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Coronavirus update

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

We are now seeing a different world starting to emerge as we start to restore more and more “normal” services for patients and the public across the Bay. The threat of the virus has not diminished but we have certainly seen local cases start to become much more manageable.

That does not mean that we are lessening our vigilance – our teams have worked so hard over the past 11 weeks to bring us to this stage, we will not allow anything to reduce our ability to treat local patients who need our support.

However it is right that we begin to think about what further steps we can take to start regular services in our communities, outpatient appointments and planned operations and procedures.

Where possible we will continue to carry out General Practice and outpatient appointments remotely – we have used telephone and video calls to contact patients during the pandemic – we will continue to do that where we can.

We are expecting details on the Phase 3 NHS response to the COVID pandemic to be published soon. As our plans become clearer we will share more information about what steps we are taking.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your continued support and to pledge we will continue to keep you updated.



Aaron Cummins



Jerry Hawker

Joint Chief Operating Officers – 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, including an update on recovery centres, Test and Trace, antibody testing and more.

North West Ambulance service performance

While North West Ambulance Service has seen a reduction in the number of calls it has received since the start of the pandemic, it is still receiving between 3,200 and 3,500 calls each day.

All 999 calls are being answered within five seconds and See and Treat, Hear and Treat and any calls not requiring conveyance to hospital are all 20% better than 2019's performance.

New hospital management plan

An updated bed management plan is now in place across our hospitals. This plan has been developed with clinicians to continue to manage patients in 'coloured' zones depending on their risk of coronavirus (COVID-19).

We have wards coded to different colours. These have been amended and are as follows:

- **BLUE: COVID positive**
- **YELLOW: Suspected COVID**
- **WHITE: Non-COVID**
- **WHITE ELECTIVE: Non-COVID (elective shielded patients)**

This:

- Supports streamlining COVID areas as non-COVID need increases
- Aligns with the national suggestion of 'blue' areas for COVID
- Support the additional requirements for 'white elective' areas to shield patients requiring urgent surgery
- Using the correct personal protection equipment (PPE) in each area is important because:
- This PPE equipment helps reduce the risk of people from coming into harm.
- These items help to stop the spread of coronavirus - if they are used properly they can help save lives.
- This PPE will minimise the risk from airborne, droplet and contact transmission.

Hand hygiene should be done regularly, within the WHO 5 moments and after taking off the PPE which will help to prevent ongoing environmental contamination.

They will help protect you and your patients both now and in the future.

Since March 20th the Trust has issued almost 4.5million individual items of PPE, including more than 1million aprons and 2million gloves..

Currently PPE is required in all clinical settings (including community settings such as the patient's home) when clinical staff are within two metres of a patient.

Healthwatch survey

As a result of the Coronavirus pandemic, Healthwatch Cumbria, Healthwatch Lancashire, Healthwatch Blackpool and Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen (working as Healthwatch Together), created a survey to find out how the people of Cumbria and Lancashire are coping during these difficult times.

You can take part in this survey [here](#).

Ask the Pro

The Bay Health and Care Partners have launched “Ask the pro” so that anyone with questions about the current coronavirus pandemic has the opportunity to ask them.

The questions can be about how any service in or out of hospital is responding, including how local services have been affected.

Questions can be submitted to the BHCP Twitter account (@MorecambeBHCP), as well as the

University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust Twitter account (@UHMBT) or Facebook page (@UHMBT) using the hashtag #AskThePro – publicly or via private message.

Questions will then be responded to by signposting to the relevant information, or through a short video message from a BHCP colleague.

BHCP launch Big Five campaign

A campaign aimed at improving quality and safety by ensuring staff have all the information and tools they need to protect their health and wellbeing and flourish at work, has been launched at University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust (UHMBT) and other Bay Health and Care Partners (BHCP).

The ‘Big 5’ campaign is based on a similar staff campaign launched in other NHS trusts across the country and highlights the five areas that the Trust wants all staff to consciously think about each day to ensure their safety and wellbeing. The five areas the campaign focuses on are:

- **Make sure you have the Right Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**
- **Don't forget to take a break**
- **Remember - it's ok not to be ok**
- **Speak up**
- **Be kind**

The campaign will run until early July and will share information, hints and tips and resources in each of the five areas.



The Big 5

The Big 5 campaign has been launched to ensure that BHCP colleagues have all the information and tools they need to protect their health and wellbeing and #Flourish at work.

1. Make sure you have the right PPE

2. Don't forget to take a break

3. Remember - it's ok not to be ok

4. Speak up

5. Be kind



Cancer services update

During the COVID-19 outbreak CancerCare, an independent charity, which provides free professional support and therapy for people affected by cancer and bereavement across North Lancashire, South Cumbria and Furness, is offering a number of new services.

