Staff Helpline

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 our advice line for Health and Social Care staff and volunteers in Lothian is available 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

Uniforms – important reminder

All staff are reminded that they should not travel to or from work in their uniform. In light of coronavirus (COVID-19), this is more important than ever.

We understand that community staff will be required to wear their uniforms between visits, but you should ensure that you follow the principles of infection prevention and control.

Update to the guidance for staff in the at risk groups

Further to the issue of the guidance for staff in the at risk groups, OHS has been inundated with calls to undertake risk assessments.

OHS are only undertaking risk assessments for three key groups – staff with diabetes, pregnant staff and those with weakened immune systems, who are not in the highest risk group. All other cases should follow the guidance contained in the document.

To continue supporting the required risk assessments, OHS will now undertake these via a pro forma. Managers of staff in these categories should complete the risk assessment form with their employee and e-mail it to OHenquiries@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk. The subject line should be: Covid-19 Staff Risk Assessment. The manager will receive the document back with the advice regarding fitness to work and any restrictions in relation to caring for coronavirus (COVID-19) patients. The risk assessment form is available in the COVID-19 information hub on the Intranet or via this link.

COVID-19 Testing for Staff - update

Staff testing for coronavirus (COVID-19 was started on Tuesday 24 March. This is solely to support an earlier return to work if coronavirus (COVID-19) infection can be ruled out.
The demand has been understandably very high, but there are a few members of staff not presenting at the right time. For testing to be of use, it must take place between 24 and 120 hours of symptoms starting. This testing is for key or critical staff who are self-isolating because of their own symptoms OR for staff who are isolating because a member of their household has symptoms. In these cases it will be the household member who is tested. If they are negative, the staff member is safe to return to work without having to self-isolate for 14 days.

Ideally, we would like referrals on day 1 of symptoms developing. This needs to be organised by managers. The manager will need to send the name, the job title, the job location, the date for the onset of symptoms and the contact telephone number for the staff member – not the household contact, to OHenquiries@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk. Covid-19 staff testing must be the subject line.

OH will contact the health care worker to gather the necessary information and organise an appointment for a test, if appropriate. Staff or their household contacts who are out with the time limits will not be offered testing. Managers will be informed whether their member of staff can attend the workplace earlier than the guidance.

Additional information is available at http://intranet.lothian.scot.nhs.uk/COVID-19/Other%20staff%20updates/Staff%20testing%20for%20coronavirus%20(COVID-19).docx.pdf

**Paid shifts on offer for volunteer doctors and nurses at coronavirus (COVID-19) Community Hub and Clinics**

The new community pathway for coronavirus (COVID-19) patients went live on Monday 23 March. This will be the NHS front line for assessment of patients who may be coronavirus (COVID-19) positive. All patients in the community should now phone NHS24 on 111 for coronavirus (COVID-19) advice and not their general practice.

NHS Lothian has set up a coronavirus (COVID-19) triage hub in the Flow Centre to receive calls from NHS24 and has established a clinic to see patients who need face to face assessment. There has been a huge effort by all parts of the system to set this up and staff it. It will be necessary to rapidly expand the clinics as the peak coronavirus (COVID-19) spread approaches and we are planning clinics in all areas of Lothian. We are still seeking volunteers to staff the hub and clinics to ensure that we can provide a 24/7 service. We particularly need doctors and nurses and can accept volunteers on a shift by shift basis.

If you want to offer your services please email Covid19@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

**Car Parking Charges at RIE are suspended from Monday 30 March**

The Scottish Government has confirmed that car parking charges at PFI sites will be suspended. This will come into force from Monday 30 March for 12 weeks.

Please be aware that parking may still be limited, despite the additional spaces that have been secured.

**Car Parking – St John’s**

Parking is available for staff at the Howden Centre. Staff should ensure that they respect areas where there are 'no parking' signs in place, as access to the building is still required.

