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# Coronavirus update

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

It's still such a fast moving situation with updates coming out every day – which means we're still facing very different challenges to those we were facing two months ago.

We are now starting to look at how we can begin to bring some level of normality back to the area in terms of providing health and care services.

We are doing this in a cautious way, taking into account national announcements, and local data to ensure we do not do anything to jeopardise the fragile recovery we are seeing across Morecambe Bay at the moment.

That means looking at how to restart providing outpatient services, many of which we postponed to tackle the urgent nature of coronavirus, how to begin to plan in less urgent operations and procedures, and the other services we provide, without losing the ability to be able to manage if we see a rise on the number of people requiring support for coronavirus-related illnesses.

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

# Infection rates

You may have seen in the media recently that data has been released by Public Health England that shows coronavirus infection rates per 100,000 resident population and by local authority area. This data suggests that the three locations with the highest rate of infection are Barrow, Lancaster and South Lakeland.

As you can imagine, we have received a lot of contact from people concerned about the figures and what they mean. Whilst we are right to be concerned because the virus is still a challenge to our country, these figures should be viewed with caution.

It's difficult to carry out like for like comparisons for different areas because of the different age structures and other socio-demographic factors, and of course, the varying levels of testing that have been carried out.

Within Morecambe Bay, we have been testing our colleagues and their family members, local care home staff and other key workers for a significant amount of time and in large numbers.

It is important that these figures are viewed in this context. Further investigation of all the data, including the figures from the national testing centres that opened recently, needs to be carried out before any real conclusions can be made.

However, that said, it does highlight the point that the work isn't over yet. We are still fighting coronavirus and as a Trust and wider communities, we need to continue to pull together and do all we can to slow the spread of the virus and protect ourselves and those around us.

## Colin Cox, Cumbria's Director of Public Health has issued the following statement in relation to the reported high rates of coronavirus infection in south Cumbria and Barrow in particular.

"The quoted high rate of Covid-19 infections in Barrow south Cumbria needs to be treated with considerable caution. This is strongly influenced by the rate at which testing is carried out, and we know that the rate of testing in the area has been exceptionally high due to the early and proactive approach to testing taken by the University Hospital of Morecambe Bay Trust, which manages Furness General Hospital.

"In relation to Barrow specifically, while the infection rate figures are undoubtedly artificially high because of the testing rate, it is still possible that Barrow will turn out to have a higher infection and mortality rate than average. Indeed we might expect it to: we know that mortality rates are higher in older populations, urban areas, and more deprived areas – all of which are relevant to the position in Barrow. Barrow also has a small population, so any outbreaks with a number of deaths will have a disproportionate effect on the figures – and we know that there have been some significant outbreaks in care homes in Barrow. More data and more research is needed to understand the full picture."

## Cards for kindness

### Brighten someone's day by sending a card to a local care home.

Now in its third year, Cards for Kindness is a joint initiative between Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care System, Lancashire County Council and Blackpool Council.

The campaign has previously appealed for postcards over the summer and Christmas cards during the festive period.

The theme of this latest campaign is 'hope, from our home to yours'. Find out more and get involved in the [Cards For Kindness campaign](#)

Send a **message of hope** from your home to theirs



## Attend anywhere

Lancashire and South Cumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust's new online consultation platform Attend Anywhere continues to be rolled out to more and more of our medical and clinical staff to make it easier for them to work whilst social distancing.

It's been a great success so far and is now being used by more than 250 staff who have carried out almost 1,000 online consultations across community based mental health teams and perinatal services.

This means that patients who are at most risk of coronavirus and those people who are struggling the most with their mental health can continue to receive care and support when they need it most. All they need to do is click a link on a smart phone or device that has access to a camera or a webcam to connect with up to 700 healthcare staff.

University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust has also piloted Attend Anywhere with Community Midwives, Paediatrics, ICNT, Stroke, Gastroenterology, Rheumatology and Speech and Language Therapy.

The results of the pilot have been overwhelmingly positive and, as a result, we are now seeking to roll out the video consultation tool more widely as part of their coronavirus response.



## Cumbria issues 'no overnight stays' campaign

Incidents of people ignoring the current lockdown restrictions and attempting to camp overnight at local beauty spots in the Lake Districts prompted Cumbria's multi-agency Local Resilience Forum to remind people that overnight stays are not permitted under the new guidance and anyone found breaking the rule will be asked to move on, and potentially fined.