These include:

- 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 are self-isolating and cannot leave their homes
- Online and telephone therapies including nutritional advice, reiki, hypnotherapy, yoga, mindfulness classes and online peer support for young people
- Free telephone bereavement counselling for schoolchildren
- Free telephone counselling for anyone bereaved as a result of COVID-19

Helpline:

- call: 03330 150 628 (charged at standard rate)
- email: CancerCareCan@cancercare.org.uk
- text: 07860 018 278
- www.cancercare.org.uk

Meanwhile people in Lancashire and South Cumbria are being urged to contact their GP if they have any signs or symptoms of lung cancer.

The NHS is committed to providing essential cancer services during the coronavirus pandemic.

At the beginning of the outbreak, there was a sharp drop in the number of patients referred for investigations and appointments for suspected cancer. This has improved for most types of cancer, as more people are talking to their GPs about their concerns. However, for lung cancer only about 1 in 4 of the expected numbers of patients are contacting their GPs and being referred to hospital. Some patients are being diagnosed in A&E when they are unwell with advanced disease. If this continues more people will be diagnosed later, resulting in a lower chance of survival. Finding and treating lung cancer at an early stage can save lives.

Urgent care and treatment is still available to help Lancashire and South Cumbria residents, don't risk your long-term health by delaying getting the help you need. NHS staff have worked hard to put in place measures allowing people to access care safely – such as splitting services into Covid and non-Covid. GPs, pharmacies, NHS 111 and A&E departments in the area are still operating for those who need them.

[Read the full article on lung cancer symptoms.](#)

Video - signs and symptoms of cancer

Dr Neil Smith outlines four main symptoms of cancer and encourages anyone with one or more of these symptoms to make an appointment with their GP.

[Find out more about the Let's Talk Cancer campaign.](#)

[Watch Dr Neil Smith's video](#)



Lancashire and south Cumbria Care join research on impact of Coronavirus

The research and development team at Lancashire and south Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust is collaborating to assist with vital studies that will inform a picture of the national coronavirus impact.

The researchers, based in Preston, have placed much of their usual research activity on hold while they help carry out vital studies into the pandemic.

The team of 19 is made up of research nurses, clinical studies officers, clinical trials support officers, research assistants and research admin who usually conduct research activity on topics around mental health, dementia, diabetes, tissue viability, rheumatology and sexual health.

They have recently joined up with other researchers in the area to help support a number of studies relating to Covid-19.

One piece of work, run by Oxford University, is a national recovery trial looking into the different treatments for the virus, which is currently recruiting patients on critical care and following their recovery through to the wards.

Another study is collecting data to show the demographics of those affected, including symptoms and medical history, which will feed into a national database to give an overview of the scale of the pandemic. A third investigation is looking at the triage of coronavirus patients who are taken to accident and emergency departments.

Victim Support new online resource available

Victim Support's new online resource, My Support Space, re-launched on Wednesday and is now available to all victims of crime across England and Wales (over the age of 16).

[My Support Space](#) is an online resource designed to help clients manage the impact that crime has had them. It is a free, safe, secure and confidential space which contains interactive guides, videos, techniques, activities and tips, and can be completed at their own pace. Victims of crime can access My Support Space regardless of whether they have reported the crime, or when it took place. It is a free, safe, secure and confidential space.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Justice is also funding a [live chat service](#), 24 hours day, 7 days a week, which means that all victims can access support remotely.

For more information, watch the two videos: [My Support Space](#) and [Live Chat](#).

Samaritans self-help app launched

A new Samaritans self-help app was launched on Monday to mark the beginning of Mental Health Awareness Week. It offers practical ways to cope and stay safe for those who are struggling and finding it difficult to reach out for help. You can find more information and a download link [here](#).

PRINCIPLE study - patients can now self-refer

Currently, the National Institute for Health Research Clinical Research Network North West Coast (CRN NWC) are focusing on Urgent Public Health (UPH) studies across the region in response to COVID-19. PRINCIPLE is an UPH study that has recently opened up to recruitment to reach as many patients as possible.

People with COVID-like-illness will also now be able to self-refer to the study directly through the trial website. [The study website can be found here](#).

Supporting our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) colleagues and those at risk

University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust has been carrying out risk assessments with our colleagues from a BAME background as it has been recognised that people from this group are at a greater risk from coronavirus.

University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust have started to complete risk assessments with our colleagues from BAME background as it has been recognised that people from this group are at a greater risk from coronavirus.

