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. If you can’t find what you are looking for: call 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, Public Health or Infection Prevention and Control who are already under extreme pressure. Thank you

Important Information

Coronavirus Bill
A UK was introduced to parliament today. It applies to all parts of the UK and will enable the Scottish Government to bring more health professionals and social workers into the workforce. It will relax regulations to ease the burden on frontline staff, and take steps to help slow the spread of the virus. It grants new powers to cancel events and allow the police to compel potentially infectious people to undergo COVID-19 screening and assessment.

PPE Guidance: How To...
Lead Infection Control Nurse Lindsay Guthrie has produced a collection of five short and very helpful videos with guidance on PPE. You can access them on the Infection Control section of the Covid Base on the intranet.

Externally or on your phone you may find it easier to access them from our Vimeo page: https://vimeo.com/nhslothian

Homeworking
We are working hard to create sufficient extra capacity on the network to allow everyone who is currently equipped to work from home, to be able to do so as soon as possible. We aim to have the extra capacity in place from Monday 23 March.
Therefore, if you have a laptop, and have worked from home before using VPN access, you will be able to do so again from Monday 23 March. Please speak to your line manager to make sure this is ok.

There are many more people whose roles could be carried out via homeworking but who do not have a laptop or remote system access. The existing stock of spare laptops is limited so we are creating ‘triage’ criteria to prioritise those whose need is greatest while we wait for additional supplies currently on order. We’ll give you more information on how to register a homeworking request next week.

School Closure Update
Education Secretary John Swinney announced today exams for Scottish school pupils will not take place this year. He also suggested some schools may stay open to enable vulnerable children and the children of key workers, including NHS staff, to attend. We’ll pass on any details about this when we have it and suggest you follow your local education authority’s news for more on this.

Workforce Guidance
The Workforce Guidance is being updated on a regular basis and up to date Guidance is held on the intranet.

The key areas changed are in Section 4 – Absence Management under the following heading:

- Medical certification will only be required for absences of over 14 days
- Update to Sickness/Self Isolation
- Update to Carer’s Responsibilities
- Updated guidance on absence recording to address household isolation requirements

This is a work in progress as we wait for national workforce guidance. There is further guidance to come on staff in at risk categories and the policies that will take account of the impact school closures will have on many staff.

Parking
We know there is a great deal of staff concern about parking, particularly at a time when we are discouraged from using public transport. We are actively exploring ways to ease the parking challenges on all our major sites and hope to be able to update you on that next week.

Visiting Times
The following wording is appropriate for use on most wards, excluding Children’s and Maternity:

An Important Change to Visiting Times
NHS Lothian recognise the importance of supporting people to stay connected to the people that matter most in their lives whilst they are in hospital.

Due to the ongoing developments with Coronavirus we are required to restrict visitors to our hospital in the interests of patient safety. We hope you understand that the safety of our patients is our top priority.

For the duration of the outbreak visiting will be restricted to immediate family or carer only. Times of visits will be agreed with the nurse in charge. We are aware that in some circumstances it is vital
to patient care that visitors are permitted to attend and these will be discussed with families and the nurse in charge.

Visiting is restricted to two visitors at a time unless there are exceptional circumstances and following discussion with the nurse in charge. Children under the age of 12 are not permitted to visit. You should consider if your visit is essential

There may be circumstances where visiting is restricted even further for patients who are in isolation. Please discuss with the nurse in charge.

You should not visit if you have any of the following symptoms

Feeling unwell  
Persistent Cough  
Raised Temperature

Or

Been in direct contact with anyone with confirmed Corona virus

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**Training**

**Refresher training**  
The Clinical Education Team has set up a range of specific upskill and refresher training to support clinical services.  
These sessions are open to all clinical staff - nurses, midwives, AHPs, medics and support staff. The focus is PPE, Infection Prevention & Control, Deteriorating Patient and Respiratory/Airway Management. These are rolling drop-in sessions - most do not require pre-booking.  
[Click here for information on these sessions](#)

**Induction Training**  
Staff coming through induction training or the upskilling sessions for non-ward based staff will have completed a shortened 1.5 hour version of TRAK training. This means they may have some skill gaps. They are therefore advised to seek support and guidance from:

- Colleagues
- TRAK super users
- Training materials on the Intranet (TRAK Tuesday and single task videos, quick guides, LearnPro for TRAK basics)
- Training Team support line on 85050 option 2.