The rules apply to all forms of overnight stays by visitors – including camping, motorhomes, caravans, boats and second homes.

Recently the Prime Minister answered a question during the daily briefing from an Ambleside resident on the issue of trips to the Lake District saying "So there cannot be any question of people just going off for holidays in places like the Lake District"

And later the same week, the Transport Secretary addressed the specific issue of camping holidays saying "people have to stay in their own homes, and not stay over anywhere".

Cumbria LRF continues to stress that now is not the time to visit Cumbria and the Lake District, but if people insist on doing so then they are asked to show respect:

### Respect our local communities

Assistant Chief Constable Andrew Slattery, Chair of Cumbria's Local Resilience Forum, said:

"While lockdown restrictions have eased, it is absolutely clear in the guidance that while people may visit the area they are not permitted to stay overnight in any way. The police will take action on reports of these rules being flouted. We understand it is frustrating and people want to enjoy our beautiful county, but the rules are there to keep our communities safe and we cannot stand by if people choose to ignore them. As I've said before, we very much look forward to welcoming visitors back, but now is not the right time and we would urge people to stay local for the time being."

# We're still open

Health chiefs across Morecambe Bay are urging people not to put off getting help when they need it.

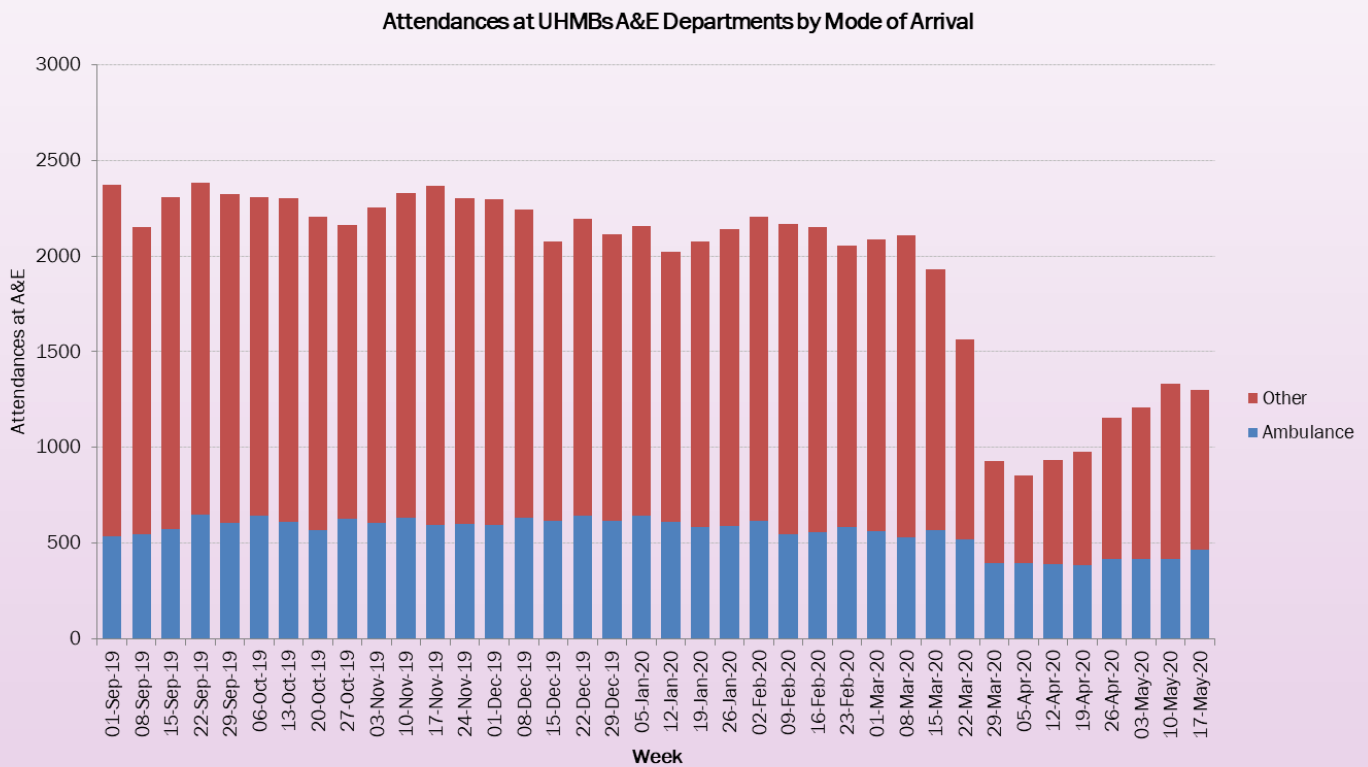
The message is: "we're open, let us help you". There is a worry that people are putting themselves or their loved ones at risk by not seeking urgent help when it's needed.