It is a particularly difficult time for everyone and different groups of staff may require different kinds of support. That is why, as part of the continued review of support for BAME colleagues and those at risk across the Trust, the various ways that colleagues in these groups and in wider teams can get further advice or support both in and out of work have been shared.

In addition, an equality impact assessment (EqIA) has been undertaken to identify the impact of coronavirus on colleagues and to capture the Trust's response to this. The EqIA has been developed through consultation with Staff Side colleagues, inclusion networks, Personal Fair Diverse Champions and Stonewall (national LGBT Charity).

The assessment identifies the impact for different equality groups and actions we are taking to mitigate negative impact identified - which is crucial in maintaining and improving the experience of colleagues and is congruent with our aspiration to be a great place to work for everyone.

Head lice in COVID-19 lockdown

Take a look at a statement from Community Hygiene Concern regarding the opportunity to decimate the louse population whilst children from different households are less likely to be in contact with each other. There is also a document with information about wet combing if you need any further advice.

GP practices across Lancashire and South Cumbria are now just a video call away

Every general practice in Lancashire and South Cumbria can offer patients video consultations after a programme to introduce the technology was accelerated in response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

A number of practices had already started to offer video calls before the outbreak and the technology has since been rapidly rolled out. Most GP practices in Lancashire and South Cumbria are now doing video consultations with patients and all have the technology to offer them in the future.

The technology helps patients to continue to access general practice services remotely while they are social distancing unless a face-to-face appointment is necessary.

Benefits of video appointments include minimising travel, supporting isolated communities and reducing the spread of infection.

[Read the full article on video consultations in primary care](#)



'Safe and secure video consultations are an important way for the NHS to ensure that it is still there for people during the coronavirus pandemic, they will continue to be an option in the future too.'

Declan Hadley,
Digital Lead for Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care System

Ambulance Service Community First Responders help in pandemic

Community First Responders (CFRs) are volunteers, trained and dispatched to deal with emergencies prior to the arrival of an ambulance, able to provide early interventions in those crucial first minutes of an emergency.

During the pandemic, CFRs have taken up additional roles fulfilling important tasks such as providing critical care transfer 24/7 support, delivering operational fit testing of frontline colleagues, meal deliveries to the wider NHS network, driving and supporting paramedics who are undertaking COVID-19 home swab testing, welfare support for colleagues, vehicle cleaning

and protective personal equipment (PPE) packing and distribution, all in addition to responding to patients in their local area as usual.

Between 28 March 2020 and 21 May 2020, CFRs offered their support on 1,500 separate occasions across the north west, taking on a range of roles to help the organisation, volunteering 9,685 hours of their own time – equivalent to more than 400 days.

CFR colleagues supported in the conversion of patient transport service (PTS) vehicles, enabling PTS fleet to be remodelled for emergency use by driving vehicles from across the North West.

Test and Trace and antibody testing

Antibody testing has begun across Lancashire and south Cumbria NHS services and Morecambe Bay will be playing its part in this important work and will be fully supportive of the programme.

There has already been an overwhelming response to the announcement about the testing programme, and it will continue amongst key workers across the area.

A positive antibody test will tell you whether you've previously had the virus that causes COVID-19 and that your body has produced an immune response.

There is no strong evidence yet to suggest that those who have been proven to have had the virus and to have produced antibodies are immune.

If you receive a positive antibody result it does not mean that you're immune, or that you cannot pass on the virus to others. It also does not mean that you can ignore social distancing measures.

Therefore, the value of antibody tests is currently limited to answering the question of whether someone has had the virus or not, and providing data and a greater understanding on the spread of the virus.

More information is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-antibody-tests/coronavirus-covid-19-antibody-tests>

Meanwhile the NHS Test and Trace service forms a central part of the Government's COVID19 recovery strategy, which seeks to help us return to normal as soon as possible for as many people as possible, in a way that is safe and protects our NHS and social care sector.

It will also help play a role in providing an early warning if COVID-19 activity is increasing locally, regionally or nationally.

The service:

- provides testing for anyone who has symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) to find out if they have the virus.
- gets in touch with anyone who has had a positive test result to help them share information about any close recent contacts they have had.
- alerts those contacts, where necessary, and notifies them they need to self isolate to help stop the spread of the virus.

If someone who works in a health care setting (e.g. a hospital or care home) tests positive for coronavirus, their case will be escalated to local public health experts, who will liaise with the relevant setting to agree on the most appropriate action.

