

Long Covid Services

1. Details on current services available including information on how the Scottish Government funding has been used

A temporary Tayside service known as CAREs (COVID-19 Assessment Rehabilitation Enablement and Support) was initially set up in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic to offer support to adults with ongoing symptoms after COVID-19. This has been stood down and a single Tayside pathway has been agreed with the three Tayside Health and Social Care Partnerships (HSCPs).

The local pathway (Appendix 1) was developed in line with the SIGN guideline 161, the SIGN implementation guidance, Scotland's Long Covid Paper, guidance from the National Long Covid service planning group, the national Subject expert group and the national lived experience group. As services develop, adjustments will be made to this pathway.

The focus of services in Tayside is an early intervention, supported self management service utilising remote and face-to-face opportunities for people to gain the support they need. This updated pathway is Primary Care led, utilising NHS Inform supported self management advice and then the Chest, Heart and Stroke Scotland advice line as the first line interventions.

Tayside Developments

Primary Care - investigations and management

Primary Care are the lead and the first point of contact for patients. Secondary Care Consultants from Respiratory, Cardiology and Neurology have developed guidance documents related to post-Covid risks and symptoms to support the management.

Allied Health Professions - Rehabilitation

The updated model provides funding to each HSCP to build capacity within each community rehabilitation team to support this patient group. This funding will be recurring for three years.

The teams will each nominate a Long Covid Lead who will work collectively across Tayside as a network to share learning, offer collective input to patient group training and/or other shared activities. This will support a balance of consistency and equitable service whilst also aligning to local resources and supports.

Children and Young People

Funds have been made available to this team to provide capacity to develop resources to support their teams to provide interventions and support. This funding is for six months.

Co-ordinating Services

In line with the SIGN implementation guidance, referral to service will be via Primary Care with GP assessment of the undifferentiated symptoms and onward management. Referral is via SCI-Gateway with routes for referral by email also available.

It is essential to note that all existing services based around clinical specialities are still available for this population.

The emergence of new local and national self-management resources, group programmes and advice lines will enable people to manage their own condition, accessing specialist services as required.

Funding Model

Tayside has been awarded £194,620 per year for three years to support the development of services for Long Covid. The purpose of this funding is to support those experiencing Long Covid (symptoms related to Covid which extend beyond 12 weeks from acute illness and cannot be attributed to any other diagnosis or condition).

Proposed	2022-2023 Costs	2023-2024 and 2024-2025
<p>Community based rehabilitation and support for early intervention and rehabilitation.</p> <p>Band 7 Community Physiotherapist and</p> <p>Band 7 Community Occupational Therapist as funds allow.</p> <p>0.2 WTE Band 7 Speech and Language Therapist</p> <p>0.5 WTE Band 6 Dietitian</p>	<p>£176,620 Total</p> <p>£7,000 Speech and Language Therapist (0.2 Band 7, 7 months)</p> <p>£14,600 Dietitian (0.5 Band 6, 7 months)</p> <p>Remaining £155,020 to be split as per NRAC percentage between all 3 HSCPs for Occupational Therapist and Physiotherapist</p>	<p>£12,000 Speech and Language Therapist 12 months(x2 years)</p> <p>£25,000 Dietetics 12 months (x2 years)</p> <p>Remaining £157,620 to be split between each HSCP annually.</p>
<p>GP with special interest for leadership and co-ordination</p> <p>0.1 WTE (9 months)</p> <p>9 months are July – March</p>	£12,000	0
<p>Child health resource development</p> <p>0.2 WTE Band 7 (6 months)</p>	£6000	0
	£194,620	£194,620 each year x 2 years

2. Barriers to service development and provision

Recruitment for these posts has been slower than would have been anticipated. This is due to development of job descriptions and the need to re-advertise posts where recruitment was not successful. This reflects the challenges seen nationally and the short term nature of the posts potentially making them less attractive to applicants.

The previous Tayside service had been unable to match capacity with the demands and as a result some patients have had significant waits for specialist rehabilitation input. The newly formed services are focusing on supporting this group.

Whilst waiting these patients have had access to local and national information resources, locally produced animations and the community listening service, which is delivered by the Spiritual Care team.

3. Examples of good practice

A Physiotherapist and Occupational Therapist in Tayside worked to develop educational resources for staff to support them in working with people with Long Covid. This was supported by the award of an NHS Education for Scotland Career fellowship. NES have now employed the physiotherapist to develop and spread these resources as a Once for Scotland resource.

4. Future plans for long COVID service provision in the short and medium term

A new structure in Tayside will be introduced to support the network of local meetings now in place in each HSCP and this will allow collaboration to continue through the Tayside Long Covid Oversight Group. This structure will be enhanced by the development of two further groups – a lived experience patient group and a staff professional network.

A procurement process is underway to purchase the Covid-19 YRS app. Use of this App can reduce the assessment time by 80% for each patient, support people to access resources and provide outcome data and measures for evaluation. The YRS Covid-19 app is expected to be available around March 2023 and once Information Governance approvals are in place this will be rolled out to all services. It is anticipated that this will support a shorter wait for people requiring support.

Like other Boards, NHS Tayside is seeking to strengthen their formal information sharing links with the nationally funded CHSS Covid advice line (Chest, Heart & Stroke Scotland) to enable this to be a formal step in our intervention. NHS Tayside is currently in the final approval stages for expanding the CHSS offering to include 12 weeks of 1:1 support for Tayside residents and access to local and national peer support and resources. This will enable us to offer timely access to specialist rehabilitation to those who require it.

Tayside Ongoing symptom management pathway for symptoms which could be attributable to COVID-19 disease

Pathway aims: detect other pathology; improve symptoms with evidence informed practice; where no evidence exists, affirm effectiveness with research
A positive PCR/lateral flow is NOT required throughout the pathway

Listening Service (0796 777 1941) available throughout for 1:1 or peer group support