The people of Morecambe Bay have been brilliant at staying home to save lives, but if you or someone you are with shows signs of a serious, life-threatening illness or injury they must go to hospital.

There's a worry that people who may be experiencing a heart attack or stroke are putting off coming to hospital.

A&E attendances at our three hospitals are now 66% fewer than the same time last year. The NHS is under immense pressure, but these illnesses and diseases haven't gone away.

You can see the reduction in attendances at our A and E departments in the slide below:



All of our NHS services are still open and anyone suffering with a health issue and has doubts should not hesitate to seek help. We would rather they called 999 or attended the A&E to find an honest mistake has been made than be too late to save a person's life.

People can be nervous at the best of times about coming into hospital, and we understand the feeling of uncertainty right now during the Coronavirus pandemic.

The Doctors and Nurses may look a little different at the moment, but it's for everyone's safety. If you are seriously ill, please don't let that put you off coming to hospital for an emergency. We have COVID and COVID free areas to look after people with different needs.

## Going home checklist and coronavirus map

Staff members at Lancashire and South Cumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust's The Cove, in Heysham, have introduced a fantastic 'going home checklist' to help their wellbeing.

Psychologist Tim Atkin has developed it to encourage people to detach from work and go home at the end of the day with a clear mind. It has a series of tips and advice to prompt staff to 'reflect, check in and check out'.

Modern Matron Michael Huitson and Personal Assistant Victoria Smith at The Cove have also developed a coronavirus map to help staff and visitors understand which PPE must be worn in different areas, which people have found extremely useful.

### New maternity services app

Maternity services across Lancashire and South Cumbria are today launching a new mum & baby app – a definitive, personal, on-the-go guide for pregnancy, birth and beyond.

The app has been developed to provide parents and parents-to-be with a single source of trusted NHS information for all their maternity needs across Lancashire and south Cumbria, including the Morecambe Bay area.

From the start of pregnancy to early parenthood, this app will support local families with making choices throughout their pregnancy by providing access to essential, clinically validated information every step of the way: from planning a pregnancy and being pregnant, to giving birth and looking after a new baby.

It also includes examples of personalised plans for their care during pregnancy, birth and beyond.

The app offers an easy-to-navigate screen, links and videos of a range of useful topics;

information about emotional and physical wellbeing, mental health concerns, advice for partners, preparing for labour, hospital stays, post-delivery care, baby care basics, mum and baby checks, recovering from different types of delivery and medical conditions, and advice for when you take your new baby home.

The app provides users with a single point of access for information on booking in their local area in order to receive higher levels of continuity of care. Personal preferences for each stage of the maternity journey can be documented to share with care providers, generating conversations to support shared and personalised care plans.

The app aims to improve women's experiences of maternity care and ensures that the information they receive is consistent no matter where they choose to give birth across Lancashire and South Cumbria.

The app is will be available in both iOS and Android formats; go to your app store (Apple Store or GooglePlay) to download the app.

## Letter of thanks from Bishop of Carlisle

A letter from the Bishop of Carlisle, showing appreciation for the hard work, sacrifice and dedication of all NHS staff during the current pandemic, was sent to the Clinical Chair of the Morecambe Bay CCG Dr Geoff Jolliffe last week. The letter expresses gratitude to all the health and care workers for their extraordinary commitment to the wellbeing of our local communities. [View the letter.](#)

# New phone line and care centres

Improved access to services for people who need urgent support with their mental health is now in place across Lancashire and South Cumbria.

Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust (LSCFT), which delivers mental health services across the area, has set up a new 24/7 phone line and five Mental Health Urgent Assessment Centres. Together the two should simplify the system for receiving support for people who are in crisis.

