

NHS 24 BOARD MEETING		14 FEBRUARY 2019 FOR APPROVAL ITEM NO 10.3	
EASTER PLANNING 2019			
Executive Sponsor:	Director of Operations		
Lead Officer/Author:	Associate Director of Operations and Nursing		
Action Required	The Board is asked to note the planning arrangements in place ahead of Easter 2019.		
Key Points	<p>This paper offers a high-level briefing to the Board in respect of preparations for Easter 2019. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning focus across service delivery, specifically unscheduled care; • Forecast demand and predicted service levels for the four days; • Plans in respect of national communication / media campaign and associated social media; • Key focus for Health Information Services, including NHS Inform <p>Easter is the second busiest public holiday for NHS 24 and its partners across the health and social care system.</p>		
Financial Implications	The financial implications relating to the Easter period in terms of service provision and communications activity are accommodated within the annual financial plan		
Timing	Easter 2019 falls at the end of April and this update is provided to the February Board to note. A review of the Easter weekend will be provided to the Board in April.		
Contribution to NHS 24 strategy	Key performance measures are developed to support delivery of NHS 24 strategy and LDP key performance indicators. Effective monitoring of performance ensures robust governance and decision-making in line with corporate objectives		
Contribution to the 2020 Vision and National Health and Social Care Delivery Plan (Dec 2016)	NHS 24 will work collaboratively with partners across the health and social care system to support delivery of unscheduled care across the Easter period. This is a peak demand period across the system.		
Equality and Diversity	There are no specific implications in respect of equality and diversity arising from this paper. NHS 24 will continue to deliver an equitable service in line with business as usual processes, albeit with the anticipation of increased caller volume.		

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Easter weekend is a time of peak activity for NHS 24. At this time, the majority of GP practices will close for four days over the Easter weekend.
- 1.2 This paper seeks to provide a high-level briefing to the Board on the plans that are being put in place within NHS 24 to facilitate the delivery of the Unscheduled Care Service and Health Information Services over these periods of peak activity.

2. UNSCHEDULED CARE SERVICE PLANNING – EASTER

- 2.1 Historically, after the Festive period, the Easter weekend is the second busiest time for NHS 24. Good Friday this year falls on 19th April, with Easter Monday on 22nd April. In partnership with the Territorial Health Boards, NHS 24 will be providing cover to approximately 75.8% of the population on Good Friday and approximately 93.5% of the population on Easter Monday, with the remainder of the population being covered by GP practices remaining open.
- 2.2 It is recognised that additional demand will be placed on the service at these times, due to increased call volumes. In conjunction with staff and partners across NHS Scotland, NHS 24 has undertaken detailed planning to ensure that the service is robustly prepared to continue to provide safe and effective care across the period.
- 2.3 Demand and service level forecasts across the four-day weekend are set out in the table below:

Date	Demand forecast	Predicted Service access
Fri 19/04	8,803	49.9%
Sat 20/04	8,624	46.9%
Sun 21/04	8,372	51.9%
Mon 22/04	9,481	41.0%

These predictions are based on current planned staffing, however, we will continue to seek additional hours from staff. As with Festive, there is an increased requirement for staffing across Easter, although to a lesser degree than the key Festive dates.

- 2.4 Internal planning is underway and will be led by the Head of Clinical Services in the North centre supported by a dedicated CSM in each of the main centres.
- 2.5 There are a number of planned upgrades to the SAP system and clinical content ahead of the Easter weekend to increase efficiency and ensure that the correct calls are delivered to the correct skill sets. The priority prior to Easter is the Pharmacy call types.

- 2.6 Local account leads will work collaboratively with their Health Board partners and the Scottish Ambulance Service to ensure a cohesive peak planning approach.

3. HEALTH INFORMATION SERVICES (HiS) PLANNING

3.1 Service Knowledge Content Updates

The collection of the local service information to update the knowledge management system (used by a number of services including Unscheduled Care) is planned in advance, including early engagement with all health board partners. This is to ensure prompt receipt of the specific public holiday information over the Easter period, to update the information available to the frontline team over this time.

3.2 NHS Inform

Given the positive increase in accessing of NHS Inform throughout the recent Festive period, we are anticipating continued growth in the number of users accessing information, advice and self-help guides and will positively promote increased accessing of NHS Inform in the build-up to Easter.

3.3 Social Media

Given the success of the use of social media channels during peak periods of activity at the Festive period, those channels will again be used to deliver key messages to raise awareness of our services to support self-care/self-management as well as appropriate signposting.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The financial implications relating to the Easter period in terms of service provision and communications activity are accommodated within the annual financial plan.

5. COMMUNICATION

NHS Scotland's 'Be Health-Wise This Easter Campaign' will be launching in the first week of April. Media channels include both commercial and community radio, in addition to two full weeks of digital advertising across Facebook and utilising YouTube pre-roll slots. There will be a full range of PR and social media to support the campaign. NHS 24's communication team will deploy the successful tactics used at Festive to engage with our audience across all channels, including across the out of hours period.

6. RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 The Board is asked to note the planning activity being undertaken in respect of the 2019 Easter period.