Important Information

Staff Helpline
A helpline for Staff and Volunteers has been set up.
If you have questions about coronavirus (COVID-19), please try the Health Protection Scotland Website in the first instance. Can’t find what you’re looking for?
Call our advice line for Health and Social Care staff and volunteers in Lothian on 0131 537 8530 (ext. 88530). Lines open: Mon to Fri 8am to 6pm.
Please do not call colleagues in RIDU or Public Health who are already under extreme pressure. Thank you.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) – Guidance Reminder

There is an understandable degree of anxiety among some staff about what PPE should be used. Please be assured that the guidance on PPE has been robustly risk assessed and applies nationally.

It is as follows:

1. Staff caring for Covid-19 positive patients in high risk areas (RIDU and Critical Care) should continue to use PPE and Face Fitted Protective masks (FFP3). These are the ones with the respirator.

2. Staff caring for patients outwith high risk areas should wear Fluid Repellent Surgical Mask (FRSM), gloves and apron as per current droplet transmission based precautions if:
   - providing direct care within 2 metres or
   - present in a room with patient for longer than 15 minutes or
   - Not performing an Aerosol Generated Procedure

If you are dealing with a suspected case you do not need a face fitted mask. You must wear:
   - Fluid resistant mask, gloves and apron. Eye protection should be worn if the situation demands.

Just as the public are being advised against panic buying and clearing supermarket shelves of essential items, so it is with PPE: It is important that staff use the level of PPE that the situation demands in order to conserve stocks for the weeks and months to come.
PPE in Primary Care

All GP practices will receive PPE tomorrow (17 March) a supply of fluid resistant masks, Goggles and lenses, gloves and aprons.

Important Health Advice to Staff

HEALTH ADVICE FOR STAFF

**New Workforce Guidance** has been prepared for staff to help you look after yourself. These are posted on the intranet. Please disregard any previous versions you have received as these have been updated today.

Key Points:

New Guidance has been issued today (16 March 2020) to staff. This is correct at 1715 but may be subject to change.

- If you are well, come to work.
- If you have a new continuous cough and/or high temperature (37.8 degrees centigrade or higher), regardless of your travel history or contact with confirmed cases you should stay at home for 7 days and will not be tested.
- You should return to work after 7 days if your symptoms have resolved and you have not had a fever for 48 hours.
- You can return to work after 7 days with a persistent cough if you are otherwise well.
- If not recovering after 7 days, contact NHS through advertised routes – on-line rather than by phone and not in person.
- If you become more unwell, contact NHS through advertised routes – on-line rather than by phone and not in person.

Pregnant or Immunosuppressed?


However, the advice at present, is that pregnant and immunosuppressed workers should avoid working with *known or suspected cases*. If a key member of staff needs to work with a known or suspected case and is within one of these staff groups, then a detailed risk assessment supported by guidance from occupational health and infection control should be undertaken urgently. These staff members will need to work with full PPE and support.

Immunosuppressed groups include (but are not limited to):

- cancer treatment
- treatment for autoimmune diseases, such as rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, multiple sclerosis (MS) and inflammatory bowel diseases
- HIV
- having an organ transplant or a bone-marrow transplant
- long term oral steroid treatment

Underlying health Issues
Staff with underlying health issues should continue to attend work and should follow the PPE guidance as for all members of staff.

**Further advice for health professionals and practitioners**

Health Protection Scotland have published a range of guidance which will continue to be updated here [https://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/a-to-z-of-topics/covid-19/](https://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/a-to-z-of-topics/covid-19/)

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**Advice Issued to General Public**

**HEALTH ADVICE ISSUED TO GENERAL PUBLIC**

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**All symptomatic people to stay at home (self-isolate) from Friday 13 March**

All people with a new continuous cough and/or high temperature (37.8 degrees centigrade or higher), regardless of their travel history or contact with confirmed cases will be asked to stay at home for 7 days and will not be tested.

**The geographic element of the case definition has now been removed**

Travel and contact history are no longer important for diagnosis. People who have travelled and do not have symptoms do not need to stay at home.

**Those with mild symptoms do not need to call their GP or NHS24 (111)**

If people are concerned about more serious symptoms or if their symptoms worsen, they should contact their GP in hours, or out of hours NHS24 on 111.

**Testing will not be offered routinely to individuals staying at home**

Patients who require overnight admission to hospital will still be tested if they present with either clinical or radiological evidence of pneumonia; or acute respiratory distress syndrome or influenza like illness.

**How to Self-Isolate**

Public Health England (PHE) has produced advice for people who have symptoms and are self-isolating –

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**Further advice to the public**

The public can find the latest information at [https://www.nhsinform.scot/coronavirus](https://www.nhsinform.scot/coronavirus)

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**Validated Statistics as at 1400**

- As of 2pm today (16 March) there were 171 positive cases in Scotland
- Across the UK, as of 2pm yesterday (15 March) there were 1372 positive cases
- Sadly, one patient in Scotland who tested positive for Coronavirus has died.

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**Important Reminders**

Please refer to these website for the latest guidance and information:
Health Protection Scotland Covid-19
This includes guidance documents for clinicians, advice for staff in other settings, etc
https://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/a-to-z-of-topics/wuhan-novel-coronavirus/#news

World Health Organisation Covid-19
https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019

UK Government Covid-19 Action Plan

Scottish Government: Coronavirus in Scotland