Further information is available at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works>

Domestic abuse campaign launched in Cumbria

Cumbria County Council and Cumbria Police are joining forces to reach out to people across the county who are at risk from domestic abuse. A new campaign has launched to encourage victims, or people who are concerned about their friends, family or neighbours, to report incidents to Cumbria Police.

Report domestic abuse:

- Call 101, or report online at www.cumbria.police.uk.
- If you are in immediate danger, always call 999 and ask for the police.

Government instructions over the past few months of lockdown were designed to keep us safe and to protect the NHS by staying at home. This campaign is trying to highlight that the stay at home message may not have been ideal for victims of domestic abuse who may have found it harder to escape their abusers or even to report them.

Domestic abuse is always unacceptable and everyone is entitled to live safely, without fear of violence or abuse. For anyone who feels they are at risk of abuse, it is important to remember that there is help and support available to you, including police response, online support, helplines, refuges and other services. Victims are not alone.



Cumbria Police and safeguarding partners are also holding new online Domestic Abuse Surgeries, on the police's [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/cumbriapolice) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/cumbriapolice) pages, every Monday and Wednesday between 11am-1pm. These live chat events make it easy for people to ask questions and seek advice; questions can also be asked anonymously.

Friends, family, neighbours and community members can be a vital lifeline to those living with domestic abuse. If anyone is worried that someone they know may be a victim of domestic abuse, reassure them that the police and support services are here to help and direct them to sources of support.

Find out more at www.cumbria.police.uk and always report it.

Active at home

Public Health England has produced an 'Active at Home' booklet that provides practical guidance to older adults on home-based activities to maintain their strength and balance. It follows concerns that low levels of physical activity in older adults will lead to reduced fitness resulting in loss of independence and need for care in the future.

To download a copy go to: <http://orlo.uk/1mKvo> this and more can be seen on the Active Cumbria 'Active at Home' page: www.activecumbria.org/stayinworkout



Recovery centres in Cumbria

NHS leaders have praised the amazing community response to developing Cumbria's four Community Recovery Centres - from the teams that built the centres to the generous volunteers willing and trained to staff them.

Work on the centres took place in early April at a time when hospital admissions were rising rapidly and Cumbria's Local Resilience Forum partners made a commitment to be ready in case they were needed.

The centres were transformed from sports halls into wards with privacy screening, hospital standard beds with bedside lockers with arrangements for appropriate catering and sanitation facilities. The centres were planned for use by patients medically fit to leave hospital, but needing a little extra time and care before going back to their homes.

Due to the overwhelming response from people living in Cumbria respecting guidance around social distancing and handwashing, our local hospitals have been able to maintain enough capacity to care for all covid-19 positive patients requiring a hospital admission.

When the centres were built we could not be sure that the number of people becoming ill with covid-19 would come down the way it has, and we are now in the very fortunate position of not needing to use the centres.

Hilary Fordham, chief operating officer for NHS Morecambe Bay CCG, said: "We are very grateful to the teams who built high quality facilities at short notice, from the NHS and from local businesses

and the collaboration of our local authority partners.

"This has been a real team effort from all involved and we have been fortunate not to need to use the centres. We are now looking at ways to ensure that we have sufficient capacity to support patients over the next phase of the pandemic."

In April, 160 volunteers were recruited in a couple of weeks and trained to provide patient support, with supervision from nursing and other health professionals.

In south Cumbria two centres were developed in March and early April in Furness Academy, Barrow and at Kendal Leisure Centre.

The centres have been ready to go if needed but now the Community Recovery Centre at Furness Academy in Barrow will be stood down. All the resources and equipment will be put into storage and able to be stood up in other facilities at short notice.

Furness Academy is re-opening as a school and needs its sports hall back.

Kendal will continue to be held for the time being while conversations about their future continue. Both can be taken down and reconstructed at short notice. We are keen to keep these facilities at hand in case of a second spike now or in the winter.

We would like to thank the following:

- Furness Academy - especially John Rawsthorne COO, Stuart Redfern Site Manager, Jayne Beech Catering Manager
- BAE Systems
- Barrow Borough Council
- NHS Morecambe Bay Clinical Commissioning Group
- Ward Group Painting
- Leck Construction
- Optech Fibres
- Travis Perkins
- Jacksons Timber Ltd
- Pickering Scaffold
- T Ward & Son
- JT Atkinson
- South Lakeland District Council
- GLL
- Cruden Property Services,
- David G Bushell Electrical Contractors
- Castle Alarms Ltd,
- Athena PTS
- Nationwide Fire Training Limited
- IT Shaw Ltd
- Alan Hodgson's Decorators
- Russell Armer Homes
- Timber Frame North West

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).