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Coronavirus update

Welcome to the twenty-fifth bulletin providing you with an update of what has been taking place across Morecambe Bay to tackle the current coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

On Tuesday 23 March, it will be 12 months since the country was placed into the first lockdown and we faced initial restrictions on how we behave and go about our daily lives. We want to recognise how this has impacted not just the general public but our colleagues across the Bay Health and Care Partners who have had to adapt (either working from home or adapting the way you conduct your role in the workplace).

We're delighted that some of our colleagues have shared their stories about the impact that coronavirus (COVID-19) has had on them and the positives that they have been able to take away from the experience. Our North Lancashire Community Respiratory Team appeared in a [film](#) on Thursday as part of Lancaster Litfest and we couldn't be prouder of the teams' work and the work of all of our partners during the pandemic.

It's important to highlight that our colleagues in our primary care and our hospitals have delivered an impressive amount of coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccines to colleagues and the public over the past few months and continue to drive the programme forward at pace. We also want to thank the volunteers who have been involved in helping us to deliver the vaccine.

Lastly, we want to highlight some of the work of our partners including the latest update from the New Hospitals Programme (more on page 5) and the 2020 annual report from the Bay-wide Maternity Voices Partnership. The report highlights the fantastic work that the partnership has undertaken to support maternity services, including the response to the COVID-19 pandemic (more on page 4).



Aaron Cummins, Hilary Fordham and Anthony Gardner on behalf of the Bay Health & Care Partners.

Tackling the pandemic

Within the following pages you'll find out more about how we are continuing to respond to the pandemic.

Vaccination programme

The vaccination programme in Morecambe Bay continues to move at pace, thanks to our colleagues in primary care, our hospitals and volunteers who are helping to deliver the vaccine.

In Lancashire and South Cumbria we have now moved into cohort nine of the vaccination programme and anyone aged 50 or over can book their vaccination [here](#). With people aged 55 to 59 already getting vaccinated, and more than 2.7 million vaccinations given in the North West so far, we are doing remarkably well.



Work is ongoing to support people in ethnic minority communities to take up the coronavirus vaccine and to tackle health inequalities across the North West. The British Islamic Medical Association has also released supportive materials around the vaccine and what steps to take when having a vaccine during Ramadan. You can access the information [here](#).

Two new NHS large vaccination centres have launched at St Johns Shopping Centre in Preston and Charter Walk Shopping Centre in Burnley. People who are eligible, live within 45 minutes' drive from the new vaccination site and who haven't already been vaccinated by their local GP led vaccination services or hospital hub, will receive letters from the NHS COVID-19 Vaccination Booking Service, telling them how they can book their appointment.

The Preston and Burnley venues join sites in Ulverston, Lancaster, Blackpool, Blackburn and Westmorland as the last in a series of large vaccination sites and pharmacy sites which have opened in Lancashire and South Cumbria over the past few months to offer a convenient alternative to GP and hospital services, which can deliver thousands of vaccinations every week. The Bay Health and Care Partners continue to support those colleagues and people in the community, who have been offered a COVID-19 vaccination and not taken up their appointment, to take up the opportunity to be vaccinated to decrease their chance of getting the virus.

Royal acknowledgement for Lancashire and South Cumbria's response to the pandemic

Lancashire and South Cumbria Pathology Collaboration's work in response to the COVID-19 pandemic has been recognised by The Duke of Cambridge. This comes after The Duke spoke over the phone with the Pathology Collaboration's Associate Director of Transformation and Strategy, Gillian Crankshaw. Gillian informed The Duke about the collective team effort made across the system over the last 12 months piloting the saliva testing (LAMP) as well as offering rapid and high throughput PCR testing.

Talking about the call, Gillian said: "I was absolutely delighted that I was nominated to speak to The Duke. We spoke about the real team effort to set up and deliver COVID-19 testing across Lancashire and South Cumbria and it was so good to get recognition for the hard work that everyone has done. We have capacity across the area to do over 7,000 tests per day across acute trusts for patients and staff and it was acknowledged that we have done a good job which makes me feel really proud."

Staff share their experiences of the past year in a film for Lancaster Litfest

Naomi Turner and Helen Duncan from the North Lancashire Community Respiratory Team at University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust (UHMBT) appeared in a film which was premiered as part of this year's Lancaster Litfest's 2021 digital festival.

