

# **#SP2021 – SNP promise to renew the Eye Pavilion**

**SNP Leader, Nicola Sturgeon, unveiled plans to increase both elective and short-term hospital capacity in Scotland.**

She urged voters to back the SNP to help the NHS remobilise after the Covid-19 pandemic.

This includes a promise to renew the Eye Pavilion. The Scottish Government cancelled the £45 million contract for a new centre in December 2020. Since then there has been an outcry about the loss of a city centre facility.

In a speech delivered today, the SNP Leader confirmed that on top of the six elective treatment centres already in development, an SNP Government would establish two more, in Ayrshire and in Cumbernauld – as well as renewing the Edinburgh Eye Pavilion.

Ms Sturgeon also pledged to utilise mobile operating theatres and to bring on stream under-utilised theatre capacity at community and general hospitals, such as at the East Lothian Community Hospital in Haddington as part of a plan to boost hospital capacity to remobilise the NHS.

She also said that the first three of the network of fast-track cancer diagnostic centres – in Fife, Ayrshire & Arran and in Dumfries & Galloway – would be operational by the end of May.

As well as the steps to build new and maximise existing

hospital capacity, the First Minister also set out plans to increase investment in the NHS staff who have been central to the pandemic response, and allowing more people to be treated closer to home by ensuring that half of the total budget for frontline NHS services will be invested in community and primary care.

Nicola Sturgeon said: “Our plan envisages that by 2025, an additional 1,500 staff will be recruited to work in the new national elective and diagnostic treatment centres that are being established across the country to carry out more planned operations.

“Like the fantastic Golden Jubilee Hospital in Clydebank, these elective centres will be dedicated to delivering planned care only, rather than the mix of emergency and planned treatment that is carried out in most of our existing hospitals.

“These centres will specialise in procedures like hip and knee replacements, cataract surgery and diagnostic services like MRI scans.

“We have already expanded the original elective centre at the Golden Jubilee. A further six new elective centres are already in development, and we will also renew the Edinburgh Eye Pavilion

“In light of the backlog created by Covid, we will establish if re-elected two more elective treatment centres – one in Ayrshire and another in Cumbernauld. This will mean a national network of 10 elective and diagnostic centres across the country.

“This will significantly increase NHS capacity but crucially, delivering elective care in this way will also reduce the chance of last minute delays because treatment will not have to be paused for emergencies.

“This expansion of elective capacity will be vital. But it will take time for all of it to be fully operational – so to increase capacity in the meantime, while these projects are completed, we intend to invest in shorter term capacity.

“We will utilise mobile operating theatre units at a number of NHS sites, and we will bring on stream under used theatre capacity in community and general hospitals, so that they can treat more patients as day cases.

“One of the places where this will happen is East Lothian Community Hospital in Haddington.

“Having increased surgical capacity means we will need to increase the number of available intensive care beds, so we plan to expand our normal pre Covid ICU capacity from 175 beds to at least 200.

“We will invest in a new network of fast track cancer diagnostic centres – the first three of these, in Fife, Ayrshire & Arran and Dumfries & Galloway will be operational by the end of May.

“We will also significantly expand community mental health services. Investment in and reform of mental health services – especially for children and young people – was already a priority pre-pandemic. The stress and trauma of Covid has made that even more necessary and urgent.

“The ambition we are setting out in the remobilisation plan is bold but also achievable – it is a plan to recover from the pandemic, remobilise our NHS and tackle the treatment backlog, and put the NHS on a secure and sustainable footing for the long term.

“In this election if you want experienced leadership and a serious government to guide Scotland through the pandemic and into recovery – and if you want a bold, progressive plan for government with the remobilization of the NHS at its heart –

make it both votes SNP.”



Sarah Masson SNP candidate for Edinburgh Western  
SNP candidate for Edinburgh Western, Sarah Masson, said: “This is great news for people right across Edinburgh, and the eight thousand people who undergo surgery at the Eye Pavilion every year.

“The facility is vital for some of the most vulnerable people in our society and the accessibility of it is key for those using it. I have no doubt that this announcement will be very welcome news for so many people who have, and continue to, rely on our Eye Pavilion.

“What Nicola Sturgeon has announced today is a bold plan to help people get the treatment they need, in the way they need and make sure Scotland’s NHS remains ready to serve our communities in the future.

“The SNP is the only party with the experienced leadership and serious government needed to guide Scotland through the pandemic and into recovery.

“Only giving both votes to the SNP will allow us to continue our bold, progressive plan for government with the remobilization of the NHS at its heart.”