**Additional Staff**

Rapid Recruitment
The Generic Recruitment Team and HR Recruitment team are working in tandem to support a rapid recruitment process. So far, we have received 1,600 applications for a range of roles. The rapid recruitment process is via a (COVID-19) advert (these will run periodically and for specific groups) – coordinated by the Generic Recruitment Team. Adverts will appear on the apply.scotland web site with the keyword and prefix COVID 19 https://apply.jobs.scot.nhs.uk/vacancies.aspx. The adverts will cover registered and non-registered staff working in Nursing and Midwifery, Pharmacy, Allied Health Professionals and Domestic, Catering and Portering. In the event that there are people that do not fit one of the categories being covered by the advert please refer them to the covid19recruitment@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk e-mail address.

Retirees / Former Employees
We have made contact with clinical staff who have retired in the last year and have also had a number of people approaching colleagues directly to offer assistance. Additionally there are national campaigns around clinical staff who have been retired up to 3 years and final year student capacity which are being managed by NES. In the event that you are contacted directly by someone who wishes to return to support the service, these people should be directed to the adverts in the first instance.

Routine Recruitment
Routine recruitment is being restricted to essential posts only.
For Nursing and Midwifery posts it has been agreed to suspend the internal moves process for the duration of the coronavirus (COVID-19) situation.

Secondments
Secondments have been withdrawn and staff will return to their substantive post unless the seconded post is key to supporting the coronavirus (COVID-19 response). This will be arranged directly between the manager and the secondee.

Deployment of Staff providing non-essential services
Where services have identified resource that are not considered essential roles in the current environment and / or services are being stood down, it is expected in the first instance that these staff are redeployed within their existing service to support the essential services. For example, staff from out-patients that are no longer providing out-patient clinics will be deployed to other areas of need on the site. This will be co-ordinated locally by the management teams.

As the response to the pandemic progresses, the Staff Bank team will co-ordinate the deployment of staff who are not engaged in essential work such as corporate services to support clinical roles on a prioritised basis WHEN this is required.

Volunteers
The Voluntary Services Team is currently processing hundreds of applications for ‘ward helper’ volunteers who will be able to begin volunteering from the 13th of April.
Volunteers are a key part of our tactical response to depleted staffing levels, ensuring that patients have contact and someone to run errands to the hospital shop, ensure that patients have some mental stimulation, are assisted to complete menu cards and are prompted to eat and drink. Ward helpers will have undertaken the required elements of recruitment and induction to keep themselves and patients safe.

More information on how the volunteer ward helpers will be deployed will be shared directly with services next week. Whilst we appreciate that areas are reducing footfall through restricting visiting, please continue to welcome volunteers to your areas.

We will be recruiting to additional roles from the middle of April. If you know anyone who would be interested, they should keep an eye on the NHS Lothian Voluntary Services on the NHS Lothian external website.
**Additional guidance on home working**

HR Online already has a range of information related to Home Working for staff. Given the increased level of home working in response to government requirements, additional guidance has been prepared which provides some useful practical advice for managers and staff. This can be accessed through the COVID-19 hub on the Intranet or via this link: [http://intranet.lothian.scot.nhs.uk/COVID-19/Other%20staff%20updates/Working%20from%20Home%20Guidance%20-%20COVID-19%20(3).pdf](http://intranet.lothian.scot.nhs.uk/COVID-19/Other%20staff%20updates/Working%20from%20Home%20Guidance%20-%20COVID-19%20(3).pdf)

**eESS Helpdesk**

Due to the HR Systems Team moving to home working, from today the eESS Helpdesk phone number has changed.

These numbers may change without notice, so please check HR Online for the most up to date phone numbers: [http://intranet.lothian.scot.nhs.uk/HR/az/eESS/Pages/default.aspx](http://intranet.lothian.scot.nhs.uk/HR/az/eESS/Pages/default.aspx)

**Accommodation for Staff**

We have received multiple very generous offers from companies offering us accommodation for staff affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, and also an offer of support from the Edinburgh and Lothians Health Foundation.

