



was no end in sight, postponed elective care having a real impact on ability of many to remain independent, little Face to Face contact, emergency and essential work only. This is not how we would choose to work, and our patients have been supportive and understanding, for which we are so very grateful.

“Our second wave of need hit us fairly swiftly when the inevitable build-up of stresses and strains from families struggling to live so closely together, not going out to work or not having work and home schooling, mounted up and broke on Primary Care’s shores. There were also so many people without support with increasing loneliness and anxiety and limited availability of services to support them who have really suffered, and we have cared for them all despite the restrictions, despite the various other limitations in how we can care a support our patients.

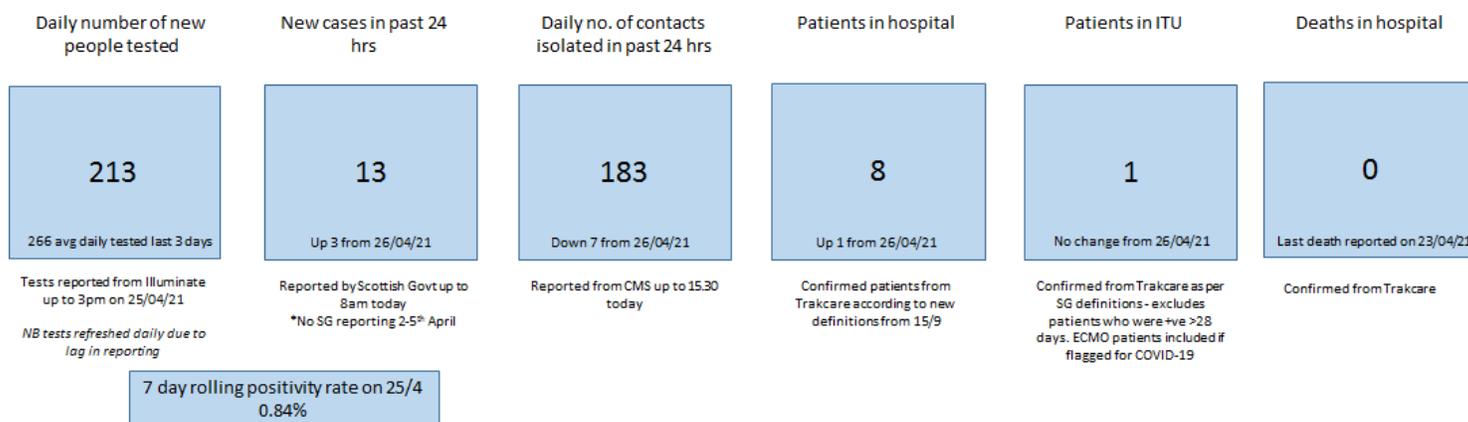
“Throughout autumn and winter many of our practices were completely overwhelmed, supporting individuals, families and in many cases Care Homes. With the usual winter pressures but also with the ever-increasing cases of COVID-19.

“January 2021 – the first glimmer of hope with the vaccine roll-out and the opportunity for Practices, who were adequately resourced to offer, face to face, the vaccine to our over 80s. The effort on some patients’ parts, the delight and excitement of coming to the surgery, town hall or sports centre and seeing all of us there still was wonderful. Nodding to a few friends in passing and receiving a life-saving vaccine was the start of the way forward. For us as GPs or nurses to be able to see and briefly assess the most elderly of our population was a bonus as we all miss that opportunity. It made us all appreciate how long a year it has been and fear for what we may have failed to recognise or diagnose. The gratitude and appreciation for us all being together was overwhelming and a real highlight. It gave us the hope that 2021 would be a much better year.

“What have we learnt? Well, our IT skills have improved, telephone consults are familiar, teams have grown stronger and communication between teams easier. Many problems can be resolved remotely, and in the future will continue to be resolved remotely. However, the complex relationship with our patients also requires us to meet and get to know each other face-to-face, building a trusting connection and holistic knowledge – for me this is what I’m looking forward to most.”