The Trust rapidly established five centres as part of its response to coronavirus. Each is supporting people who have a mental health need but no coronavirus symptoms or physical health issues. Service users who do have physical health issues will continue to attend A&E to be seen by appropriate professional colleagues, liaison staff or the acute hospital team. Amongst the locations are:

- Albert View in the grounds of The Orchard, Lancaster
- Danegarh at Furness Hospital, South Cumbria

The other three are located at:

- A dedicated space next to the A&E at Blackburn Hospital

- The former ophthalmology unit at Royal Preston Hospital
- A dedicated facility adjacent to the A&E at Blackpool Victoria Hospital

The newly launched telephone support service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, by calling 0800 953 0110. Trained medical professionals are available to answer calls from people needing immediate advice or assistance, for themselves or a friend or family member. Callers can receive a mental health assessment and referral on to appropriate services.

The new response line and urgent care centres will complement support already provided by the Trust through their Mental Health Wellbeing Helpline. Different from the new response line, this existing helpline staffed by volunteers and people with appropriate life experiences, will continue to offer emotional support. People who would like to chat with someone about their mental health or who are feeling lonely, are encouraged to call the helpline on 0800 915 4640 or text 'Hello' to 07860 022 846.

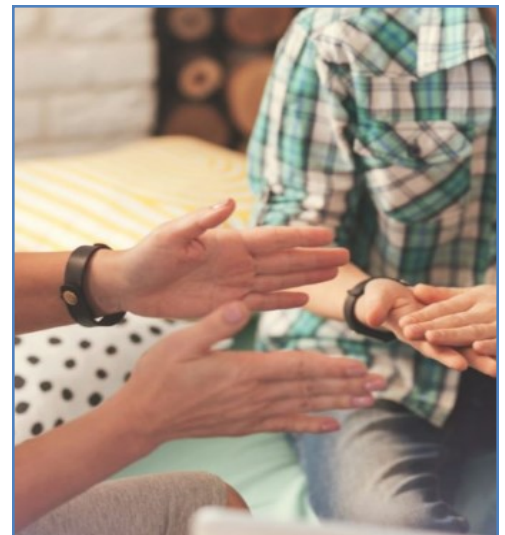
## Let's keep talking

A suicide prevention campaign has been launched to encourage people to "keep talking" throughout the coronavirus pandemic.

The partnership is concerned that people's mental health will be adversely affected in Lancashire and South Cumbria as people stay home during lockdown and self-isolation.

To tackle this, materials have been created to share on social media and through local community hubs, asking people to call their friends and family and keep talking by text, phone and video call, while social-distancing measures are in place.

Find out more about the [Start The Conversation](#).



## Hospital zones to protect patients and staff

During the current pandemic our local hospitals have segregated their wards into zones to help protect patients and colleagues working in those areas. This helps to:

- Protect patients who need shielding
- Allow staff to wear the appropriate PPE and training in the use of PPE
- Ensure appropriate staffing levels and skill mix

Patients are separated into the following coloured care areas:

**RED:** Patients in this area have confirmed coronavirus and require a higher level of care

**YELLOW:** Patients in this area have possible coronavirus and may require Aerosol generating procedures (AGPs)

**GREEN:** Patients are recovering from confirmed coronavirus

**WHITE:** Patients in this area do not have overt symptoms of possible or confirmed coronavirus

In our community services patients are managed according to risk of coronavirus and the need for AGP's. Patients requiring care in a maternity or children's ward setting are triaged and cohorted/isolated as required.

## Ambulance service strengthens workforce

An additional 187 staff are in place to handle 999 calls across the north west in the North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) emergency operations centres, while 150 additional NHS 111 clinicians, health and service advisors have joined the teams at their contact centres.

Recruitment and training of new starters is continuing in NHS 111, with 142 staff expected to have joined the service by August, ready to support members of the public with urgent health concerns.

Temporary training centres were set up using empty spaces in local schools to help train the workers, which include student paramedics, apprentices, staff redeployed from other parts of the trust, and some agency workers.

They have also increased the number of ambulances available by converting 80 non-emergency patient transport vehicles and adding the equipment needed to respond to emergencies.

To staff these additional vehicles, student paramedics and apprentice emergency medical technicians have become fully operational and 150 of NWAS' patient transport service (PTS) employees have volunteered to receive additional training and work alongside emergency service clinicians to provide a safe and effective service.



