

Health and Social Care Response to Covid- 19
in the Bute and Cowal Area

As you are aware our everyday lives have been turned upside down with COVID over the last 10 months or so and it continues to have a major impact on everything we do. The Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) has continued to provide essential services to the most vulnerable groups across Argyll and Bute and here are some of the actions we have taken in the Bute and Cowal area to date:

We have a Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Hub which provides all PPE requirements to our support services, external providers, paid and unpaid carers so they can provide their care safely. Although there was a national shortage in the early days supplies remain good.

The Mobile Testing Units (MTU) are available on three days every week in both Cowal and Bute. Tests can be booked via the government website for anyone who has symptoms.

The Community Assessment Centres (CAC) are located within our Community Hospitals and these are for patients who have worsening symptoms that require clinical assessment. Access to this is via NHS 24 and we have clear escalation plans for pathways to Greater Glasgow and Clyde Hospitals for those requiring further treatment.

We are beginning the lateral flow testing twice weekly for Health and Social Care staff which will be rolled out in the coming weeks.

In line with the Government guidelines, all our Care Home residents and staff in Cowal and Bute have been vaccinated and this was completed before Christmas. All our patient facing Health and Social Care staff are now being vaccinated, and there has been a positive uptake from staff. This will continue in both Cowal and Bute over the next few weeks.

The administration of vaccine to the first priority group of over 80's will begin as soon as the delivery of the vaccines arrive. We are working with our Primary Care colleagues in preparation for this, so that plans are in place and allow this important work to begin quickly.

I am sure you will understand that all our support services have been working very hard with reduced staffing and at times we have had to make some very hard decisions on what is practicable to continue to deliver. An example of this is our day services which are running at a significantly reduced rate. We have had to look at trying to support those most in need within their home environment rather than being centre based.

This is an ever changing landscape and we continue to respond accordingly. We are all trying to do our best under increasing pressure and we really appreciate everyone's patience and support as we move forward in 2021. We do hope this has been useful.

Jayne Lawrence-Winch, Area Manager, Cowal

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