The short film is one of six shot by Kyle McKenzie, an emerging Lancaster-based filmmaker and producer. The 'How We Live Now' films takes a look at the lives of members of our local community during a turbulent year and explore themes of environmental concern, social justice, health, business, migration, and the arts.

Before the pandemic hit, Naomi, Helen and their colleagues in the North Lancashire Community Respiratory Team were delivering a face-to-face pulmonary rehabilitation programme to patients with long-term respiratory conditions such as Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease but quickly had to adapt their service to support patients with long-COVID.

North Lancashire Community Respiratory Team works closely with the Bay Health Care Partners Morecambe Bay Respiratory Network (MBRN). The aim of the MBRN is to provide better care for patients with respiratory disease by developing a fully integrated model of care, through bringing together primary, secondary and community care teams around the three localities of North Lancashire, South Lakes and Furness.

Naomi, Pulmonary Rehabilitation Physiotherapist, said: "We were delighted to be asked to take part in the film to talk about how our team has had to adapt during COVID to support patients. It has been a long journey and difficult at times but there are a lot of positives we can take from the experience."

Helen, Pulmonary Rehabilitation Team Leader, added: "We were honoured to highlight the work we have done but we would also like to mention the many other teams in the community and in our hospitals across the Trust, our colleagues in our Bay Health and Care Partners and those working outside the health and care system who have done a phenomenal job during the pandemic." You can watch the film [here](#).



Latest Regional Figures

NHSE/I release regular national data that show how trusts across the country are performing against a number of measures. You can find the latest figures [here](#).

Advice for Unpaid carers

Unpaid carers are now being invited to receive their first COVID-19 vaccination, providing they:

- Are eligible for a carer's allowance
- Are identified as a primary carer by their GP
- Are receiving support following a carer's assessment by their local council or from a local carer's organisation
- Are the sole or primary carer who provides close personal care or face to face support for an elderly or disabled person who is clinically vulnerable to COVID-19.

Government guidance on how unpaid carers in England, who care for a person vulnerable to COVID-19, can get vaccinated can be found [here](#).

Maternity Voices Partnership Annual Report

Take a look at the 2020 annual report from the Bay-wide Maternity Voices Partnership. The report highlights the fantastic work that the partnership has undertaken to support maternity services, including the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, improvements made due to involvement of service users, the '15 steps for Maternity' improvement exercise and improving their online presence to be more accessible during the pandemic.

You can read the report [here](#).

Updated information on visiting

Due to the ongoing risks associated with coronavirus (COVID-19), visiting at hospitals across Lancashire and South Cumbria will remain temporarily suspended.

In exceptional circumstances, one visitor (an immediate family member or carer) is permitted to visit if:

- the patient is receiving end-of-life care
- the visitor is a parent or appropriate adult visiting their child
- the visitor is supporting someone with dementia, a learning disability, autism, or something similar - where not being present would cause the patient to be distressed.

The latest information for birthing partners accompanying someone in labour is available on the visiting pages of each of the trust websites. For this and more detailed local information about visiting, go to:

[University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust - information about visiting](#)
[Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust - information about visiting](#)
[Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust - information about visiting](#)
[Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust - information about visiting](#)

Visitors for the above must be agreed with the nurse in charge of the ward before attending the hospital. Visitors and patients coming to hospital for any urgent, planned and outpatient care will need to wear surgical face masks on entry to the hospital to reduce the risk of spreading coronavirus to other patients and staff. You will be provided with a surgical face mask upon arrival, which should remain in place covering your mouth and nose for the duration of your attendance in the hospital. If you are wearing a cloth-based or homemade face covering, you will be required to change to a surgical mask on entry to the hospital. This is in line with national NHS guidance as a surgical mask provides greater protection than cloth-based or homemade face coverings. People who do not bring a face covering with them when attending hospital will be provided with one at the entrance. You can read more [here](#).

PPE update

Since the pandemic began in our area, the Bay Health and Care Partners have been working across health and care settings to ensure those who need it have access to PPE - whether that be a hospital ward, a GP surgery, a care home or a patient's own home.

