Guidance for staff
Tuesday 31 March 2020

Even while we focus on our response to the pandemic, there are still important items of other business being discussed and taken forward in the background. Today, the Executive Team got back to its regular meeting and discussed a range of matters including finance, gender-based violence, public protection, risk and escalation procedures and complaints handling as part of its work to maintain governance and ensure the organisation continues to have important procedures and policies in place.

In today’s staff update we’re sharing more information as we receive it from Scottish Government, NHS Scotland and from your colleagues around HIS.

Today we’re updating on:

- Our offer to help NHS24
- Pause of national work programmes
- Office 365 roll out
- New single national guidance document from Scottish Government
- Updated rules on social distancing
- New web pages for staff, and
- Staying well, with links to all the latest advice from NHS Inform

Our offer to help NHS24

We know a number of you are waiting to hear what’s happening following your offer to step forward and go to work as call handlers with NHS24. The 111 number is taking something like 60,000 calls a week, around double the normal level, so we know they need you. Talks have been ongoing over the last few days with NHS24 to identify the process and timing for moving you across and we hope to have news for all of you on that very soon. NHS24 are also keen to hear from anyone who can help with training others to call handle. Anyone who would be willing to deploy to NHS24 who has not already offered is welcome to contact their line manager.
Pause of national work programmes

The Scottish Government has identified a number of areas of work that are to be put on hold for the time being to free up resource to concentrate on the NHS response to the pandemic. These include postponement of the 2020 iMatter survey and the National (Once for Scotland) Workforce Policies Programme. A full list of postponed work programmes be found on the Source.

Office 365 roll out

Some of you are asking how soon you can have access to Office 365, and in particular the Teams function. As we said last week, a number of teams (including the COVID-19 Emergency Response Team) is currently trialling Teams.

We’re keen to keep this project moving forward so all staff will receive login details by the end of this week. Please be aware that you must activate your login within 30 days. Details on how to start using Teams will also be provided.

New single national guidance document for NHSScotland from Scottish Government

The Scottish Government has issued a single national guidance document on coronavirus that directs NHSScotland staff to verified sources of advice. This document has been made available to staff via the COVID-19 page on Source.

Updated rules on social distancing

As we’re all adapting to a new way of working, it’s even more important that we allow ourselves regular breaks. As you know, the social distancing (or physical distancing as it is now sometimes described) measures allow us all one form of outside activity every day and we encourage you all to get some fresh air and exercise to help stay both physically and mentally healthy. All of us need to know however, to keep ourselves, friends and families safe, that Police Scotland have now been given additional powers to act when these measures are not being followed in the community, and we’ve included more information on this below.

New social distancing measures
New information resources for staff

New staff web section

With so many colleagues now deployed back into frontline care, we’ve been looking into ways to keep them up-to-date with news from our organisation when they can’t readily access the Source. We’ve been busy behind the scenes and have created some external web pages that will provide an easy-to-access platform for them to keep up to date with our latest news wherever they are.

Healthcare Improvement Scotland website staff pages

New HIS evidence web section

Healthcare Improvement Scotland is taking responsibility for identifying reliable information resources for NHS Scotland during the pandemic. There is a huge amount of information, some of it useful and some of it less so, available online. Our new HIS evidence web pages give prominence to this information. These will evolve and expand as further resources are identified.

HIS Evidence

If you have any queries or need clarification please email hcis.covid-19@nhs.net and we will respond in our Q and A section on The Source.

Keeping well

It is important to keep following the all current advice to keep us, our families and the population at large as safe as possible. NHS Inform is the top source for all current advice.

- measures on social distancing
- general advice on what you should do if you or anyone in your household as COVID-19 symptoms
- the ‘stay at home’ advice
- a self-help guide to checking your symptoms, and
- advice for health professionals

And please keep following the advice on good hand hygiene

- avoiding direct hand contact with your eyes, nose and mouth
• maintaining good hand hygiene - washing hands with soap and water frequently or using alcohol hand sanitiser specifically:
  o after coughing or sneezing
  o after going to the toilet
  o before eating and drinking
  o after using public transport or touching publicly shared items
• avoiding direct contact with people that have a respiratory illness and avoiding using their personal items such as their mobile phone
• covering your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing with disposable tissues and disposing of them in the nearest waste bin after use.

For more information

Advice on travel can be found on Fit for Travel.

Health Protection Scotland also publish detailed guidance, including for healthcare and education settings and for first responders in contact with potential cases of coronavirus.

The Scottish Government is publishing numbers of test results, updated daily.

Safia Qureshi, Director of Evidence
Executive Team lead for COVID-19