For ease of access, please print and leave in staff areas for colleagues.

All Speed Reads are available in the COVID Base on the intranet and the ‘Staff’ section of the NHS Lothian website.  

**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.

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**Important Information**

**Personal Protective Equipment**

**FFP3 respirator masks: additional supplies – UPDATE**

There is understandable anxiety about the supply of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and this issue continues to be reviewed every day at a national and local level. We are working hard to get the full range of PPE out into all parts of our system and we are having twice daily, whole-system phone calls to review the situation.

Additional supplies of FFP3 respirator masks are being made available to NHS staff, following confirmation that FFP3 respirator masks with expiry dates that have passed are safe to use.

Authorisation to use FFP3 face mask stock that has passed the expiry date is confirmed in a letter from Dr Catherine Calderwood, Chief Medical Officer, NHS Scotland and Fiona McQueen, Chief Nursing Officer, NHS Scotland. The letter, dated 30 March, says that independent test reports confirm that this stock of equipment has passed a series of stringent quality assurance tests and that the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and Health Protection Scotland (HPS), having reviewed the independent test evidence, are content with the assessment that such stock is safe and can be used by NHS staff.
The letter begins: “We are committed to keeping all of our staff safe and ensuring we are fully engaged with all of our Services to ensure that they have the resources they need for staff, including access to appropriate Personal Protection Equipment (PPE).”

The letter includes advice from The Health & Safety Executive that all individual users of the FFP3 respirator masks which have expiry dates that have passed, must visually inspect the equipment (to check integrity of foam seals, straps, valves, nose clips as applicable) and these should be fit-checked by the wearer before use.

To see the letter, which includes Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on using FFP3 Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE), click on the following link: CMO/CNO Letter FFP3 Respirators.

**PPE POSTER**

As mentioned in yesterday’s COVID-19 Speed Read, there is also a poster detailing the PPE required by staff for use in different situations and procedures within the acute setting, which can be found here.

**Testing – UPDATE**

The testing of symptomatic staff and household contacts in order to support the response to Covid-19 is evolving and we are now looking for managers to refer staff for consideration of exclusion testing on day one of their symptoms.

We are following improved guidance and expert virology advice and our experience on the ground. The most effective time to identify the virus, and also to exclude the virus, is within the first 3 days from the onset of symptoms. Excluding the virus at this time has the biggest impact on business continuity.

We are now looking for managers to:

- refer staff members for consideration of exclusion testing on day 1 of their symptoms
- assess both how crucial their service is in mounting a response to Covid-19 and how key their staff member is in delivering that service - a matrix is included in the updated guide ‘Staff testing to exclude Covid 19’, to assist.

This is important to reduce time and effort reviewing requests which do not meet these criteria. As we are required by the Scottish Government to offer testing to other key workers and the resources are limited we must effectively target them. If we get this right we can return more than 80% of staff who are isolating to the workplace.

We are urgently working on an SMS result reporting but currently only notify those who are positive by telephone. If your staff member has not heard within 48 hours of being swabbed you can assume it is negative as the results are being checked in virology and double checked in the occupational health department.

**Workforce Guidance – UPDATE**

**Staff in at Risk Groups**

The Scottish Government has developed national guidance for staff and managers on Coronavirus. This can be accessed via the following web address: https://www.staffgovernance.scot.nhs.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/guidance/

Updated guidance has also been produced for those with underlying health conditions which can be accessed
via the same web address. The NHS Lothian guidance has been updated to reflect the national guidance and can be accessed via the Covid-19 Hub.

**Pregnant Staff**

Over 28 weeks’ gestation or with underlying health issues:

- Staff in this category should no longer attend work;
- If they are able to work from home this should be facilitated;
- If this is not possible, they will be entitled to pay as if at work.

Under 28 weeks’ gestation:

- Staff in this category should undertake a risk assessment with occupational health using the pro-forma and guidance contained in the guide for at risk groups;
- If following risk assessment the staff member wishes to cease direct patient-facing duties, alternate roles should be identified which do not require direct patient activity.

Staff who live with individuals with high-risk medical conditions

The Scottish Government advice indicates that household members are at no greater risk of getting COVID-19 if staff follow effective infection control and strict hygiene measures, including clothing and personal objects such as phones, shoes etc.

**Childcare**

A dedicated team has been established within the Scottish Government to help NHS staff and other key workers who are struggling with the established childcare provisions. They can be contacted at the following email address: keyworkers@gov.scot

**Returning workers**

A new portal Coronavirus (COVID-19) Recruitment is now available on the NES (NHS Education for Scotland) website to make it easier for former health and social care staff and final year students to sign up to support NHS Scotland and social care in the fight against Coronavirus. You can find out more at their website

**Virtual Induction Process**

Due to the current COVID19 pandemic, a virtual induction process for all new staff has been created. Managers should direct staff to the Covid-19 Base and then the Covid-19 Training section to find detailed instructions. Staff are required to undertake a range of e-learning modules via LearnPro and access TURAS Learn to for videos resources.