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## Advice for key workers and their children

The British Psychological Society has produced some useful guidance for key workers to help them explain their roles to their children and the need for them to be at work. It answers a range of questions on managing your family as well as yourself while you are working differently during these changing times. Further advice has been produced for the children of key workers themselves, written for them and answering some of the concerns and worries they may have.

You can access the documents here:

- [Advice for key worker parents](#)
- [Advice for children and young people of key workers](#)

## Donated tablets help Westmorland General Hospital patients keep connected

University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation trust has had numerous iPads donated since the pandemic started.

Last week Bay Trust Radio delivered 16 of these iPads to Ward 7 and Ward 9 at WGH to help entertain patients. The iPads have been set up to allow patients to listen to Bay Trust Radio, get access the latest news and information and keep in touch with friends and family. The tablets play a huge role at this difficult time when ward visiting is suspended due to coronavirus.

The iPads also include video chat apps along with a Patients' Portal designed by the charity, allowing patients to access local information, health and wellbeing advice and a way to listen and contact the radio team.

The charity is hoping to expand the project to other wards and is welcoming any donations of unused iPads from local businesses or people. If you know anyone who would like to donate a tablet, please get in touch by emailing [info@baytrustradio.org.uk](mailto:info@baytrustradio.org.uk).

Thank you so much to all at Bay Trust Radio and the people/companies who donated the tablets. We know they will make a real difference to our patients during these strange times.

## Loss of smell or taste added to self-isolation symptoms for coronavirus

You may have already seen that the general clinical case definition for coronavirus has been updated today to include loss of or change in smell or taste. It is now:

New continuous cough **OR** fever **OR** loss of / change in smell or taste.

**This means that the advice for members of the public is that they should self-isolate even if they only symptom they show is a loss of / change in smell or taste.**

Take a look at the [alert from the Department of Health & Social Care - 18 May](#)



## David Flory CBE announced as new Independent Chair for Lancashire and South Cumbria ICS

Lancashire and South Cumbria ICS announced on Friday the appointment of David Flory CBE as the new ICS Independent Chair.

David will be joining the partnership in Autumn 2020, working closely with Dr Amanda Doyle and other local leaders to help to deliver the local vision to work together to improve health and care for local people across Lancashire and South Cumbria.

His appointment follows a competitive selection process involving a wide range of local and regional stakeholders, as well as formal approval by Chief Executive of the NHS, Sir Simon Stevens.

Since 2015, David has been the Chief of Hospitals at Hamad Medical Corporation in the State of Qatar, responsible for 14 hospitals with 2,500 beds providing a full range of secondary and tertiary services for the country.

Prior to moving to the Middle East, David had 22 years board level experience as Chief Executive and Executive Director of NHS organisations in England, including six years working as Deputy Chief Executive / Director General in the Department of Health for England.

[Read the full article](#) on the Lancashire and South Cumbria website.

## Mobile CT scanner at WGH

We are pleased to announce that a temporary mobile CT scanner arrived at Westmorland General Hospital on Tuesday. Our Radiology department has been working hard to secure the scanner which has been introduced to support outpatient and routine scans and will also help us deliver and support the national faster diagnosis cancer target for patients which is 28 days.

The scanner has been contracted by NHS England to support the Trust during the coronavirus pandemic and will reduce pressure at FGH and the RLI. It will provide 12-hour cover, seven days a week, and could potentially provide around 24 scans a day depending on complexity and longer appointment times to maintain social distancing in line with the Government's guidance.

There are other improvements in radiology planned in the future such as a replacement and a second CT scanner for the RLI, and a new MRI scanner for FGH. These come on top of the £360,000 investment in new radiology equipment at Queen Victoria Hospital in Morecambe currently underway.

## Domestic abuse during coronavirus

Domestic violence, also called domestic abuse, includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse in couple relationships or between family members. Domestic violence can happen against anyone, and anybody can be an abuser. During the coronavirus pandemic, domestic abuse charities and other organisations are reporting an increase in cases:

- General online domestic abuse searches have increased by 352.5%
- Support lines and web chat activity has increased by 53.9% and 70.4% respectively.
- There has been a substantial rise in self-referrals to ChildLine
- An increase of up to 50% in Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) domestic abuse referrals

The Home Office is promoting the freephone 24-hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline number is 0808 2000 247 and associated online support available at [nationaldahelpline.org.uk](https://nationaldahelpline.org.uk)

# 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](http://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).