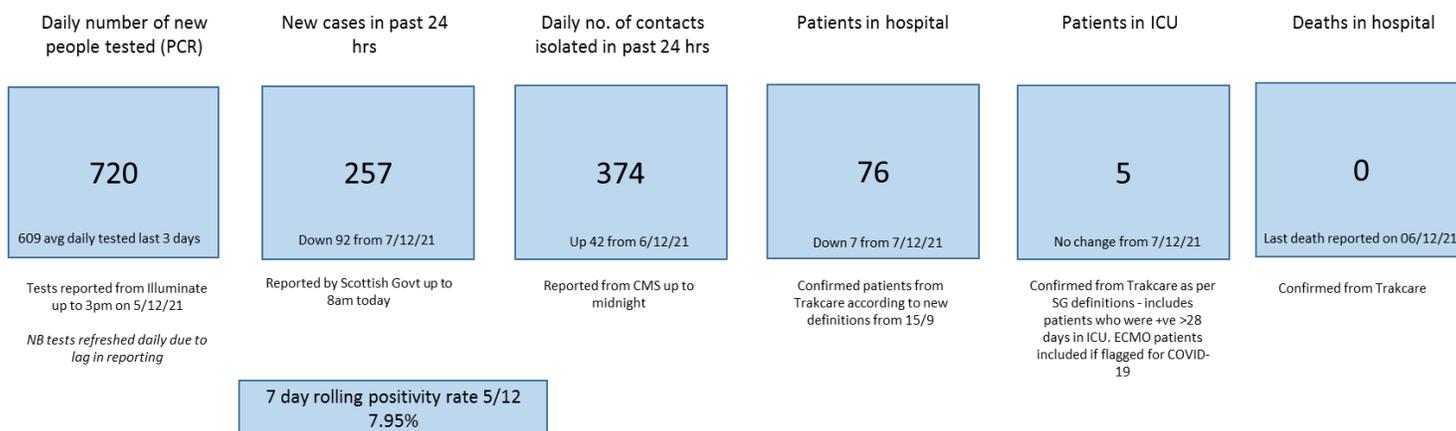
Remember, if you experience the classic COVID-19 symptoms, don't use a Lateral Flow Device. Book a PCR test, using the [staff testing programme request form](#). This service can also be used for members of your household. Let's do all we can to minimise the pressure on all of us, and our colleagues over the coming weeks of uncertainty and particularly over the festive period. Thank you.

**COVID-19 Risk Assessments** We've previously shared a lot of information about the new respiratory/non-respiratory pathways which will be introduced in health & social care settings. This will start to come into effect from next week and see the Red/Amber/Green (RAG) pathways discontinued. This is a transition, in part, to business as usual. The triage process will continue but change from RAG pathways to respiratory and non-respiratory pathways and individual COVID risk assessments for patients attending all sites will continue. The change offers the opportunity for a review of existing Individual Staff COVID Risk Assessments. It's important to remember that Individual Staff COVID Risk Assessments are dynamic and should be reviewed periodically or in the event of a change in circumstances, such as

- Emerging evidence and/or national guidance.
- work/commute transmission risk (e.g., new pathway, prevalence of virus or new strains).
- role or tasks.
- control measures (e.g., availability of PPE, physical distancing, bed spacing).
- health status of the member of staff (e.g., new medical condition, pregnancy, improvement in a health condition, change of treatment or vaccination).

[Additional guidance on how to undertake Individual COVID Risk Assessments is available here.](#) Further information, including a generic risk assessment for staff [is available on the OHS intranet page.](#) For any NHS Grampian staff member, whose specific condition is not listed in the tool, or if there is a health issue and no agreement can be reached between manager and staff member, an onward referral to Occupational Health should be made using the [COVID Enquiry Form.](#) Further support and guidance are also available in the [HR Q&A.](#) To support this, any area who would welcome a Safer Workplaces visit should contact: [gram.saferworkplaces@nhs.scot](mailto:gram.saferworkplaces@nhs.scot)

**Grampian data** The local update for today is shown below.



[The Public Health Scotland daily dashboard is available to view via this link.](#)

**Guidance on Christmas trees/festive decorations** In order to help us all celebrate Christmas safely and stay compliant with fire safety, electrical safety, and current HAI requirements, guidance is available what decorations are (and aren't) permitted. [You can read this in full on the intranet,](#) but here are some key points to remember:

- Real Christmas trees are NOT permitted within any NHS Grampian premises. Trees dry out very quickly and become highly flammable.
- Artificial trees are acceptable to use in a controlled and managed manner if it can be confirmed they are flame retardant and carry the Kite mark or CE approval mark.
- Fibre optic trees and decorations are NOT permitted, due to the heat generated by the light unit at the base which has in the past caused scorching on surfaces and resulted in near misses.