**Ongoing Informal Support for Staff who are (or were) Shielding** During recent Check-Ins for Staff who have been Shielding, some colleagues expressed an interest in meeting up again over the coming months. If you are, or have been, Shielding and are interested in being part of an informal support network/group, please complete [this form](#) by close of play, Friday 7 May 2021.

**Grampian data** The local figures for today and the 7-day rolling positivity rate are shown below. As a reminder, this rate is arrived at by dividing the number of positive tests in the past 7 days by the number of tests carried out in the past 7 days. Repeat tests are included in both categories, whereas the figures we show here only record new tests.

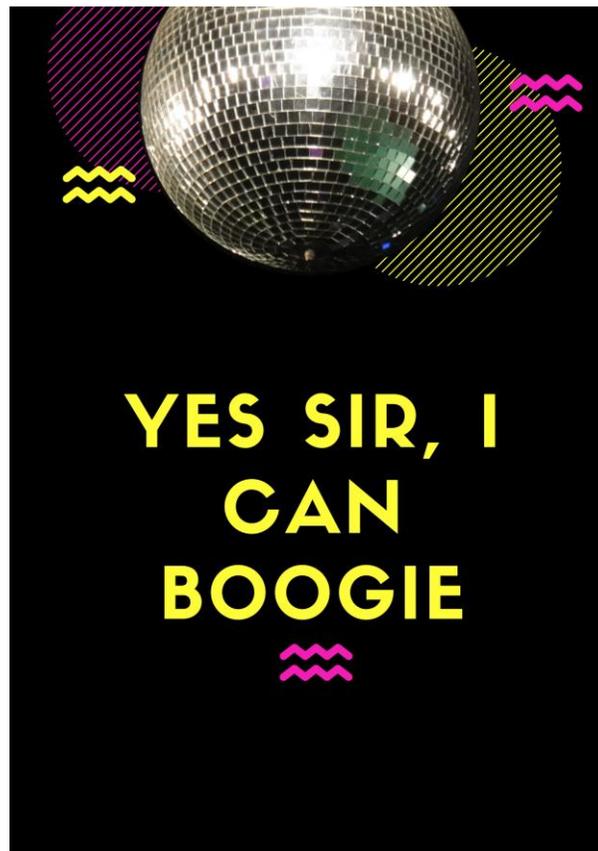


If you are interested in seeing what is happening in your area, this information is published daily by Public Health Scotland. All you need to do is click [here](#) and select the appropriate local authority area.

**Alpha Solway H-3 and HX-3 FFP3 masks** Alpha Solway recently introduced an updated version of the H-3 FFP3 mask called the HX-3. Confirmation has now been received from the manufacturer and National Services Scotland that the H-3 and HX-3 are interchangeable. Staff who previously passed a fit-test on the H-3 may now wear the HX-3 and vice-versa. As with any FFP3 mask it's important that staff do a fit check every time that they put the mask on to make sure that they have a good seal.

**What matters to you? 2021 – registration open** The What matters to you? day of celebration will take place on Wednesday 9 June and registration is now open via <https://www.whatmatterstoyou.scot/register/> Please share this with colleagues and teams who may be interested.

**Thought for the day** It seems adding songs at the end of the brief has struck a chord (sorry for the obvious pun) with you! Musical taste is definitely subjective, so to save you from my choices, feel free to get your requests in using the email below. We're looking for something to lift spirits, evoke memories of good times, and maybe even prompt a little dance. You're welcome to include a sentence or two about your tune of choice. Today's classic was burning up the discotheques long before a certain Aberdeen defender was even thought of...[enjoy!](#)



**Questions to ask? Information to share?** If you have particular questions – or are aware of questions coming from friends and family – please share them with us. We may not be able to answer every question and it may take us time to get a proper answer, but we will endeavour to respond and share the answers. You can get in touch with us via [gram.communications@nhs.scot](mailto:gram.communications@nhs.scot). Please also use that email address if you have items for consideration for future briefs.