

Unannounced Follow–Up Inspection

# Acute Hospital Safe Delivery of Care Inspection

## Victoria Hospital

## NHS Fife

**Key Messages for the public**

3–5 December 2024

*Plain language versions of inspection reports are written for patients and the public in order to easily understand how their hospital is performing.*

## Why did we go?

We carry out these inspections to ensure the care of patients in the hospital environment is safe, effective and in line with current standards and best practice. We engage with staff and hospital managers so that we can be assured they are following NHS board policies, procedures and national standards. We publish inspection reports based on our findings during inspections in key areas to ensure patients are receiving care that meets their needs. The reason for this follow-up inspection was to assess progress made against the hospital's improvement plan from the previous inspection in 2023. The report from the previous inspection can be found [here](#). The previous inspection resulted in nine requirements for the board. Our follow-up inspection confirmed that four of these requirements have been met. The remaining requirements that have not been met have been carried forward.

## Where did we go?

We visited Victoria Hospital and produced a full report which can be found on our website. Victoria Hospital in Kirkcaldy is the main acute hospital within NHS Fife. The hospital has 534 staffed beds. The hospital provides a range of outpatient, inpatient and day services such as emergency care, renal services, critical care, haematology and women and children's services.

We inspected this hospital on Tuesday 3 – Wednesday 5 December 2024.

We visited a number of areas during this inspection including the emergency department. Our team of inspectors spoke with both patients and staff. We observed how the nurses and staff interact with patients at important points in the day. For example, mealtimes and when medication are administered.

We reviewed wider hospital policies and procedures in place to gain assurance for future patients and visitors, family members and friends, that despite the everyday challenges, the hospital team are enabled and guided to provide the best care possible. We also looked at the teamwork and support that is given to the staff.

## What did we find?

Despite the hospital being busy, the areas inspected were calm and well led. Staff recommended Victoria Hospital as a good place to work. Patients and relatives were complimentary about their care and the staff providing it.

During this follow-up inspection progress has been made by NHS Fife relating to maintenance of the hospital environment. However, further improvement is needed in several areas including completion of patient documentation, safe storage of sharps boxes and the safe storage of cleaning products.

Improvement is also required to maintain patient dignity, particularly during times of extreme pressure when extra beds are in use. Additionally, a requirement has been given to ensure all staff are aware of procedures that should be followed for selection of patients to be cared for in extra beds.

Mealtimes appeared to be well organised and coordinated. Patients described being satisfied with meals and meal choices and being able to access alternatives if they disliked the initial choice. Patients received assistance with mealtimes where required.

We have given the hospital a recommendation to help patients with their hand hygiene, where required, before eating a meal.

We also found some alcohol-based hand rub dispensers were empty. A requirement from the previous inspection has been carried over to support improvement with hand hygiene practices amongst all staff groups.

In the areas we visited, we saw that all medications were securely stored.

During both our previous and follow-up inspection, we saw that the policy for management of sharps was not being followed correctly in a number of areas inspected. Sharps are part of hospital equipment that includes needles for injections. We saw sharps boxes that were not labelled correctly and ones that were too full. It is important for patient and staff safety that sharps are disposed of correctly.

During this follow-up inspection we have given the hospital fire safety requirements, including the monitoring of staff training compliance and testing of portable electrical equipment, the safe management of linen, and monitoring of patient care equipment.

Our inspectors joined hospital safety huddles online. They saw that these safety huddles had good representation from all departments.

## What do we think?

The hospital has made improvement in a number of areas since the previous inspection.

Donna Maclean who is the Chief Inspector and Associate Director at Healthcare Improvement Scotland said: *“We have been assured that progress has been made by NHS Fife. However, further improvement is required around patient dignity, hand hygiene, patient documentation, fire training compliance and the safe storage of cleaning products and safe management of waste”.*

## What changes do we expect?

We have given 12 new requirements for this hospital and the hospital must make sure these are all met. Five previous requirements have been carried over from the last inspection in August 2023. This means that, despite making improvements in these areas, further progress is needed to fully meet the requirements.

We have added below all of the areas of good practice, recommendations and requirements. This includes the requirements that were not fully met from the previous inspection in August 2023. For more information on each of these areas, please see the full [report](#).

### Areas of good practice

Collaborative working was seen within the emergency department between hospital staff and Scottish Ambulance Service to ensure safe patient care.
Wide range of training and development opportunities for staff.
Safety huddles were structured, inclusive and informative.
Timely escalation to request additional supplementary staff based on acuity and dependency.

Students reported positive practice and learning environments and support from staff within clinical areas.
Adults with Incapacity care plans were clear, detailed and completed appropriately.
Positive interactions between patients and staff.
Development and training opportunities for staff within the emergency department.
Visible senior leadership seen throughout the hospital.

## Recommendations

NHS Fife should ensure patients are assisted with hand hygiene prior to mealtimes.
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## Previous requirements

NHS Fife must ensure all sharps boxes temporary closure lids are in place and hazardous cleaning products are securely stored.
NHS Fife must ensure accurate assessment and recording of patients' care needs.
NHS Fife must ensure that all staff and volunteers perform hand hygiene at the correct times.
NHS Fife must ensure the healthcare built environment is effectively maintained to ensure a safe and clean environment where risks to patient and staff safety are effectively identified and mitigated. This includes but is not limited to: Effective escalation and mitigation of infection prevention and control audit results. Ensuring the results of routine monitoring activities are accurate and support effective recognition of action to address damage to the healthcare built environment. Compliance with national HAI-SCRIBE guidance when carrying out construction and refurbishment work.
NHS Fife must ensure the dignity of patients is maintained, especially at the times of high capacity when the 'push' model is in use.

## New Requirements

NHS Fife must ensure all relevant staff are provided with and complete the necessary paediatric immediate life support training to safely carry out their roles.
NHS Fife must ensure all relevant staff fire training is up to date and recorded appropriately, all portable electrical equipment is tested to ensure safe to use within hospital setting and all fire exits are not obstructed.
NHS Fife must ensure all fire evacuation plans are updated to take into account the use of additional beds within clinical areas.
NHS Fife must ensure the safe storage of patient belongings to ensure evacuation routes are not obstructed.
NHS Fife must ensure staff follow risk assessments and selection criteria guidance for placement of patients within additional surge beds.
NHS Fife must ensure boarding policies are followed and clear documentation is in place when deviations are made and all staff are aware of policies procedures in place to support safe selection of and appropriate patient placement.
NHS Fife must ensure staff follow policies and procedures for the safe care of vascular access devices.
NHS Fife must ensure staff comply with safe management of linen policies.
NHS Fife staff including nurses, domestic and estates must ensure the appropriate monitoring and cleaning of vents and escalate any concerns in relation to this.

NHS Fife must ensure all patient care equipment is in a good state of repair, including trolley mattresses within the emergency department, and is decontaminated following use and stored safely.
NHS Fife must ensure alcohol based hand rub is available for use by staff and visitors.
NHS Fife must ensure that there are suitable arrangements for real-time staffing assessment and escalation of risk for all clinical professions.
NHS Fife must ensure patient dignity is maintained at all times. This includes but is not limited to access to shower facilities for all patients.

## What happens next?

As part of the overall inspection, we will follow-up with the hospital on these requirements. The hospital has written an action plan which explains how they will make these improvements and includes completion deadlines. The action plan will be updated by the NHS board 18 weeks after publication and shared on our website. Our inspectors may revisit this hospital at a future date.

We would like to thank the staff at Victoria Hospital and colleagues across NHS Fife for their help and support.

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