**Christmas lunches** The cafes at Dr Gray's, Woodend, Royal Cornhill, and the Orange & Pink zones at ARI will be serving Christmas lunches on Wednesday 15 December. Menu below; please remember to gel your hands on arrival at any of the cafes.

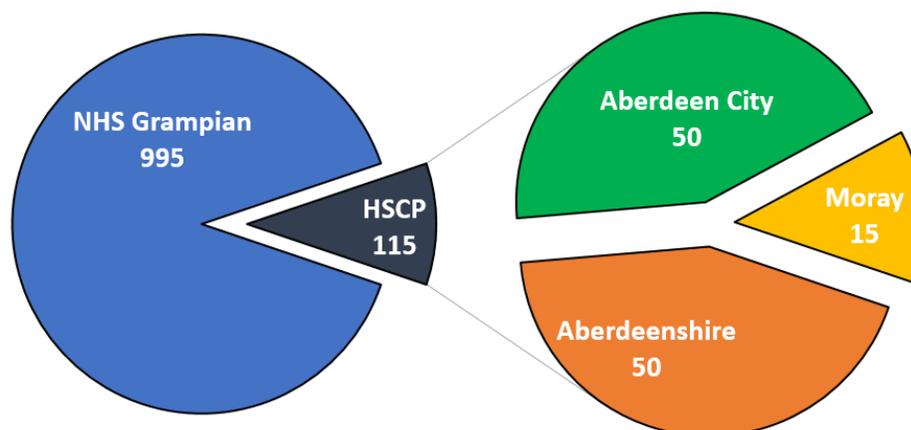


**Festive Celebrations** We've shared this a couple of times already, but just in case you missed it, we've reattached our top tips on planning the safest team get-together you can. While a certain festive gathering which may (or may not) have taken place last year is getting all the headlines, you might have missed this story from Spain, [where nearly 70 staff are absent from one hospital, following a party](#).

**Advent Achievements** On 8 December 2020, the first COVID-19 vaccinations were administered in Grampian. In the 365 days since, we've administered 1,063,490 doses. We've also (deep breath) moved into P&J Live, moved out of P&J Live, and moved into the old John Lewis (yes, we still miss it too). We've turned a tile showroom in Elgin into the Fiona Elcock Vaccination Centre. The Banchory vaccination clinic has found its permanent home in a former day centre. We've vaccinated in care homes, hotels, sports halls, town halls, in public parks, at car festivals, at international bike races, in community centres, churches, bars – we've gone anywhere that would have us! We've celebrated birthdays, welcomed new recruits, and wished people well as they retired. We've jabbed famous footballers and ordinary folk alike; we've battled through everything the north-east weather can throw at us (and only occasionally lost). We've had soldiers and superheroes along for the ride, we've laughed, we've cried, but above all, we have kept going. To the dedicated and hardworking team behind the vaccination programme, we say thank you.

**Secret Santa Draw** Gleneagles have generously donated 38 vouchers for an overnight stay for two people, to be redeemed before August 2022, as a thank you to NHS Grampian employees for all they have done and continue to do during the pandemic. The vouchers will be given away via a random draw, to take place on 23 December. The draw is open right now, until 22 December, to all NHS Grampian Employees with a substantive contact. [Entry and terms & conditions can be found on the intranet](#). If you are manager for a staff group who do not have active email addresses or access to the intranet, please contact [gram.staffthanksandrecognition@nhs.scot](mailto:gram.staffthanksandrecognition@nhs.scot).

**We Care Wellbeing Wednesday** Many thanks to all who have completed the survey so far! We have had 1085 submissions – [if you haven't had a chance yet to complete it you can do so here](#). The survey is open to all health & social care staff. We have included a sneak peek of where our returns have come from so far (see below). Please take a few minutes to complete the questionnaire so we can more accurately capture the health and wellbeing of our staff and inform our We Care approach going into the new year. Closing date for the questionnaire is Midnight on Monday 13 December.



**Tune of the day** Thanks to Sherellyn Riddell for her request – she's gone for the always excellent Lizzo and [Truth Hurts](#). Once again (twice in one week!) be advised there are a couple of swears in this one.

If you want to request a song for tune of the day, follow up on items included in this brief, or suggest an item for sharing, drop us an email via [gram.communications@nhs.scot](mailto:gram.communications@nhs.scot)