**COVID Training**

After around 1,500 staff attended face-to-face sessions, all COVID-19 upskill and refresher training has now moved on line.

This are open to all staff in acute and community settings and focuses on PPE, Infection Prevention & Control, Deteriorating Patient and Respiratory/Airway Management The resources are available via the COVID-19 Training Intranet and COVID-19 Staff Internet and include direct links to the NES national COVID-19 resources available on Turas.
**Information for Students**

A dedicated internet site ‘Information for Students’ has been set up for nursing, midwifery and AHP students to access essential NHS Lothian training, PPE guidance and other staff support materials. This is currently directed at final year students as they prepare to join the workforce.

Full links:
- Internet [https://staff.nhslothian.scot/COVID-19/Training/Pages/default.aspx](https://staff.nhslothian.scot/COVID-19/Training/Pages/default.aspx)
- Information for students [https://staff.nhslothian.scot/COVID-19/Students/Pages/default.aspx](https://staff.nhslothian.scot/COVID-19/Students/Pages/default.aspx)

**Free access to RCPE online education resources for returning doctors**

In response to the announcement that the General Medical Council (GMC) is registering returning doctors, the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh will be giving free access to its online education resources to these doctors for three months. Further information is available at [https://www.rcpe.ac.uk/college/free-access-online-resources-returning-doctors](https://www.rcpe.ac.uk/college/free-access-online-resources-returning-doctors)

Any staff that are interested can complete the following survey: [https://education-rcpe.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/returning-doctors-account-sign-ups](https://education-rcpe.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/returning-doctors-account-sign-ups)

The Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh will use this information to create a temporary account to access the RCPE Education Portal and to contact doctors with any updates they think are relevant.

**Staff Absence**

In line with Scottish Government guidelines, the following absence reasons are now available in SSTS and have also been added to eESS.

**SP - Coronavirus – Covid 19 Positive** – as it says employees who have tested positive for the virus

**SP - Coronavirus – Self displaying symptoms – Self Isolating** - this will record a staff member who is displaying symptoms and allow testing of key workers to be targeted (original self-isolating reason)

**SP - Coronavirus – Household Related – Self Isolating** - someone in the household of the staff member is displaying symptoms

**SP - Coronavirus** – this will record those who have caring responsibilities and are absent due to these

**SP - Coronavirus – Underlying Health Condition** – staff member has Underlying Health Condition putting them in the at risk category.

Users are asked to record absences in a timeous manner as national reporting is taken from SSTS.
**Staff Health**

**‘Here for You’ telephone helpline – now live**

The ‘Here for You’ telephone helpline, providing staff with confidential psychological support and guidance is now live.

The helpline can be accessed by calling 0131 451 7445 and is available Mon-Fri 8am-6pm.

If you can’t call between 8am and 6pm, please email [Here4U@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:Here4U@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk) with your name and contact details and we’ll be in touch to arrange a time to speak with you. Please note that emails are monitored during office hours only.

If you need to talk to someone out with these hours you can access support through: **Breathing Space on 0800 83 85 87.** They are available Mon-Thurs 6pm – 2am and Friday 6pm to Monday 6am.

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**Other health and wellbeing services for staff**

**The Staff Listening Service** provides phone-based support for all NHS Lothian and primary care staff. It offers a place to explore your thoughts and feelings in a non-judgemental and safe environment. Whatever is concerning you, the Staff Listening Service is there to offer confidential support and to signpost you to specialist services if appropriate. **Phone: 07888 998084** 9am and 9pm, 7 days a week.

**The Staff Support and Counselling Service** offers Counselling as an opportunity to talk in confidence about any type of problem. Counselling provides a space for you to reflect on issues that are troubling you in a safe and confidential environment. Counselling appointments are currently only being offered via telephone. Accessing the Counselling Service is by self-referral.

Due to the high volume of calls to the Occupational Health Service at this time we advise that you email the service using [OHSCS@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:OHSCS@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk) including a contact number and your date of birth. In the subject line please state ‘Self Referral’.

**Self-management Guides**

NHS Lothian, in collaboration with NES has created a series of self-management guides to support colleagues as we respond to coronavirus (COVID-19). These are available on both the COVID-19 Intranet and Internet Hubs.

For further support for individuals and teams, visit the [Staff Health](#) intranet pages.

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**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://intranet.lothian.scot.nhs.uk/COVID-19/Pages/Infection-Control-Information.aspx)

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.

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

Validated Statistics as at 1400

As of 2pm today 15,895 Scottish tests have concluded 13,902 confirmed negative 1,993 positive 60 patients who tested positive 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