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**Staff Health - A Reminder**  
This Section contains important information previously issued which is unchanged.

This PPE Guidance was first issued on [March 18](#) and is still current:

**Personal Protective Equipment**
It is important that all NHS Lothian staff follow the correct infection control policy and guidance to protect themselves at work whilst ensuring safe and effective patient care. It is essential that clinical staff wear the correct personal protective equipment (PPE) if required, including the use of respiratory protective equipment (RPE) such as face fit tested respirators when needed. Staff who do not provide direct patient care do not require to wear PPE or RPE unless specifically advised to by a member of nursing or medical staff.

1. Standard infection control measures must be followed by all staff for all patients in all areas of patient care. Hand hygiene is vital in reducing the risk to staff from passing on infections, including COVID-19.

2. Staff who do not provide patient care but work in clinical areas – for example domestic staff, porters – do not require to wear any PPE unless directed to by a member of nursing or medical staff -if carrying out a task in a patient isolation room or patient bay where patients have possible or confirmed COVID-19 or other infections.

3. In most cases when delivering clinical care to a patient with possible or confirmed COVID-19 PPE will consist of a fluid resistant surgical mask, disposable apron and gloves (droplet transmission based precautions). There may be some circumstances where eye protection is also indicated e.g. when there is a risk of splash or spray of body fluid to the eyes.

4. When carrying out an aerosol generating procedure (AGP) on a patient with possible or confirmed COVID-19 and at all times in intensive care settings where a cohort of possible or confirmed cases has created- clinical staff must wear a face fit tested respirator (FFP3); long sleeved gown; eye protection and disposable gloves.

This guidance is in line with Health Protection Scotland advice and national policy.

Working, Self-Isolation and Return to work

- If you are well, come to work.

If you develop symptoms:

- If you live alone and you develop 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 from when your symptoms started. You will not be tested.
- If you live with others then all other household members, whether they develop symptoms or not, must stay at home and not leave the house for 14 days. The 14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the house became ill.
- If after 7 days, you feel better and no longer have a high temperature, you can return to work.

If someone in your household has symptoms:

- You must stay at home and not leave the house for 14 days whether you develop symptoms or not. The 14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the house became ill.
- Anyone in the household who starts displaying symptoms needs to stay at home for 7 days from when their symptoms appeared, regardless of what day they are on in the original 14 day isolation period.
- After 7 days, if the first person to become ill feels better and no longer has a high temperature, they can return to their normal routine.
- If anyone in the household develops symptoms late in the 14-day household-isolation period (e.g. on day 13 or day 14) the isolation period for the household does not need to be extended, but the person with the new symptoms has to stay at home for 7 days.

You must contact your line manager before returning to work so they can do a risk assessment. Before you return to work you must have had 48 hours without fever. Cough in itself does not prevent you from safely returning to work.

**Social Distancing**
People are asked to eliminate unnecessary travel, to work from home where possible (see paragraph below) and to limit social contact, avoiding places where usually people congregate; bars, restaurants, clubs, cinemas and gyms.

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**Validated Statistics 19/03/2020**

1800

- The number of positive tests in Scotland is 266. Six people who had tested positive for coronavirus have sadly died
- Across the UK, the DHSC website reported there have been 137 deaths. Testing figures have not been updated as at 18:00.

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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](https://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/a-to-z-of-topics/wuhan-novel-coronavirus/#news)

**World Health Organisation Covid-19**

**UK Government Covid-19 Action Plan**

**Scottish Government: Coronavirus in Scotland**

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If you have any communication related questions please email: lothian.communications@nhs.net