We are finalising a process around this and how it will work and will provide further updates as quickly as possible.

**Fleet Vehicles (MOTs)**

It has been confirmed that MOT tests for fleet vehicles have been waived for six months. Further information on this will be shared as soon as it is available.

**A Reminder**

This Section contains important information previously issued which is unchanged.

**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.

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 coronavirus (COVID-19). Regular, thorough hand washing with soap and water remains our best defence against the spread of coronavirus (COVID 19).

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 – and if carrying out a task in a patient isolation room or patient bay where patients have possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) or other infections.
In most cases when delivering clinical care to a patient with possible or confirmed coronavirus (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.

When carrying out an aerosol generating procedure (AGP) on a patient with possible or confirmed coronavirus (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.

Additional information on Aerosol Generating Procedures can be found in the footnotes of the following document [http://www.nipcm.hps.scot.nhs.uk/media/1496/2020-3-16-appendix-11-v17.pdf](http://www.nipcm.hps.scot.nhs.uk/media/1496/2020-3-16-appendix-11-v17.pdf)

**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.

These videos have now been subtitled for those without access to sound on their PCs.

You can access them on the Infection Control section of the COVID-19 Base on the intranet. [http://intranet.lothian.scot.nhs.uk/COVID-19/Pages/Infection-Control-Information.aspx](http://intranet.lothian.scot.nhs.uk/COVID-19/Pages/Infection-Control-Information.aspx)

Externally, or on your phone you may find it easier to access the videos from our Vimeo page: [https://vimeo.com/nhslothian](https://vimeo.com/nhslothian)

**Essential supplies and PPE**

There remains an understandable degree of anxiety from staff about what PPE should be used and what is available. Please be assured that the guidance on PPE has been robustly risk assessed, and you should continue to refer to the guidance issued by [Health Protection Scotland on Infection Prevention and Control in Healthcare Settings and as outlined below.](http://www.nipcm.hps.scot.nhs.uk/media/1496/2020-3-16-appendix-11-v17.pdf)

In terms of the continuity of supply of essential products, such as face masks and hand gel, it has been necessary to manage demand based on the priority of clinical need, and this means generic alternative products are being provided in place of what you order. Dependent on stock held nationally, you may also see a restriction in the quantity of items you receive.

It is worth noting that NHS Lothian does not operate local warehouses or stockholdings; rather our supply needs are met from the National Distribution Centre (NDC). If national stockholdings encounter gaps in supply, the national team will apportion each NHS Board an equitable allocation of what is available at the time.

As a result of unprecedented demand, the NDC remains at least 24 hours behind normal delivery schedules. This means that you may see a change in your scheduled deliveries, but be assured your needs will be met as soon as possible.

Just as the public are being advised against panic buying, and clearing supermarket shelves of essential items, so it is with essential healthcare supplies. It is important that we request and consume stock carefully, according to what each situation demands in order to conserve stocks for the weeks and months to come.
### 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.

### 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](#)

### Free Fuel for our Fleet Vehicles

Any Fleet driver using an ALLSTAR fuel card can get free fuel when filling up at BP garages.

**Please note this is for business use only.** More information is available at: [https://www.bp.com/en_gb/united-kingdom/home/products-and-services/faqs-for-uk-emergency-services--bp-customers-and-partners.html#accordion_How](https://www.bp.com/en_gb/united-kingdom/home/products-and-services/faqs-for-uk-emergency-services--bp-customers-and-partners.html#accordion_How)
UK Statistics – the latest figures are not yet in, but as of 9am on 24 March 2020:

- 90,436 people have been tested in the UK,
- of which 82,359 were confirmed negative and 8,077 were confirmed positive.
- 422 patients in the UK, who tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) have sadly died.

Scottish test numbers: 24 March 2020
A total of 10,676 Scottish tests have concluded. Of these:
- 9,957 tests were confirmed negative.
- 719 tests were confirmed positive.
- 22 patients who tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) have sadly died.

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

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