

Core brief

Message from Jane Grant, Chief Executive
(7 May 2021, 4.45pm)

This week we commemorated International Day of the Midwife. I was heartened to see so many members of the public sharing their stories with us over social media about their positive experiences of the services our midwifery teams provide. I would like to thank all of our midwives and maternity staff for the excellent care they provide and for the compassion and kindness they have offered mums and babies being born in a year like no other.

I was also delighted to learn that our Neonatal Unit at the Royal Alexandra Hospital have been awarded UNICEF Baby Friendly Stage 3 Accreditation. A significant amount of work has been undertaken by the RAH team to achieve this and I would like to congratulate them for their efforts. The UNICEF professional lead said it had been an honour to be involved with such an excellent group of staff who worked so well as a team, which was a huge testament to the unit. Well done!

One of the real successes during the pandemic has been the work of the NHSGGC research and innovation team, led by Professor Julie Brittenden. As the busiest research and innovation office in Scotland, the team run approximately 1000 studies each year. The team was the first to establish its clinical research programme into vaccination effectiveness in partnership with the University of Glasgow and partners and recruited its first volunteers within five weeks.

More recently, the team have begun to recruit members of the public to help test a new treatment targeted at those in the early stages of the disease. The antiviral tablet, favipiravir, must be taken within four days of a positive Covid-19 test so the research team are calling on members of the public who have been recently diagnosed to come forward. Within a few weeks of launch the trial already has its first participants and has now achieved global interest, with interviews taking place today with BBC World News. This demonstrates the significant contribution being made by our staff in the fight against the pandemic and I think we should all be very proud of their achievements.

Finally, the situation in Moray where COVID cases have significantly increased is an important reminder to us all that the virus has not been suppressed and that we all need to continue to follow the rules to keep ourselves safe. While we are not seeing a similar situation here in Greater Glasgow and Clyde, our Public Health teams have highlighted a small increase in cases in recent days. A new national staff campaign being launched to encourage us to help one another to follow the rules is therefore timely. "It's kind to remind" is a simple message but an important one. Please continue to maintain social distancing and regular handwashing as well as wearing a face covering and if you see colleagues standing or sitting a bit too close then speak up and let them know. It's for their own good and yours.

For colleagues observing Ramadan and preparing to celebrate Eid I would like to ask you to be especially vigilant. At a time when people will understandably wish to see family and friends, it is important to stick to the rules.

Thank you.