Over the past four weeks, University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust has issued 1,645,783 (82,289 daily) PPE items including aprons, clinical waste bags, FFP3 masks, gloves, hand gels, hand hygiene, IIR masks, spectacles and visors. The government's [PPE strategy](#) provides a framework to ensure resilience across the health and care system.

Local NHS announces Lancashire and South Cumbria New Hospitals Programme

Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust have today announced further details of the Lancashire and South Cumbria New Hospitals Programme, which will see the Trusts work together with the government to build new, centrally funded hospital facilities locally.

The Lancashire and South Cumbria New Hospitals Programme aims to address inequalities and improve health outcomes for communities across the region and will result in brand new, world-class facilities for local people. New hospital designs will be led by expertise and evidence from doctors, nurses, and other clinical staff to ensure the best possible levels of patient treatment and care. Local people, staff, and stakeholders will be encouraged to input into proposals, with ongoing collaboration with patients, communities, GPs, and partners a central part of developing plans, and public consultation planned for the end of the year.

Dr Amanda Doyle OBE, Chief Officer for Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care System, said: "This government investment offers Lancashire and South Cumbria an incredibly exciting opportunity to build brand new hospital facilities and help local people live longer and healthier lives. I want to emphasise that no decisions have yet been made about the shape or location of new hospital buildings. Collaboration with local people will be a fundamental part of our process. Over the coming months, we will be carrying out extensive engagement with our communities to explore how the new funding could best be used to provide the health services of the future. Working together, we can make sure that the proposals we submit to government are people-focused, inclusive of all, and offer the best possible quality of care and experience."

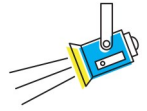
Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust will work with other Trusts and health organisations across Lancashire and South Cumbria to develop their proposals. These include Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust, Lancashire, and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust, North West Ambulance Service NHS Trust, Clinical Commissioning Groups, Primary Care, and Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care System - the partnership of NHS, local authority, public sector, voluntary, faith and social enterprise and academic organisations.

This money will be used to refurbish and replace ageing hospital buildings in the region, some of which can no longer accommodate today's increased patient numbers or provide the services and care needed due to their physical condition and layout. New facilities will accommodate technology and digital advances, from artificial intelligence, robotics, and the highest-specification imaging to assist surgeons in operating theatres, to remote patient monitoring systems, enabling safe care from home.

New hospital designs will also be environmentally sustainable and create the necessary space to allow staff to deliver acute healthcare and treatments without compromising safety and to accommodate technology and services that are currently only available to patients who travel out of the area. The programme will follow a clear process, with scrutiny and approvals needed from decision makers within the NHS, the government and local authorities and a series of milestones to pass before funding is awarded and building can start, with the building of new hospital facilities completed by 2030.

Regular updates and details of how to get involved in the Lancashire and South Cumbria New Hospitals Programme will be provided on a dedicated website at <https://newhospitals.info>

The spotlight is on...CancerCare



Welcome to our 'the spotlight is on...' feature which showcases our third sector organisations across Morecambe Bay and how they have responded to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. [CancerCare](#) offers a wide variety of services including one-to-one counselling, complementary treatments such as aromatherapy and hypnotherapy and creative and physical therapy groups including yoga and pilates sessions.



Why was your organisation founded? The charity was founded in 1983 by Professor Malcolm McIlmurray, a former cancer specialist, who moved to the area to take up a role as a consultant at the Royal Lancaster Infirmary and Westmorland General Hospital. His vision was to address a need for increased provision for cancer patients' emotional and mental wellbeing and he began by offering support one night a week from a hired room at Ryelands House in Lancaster. The idea began to grow and CancerCare was formally established by Professor McIlmurray and a group of interested professionals including nurses, GPs and hospital staff in 1983. Following a major fundraising campaign, the charity purchased its current home at Slynedales in 1989.

What services does your organisation offer? CancerCare has centres in Lancaster, Kendal and Barrow and also provides outreach services in hospitals across the Bay area. We cover a wide geographical patch and welcome clients from as far south as Garstang in Lancashire, up to Ambleside in the Lake District and as far west as Sellafield in West Cumbria.

