

A personal message from Chief Officer Ross McGuffie

Dear all

In our two recent newsletters I thanked you all for your wonderful working around how we tackled the winter challenges. Our whole system approach has been key to managing the winter pressures and we clearly work very well as a partnership.

However, it is now clear that we face an even greater challenge; one which none of us has ever experienced before in the shape of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As Chief Officer, I want to express my sincere thanks to you, our staff and partners, for the admirable commitment, flexibility and resilience you have shown in meeting the current challenge head on. We have faced many complex issues already dealing with the pandemic and I want to also thank you for playing your parts in developing our plans for the weeks and months ahead.

The Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport has been clear about the gravity of the situation in her briefings this week.

As you'll know, the Cabinet Secretary has, at this stage, placed the NHS on an emergency footing for the next three months at least. She has acknowledged that a swift and radical change in the way our health and social care services work is required and what we are looking at is the most rapid reconfiguration we have ever known.

I know many of you are leading these crucial changes across North Lanarkshire right now. Your dedication, flexibility and rapid response to this challenge and ongoing work will be key to how we tackle the pressures we'll experience in the months ahead.

It goes without saying that whole system working is vital to achieving our entire reason for existing: protecting and improving the lives of people across North Lanarkshire.

Clearly, these are difficult and uncertain times. I'm in no doubt that the new social distancing measures, while they will play a critical role in protecting the most vulnerable in our society, could also lead to personal and professional challenges as time moves on.

I'd urge you all to take the time to read advice which will be regularly issued by our NHS and NLC communications colleagues.

In the meantime, please take care of yourselves, loved ones, colleagues and service users.

My thanks to you all, once again, for your continued dedication, flexibility and professionalism.

Ross