How have your services changed during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic? During the pandemic, we were unable to carry out face-to-face sessions with clients. Therefore, we launched a raft of new online, telephone and community services to ensure we could continue to support people who were in need of help more than ever due to being isolated from traditional networks of family and friends. These included: a dedicated support helpline open at all centres in Lancaster, Barrow and Kendal daily from 9am -5pm, Monday to Friday; essential medical supplies delivery service for people eligible for CancerCare services who were self-isolating and could not leave their homes; online and telephone therapies including counselling, nutritional advice, reiki, hypnotherapy, pilates, yoga, mindfulness classes and online peer support for young people; free telephone counselling for UHMBT NHS staff and domiciliary workers; free telephone counselling for anyone bereaved for any reason – not just as a result of cancer.

Have you seen an increase in people using your services during the pandemic? We have seen an increase in people requiring more sessions than their usual allotted allocation - in 2020 35% more clients needed extra sessions compared to 2019. We have also seen a relative increase in the number of bereaved people and carers requiring support. In the immediate months before lockdown, this group constituted 18% of our client base and in the last several months, people seeking help after being bereaved has risen to form 27% of our total clients.

Feedback from a person using one-to-one support: Dawn McMullen from Ravenglass in Cumbria was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2018. Following the pandemic, her daughter Eve continued her sessions with our specialist children's counsellor Helen Tickle via telephone.

Dawn said: *"Eve really looks forward to her calls and is always in a good mood afterwards which sets her up for the rest of the week. Helen always has a chat with me first to talk about how Eve is doing and then it's just the two of them. It's joyous to see the difference it makes to her. Helen has been an absolute lifeline for our family."*

Upcoming projects: We are currently working on a project which aims to use the video game Minecraft as a way of allowing members of our Young People's Peer Support Group to engage with each other, and our youth workers, in a new, creative digital arena. The group usually meets weekly and takes part in games and fun activities including art and baking. All members are going through similar situations in their lives and help each other by sharing their experiences and forming friendships. They were unable to meet the same way during lockdown which made it difficult for our youth workers to engage with them in the same creative. Consequently, we applied for funding from catalyst which will see the building of a unique CancerCare world in which they can do artwork, games and talk to each other without having to necessarily be in the same room, should the lockdown situation occur again in the future. We are also exploring whether it could be used to replicate the sandbox play therapy we use for younger children.

Back to school mental health tips

Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust (LSCft) shared useful mental health advice and wellbeing tips for children, young people and their parents ahead of the return to school earlier this month.

For many young people this will be a positive step towards a sense of normality following a year of virtual learning and significant changes to daily routines. For some, the news brings forth anxiety and uncertainty around the spread of COVID-19 among classmates and fears around regular testing in school.

You can read the full story [here](#).

Royal Lancaster Infirmary to trial a COVID-19 test

A new, highly accurate COVID-19 test is being trialled at the Royal Lancaster Infirmary. Virus Hunter 6 (VH6) has been developed by Lancaster University in partnership with Brunel University London and the University of Surrey in collaboration with commercial partner Vidiia Ltd.

Dr Craig Williams, Consultant Microbiologist from University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust, said: "We are delighted to be involved in this trial of a new, rapid, test for COVID-19 which builds on our collaboration in providing testing for our local population early in the pandemic. It is another step forward to increasing community testing not only here in the UK, but around the world. We are privileged to be playing a crucial role in the trial and look forward to following its progress."

The diagnostic device has already received approval from the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency and has CE marking. It can test up to six samples simultaneously and was shown to be 99 per cent accurate in lab trials.

Dr Muhammad Munir of Lancaster University said "This clinically validated device will enhance the community testing capacity of the UK, and globally. This will save costs, and will provide fast track diagnostics, resulting in early case detection, thus promoting effective disease management and preventing community spread, and ultimately saving lives."

One part of the collaborative project involves Lancaster University and Morecambe Bay University Hospitals NHS Trust who will collect two nasal and oral swabs from each patient admitted to the Royal Lancaster Infirmary.

Dr Munir said: "Once the clinical validation testing of the devices has been completed, the device will pave the way for global distribution."

The VH6 digital device communicates the results to the mobile App to inform patients and doctors.

The CEO of Vidiia David Rimer said: "The team at Vidiia are extremely grateful to Dr Munir and his team at Lancaster University for heading up our first NHS trial. By gaining more results using NHS patient samples across three COVID wards, this will assist hugely in generating significantly more data from positive patients across a broader demographic. This is yet another great example of how effective our consortium of universities is in their valued contribution to the success of a product that allows our customers to operate with less restrictions and ultimately assist in a strengthening economic outlook."

You can read the full story [here](#).

The Prince of Wales sends video message to ambulance workers

The Prince of Wales has recorded a video message to thank UK ambulance workers for their “tireless and selfless” service during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the message, His Royal Highness pays tribute to the “sheer professionalism and commitment to duty” shown by ambulance colleagues over the past year.

He says: “Every working day, you are, of course, used to dealing with life-threatening emergencies, and doing so with a dedication to the welfare of others that is in the finest traditions of our National Health Service.

“However, during this most dreadful pandemic, you have surpassed yourselves in facing a previously unimaginable level of demand, day after day, week after week, month after month. The toll on your reserves of inner strength and endurance must, in consequence, often be almost unbearable.” You can watch the video message [here](#).

Training begins for over 100 community responders

Over 100 new community first responders (CFRs) are set to join #TeamNWS. COVID-secure training sessions began earlier this month with five courses taking place over five weeks to train volunteers from across the region to respond to emergencies in their local area.



CFRs are allocated to certain emergencies in their local area alongside NWS resources. Due to their proximity, they are often able to arrive first and save vital minutes in starting life-saving intervention.

Mark Evans, Interim Regional Blue Light Collaboration & Community Engagement Manager, said: “COVID-19 has provided a challenge in our ability to offer training sessions to new CFRs in our region but it’s great to be able to now move in a positive direction by increasing the numbers of volunteers we have trained in emergency care and who are able to assist us in getting care to our patients fast and effectively.

“These new CFRs will be in addition to the hundreds of fantastic responders already supporting us and delivering excellent patient care within their local villages and towns. It’s absolutely fantastic that we have so many amazing people willing to give up their time to help others.”

More information on volunteering opportunities can be found on NWS’ [volunteer](#) pages.

Find the latest advice for Cumbria

You can find the latest Government advice for Cumbria, information about COVID-19 outbreaks and council services at <https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/>



ICS March newsletter

The latest newsletter from the Integrated Care System is available [here](#).

Cumbria Police bulletin

The latest bulletin from Cumbria Police is available [here](#).

Cumbria County Council bulletin

The latest bulletin from Cumbria County Council is available [here](#).

Latest case study from Cumbria CVS

The latest case study from Cumbria CVS can be found [here](#).

East ICC newsletter

The latest newsletter from East ICC can be read [here](#).

Community Leaders Pack January 2021

A Community Leaders pack has been produced by the organisations involved in the Cumbria Community Resilience Group, and other key partner organisations. You can access the Community Leaders Pack [here](#).

South Cumbria's first Blue Light Hub officially opens

South Cumbria's first Blue Light Hub officially opens today (Monday 8 March), creating a new operational base for the county council's Fire and Rescue Service, Cumbria Police and North West Ambulance Service.

The multi-million pound Furness Peninsular Blue Light Hub, located next to the A590 in Ulverston, is a combined emergency response centre which brings together blue light services under one roof for the first time in the south of the county.

Cumbria County Council has delivered the combined Blue Light Hub facility, which includes office accommodation for Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service, Cumbria Police and NWAS. You can read the full story [here](#).

Find the latest advice for Lancashire

You can find the latest Government advice for Lancashire, information about COVID-19 outbreaks and council services at <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/your-health-and-wellbeing/coronavirus/>



Keep up to date

We are keeping staff, stakeholders and the public up to date in various ways, including a daily email bulletin for staff, this e-update for stakeholders and regular information for the public.

If you want to keep up to date, you can access recent news on our website:

www.healthierlsc.co.uk/morecambe-bay

Or social media:

Twitter: @MorecambeBHCP

Facebook: UHMBT



This newsletter has been created by the Bay Health and Care Partners:

University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust (UHMBT); Morecambe Bay Clinical Commissioning Group (MBCCG); Morecambe Bay Primary Care Collaborative; Lancashire and South Cumbria Care NHS Foundation Trust; Cumbria County Council; Lancashire County Council; North West Ambulance Service (NWS).