

Communication from Deafblind Scotland during the COVID-19 Pandemic



Update 1
20 April 2020

We hope you are managing to stay well during this difficult time. There is a lot of information going around about COVID-19 so we have provided some information below that we hope you will find helpful.

On 16 April the First Secretary of State Dominic Raab announced that the UK's coronavirus lockdown measures will be extended for at least three more weeks. There are early signs that the lockdown has been helping.

During this national crisis the Scottish and UK Governments have instructed everyone to stay at home and follow social distancing measures.

- Only go outside for food, health reasons or work (but only if you cannot work from home)
- If you go out, stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people at all times
- Wash your hands often and as soon as you get home for at least 20 seconds

Do not meet others, even friends or family.

You can spread the virus even if you don't have symptoms.

Overview

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is the illness caused by a new strain of coronavirus first identified in Wuhan city, China. It can cause a cough and/or a high temperature.

People at higher risk of severe illness

Some people are at higher risk of developing severe illness with COVID-19. These people should strictly follow social distancing and stay at home.

This group includes people who are:

- aged 70 or older (regardless of medical conditions)
- under 70 with an underlying health condition, including anyone given the flu vaccination each year on medical grounds
- pregnant

The Scottish Government has set up a helpline for people who are having to stay at home due to the reasons above and to offer additional support to people who might be finding they are struggling to cope such as people with mental health problems. So if you can't get emotional or practical support from family or friends or just need a bit of additional support the helpline number is: **0800 111 4000**

Symptoms of a COVID-19 infection

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are a new continuous cough and/or a fever/high temperature (37.8C or greater).

A new continuous cough is where you:

- have a new cough that's lasted for an hour
- have had 3 or more episodes of coughing in 24 hours
- are coughing more than usual

A high temperature is feeling hot to the touch on your chest or back (you don't need to measure your temperature). You may feel warm, cold or shivery.

Some people will have more serious symptoms, including pneumonia or difficulty breathing, which might require admission to hospital.

What to do if you have symptoms of COVID-19

If you've developed a new, continuous cough and/or a fever/high temperature in the last 7 days, stay at home for 7 days from the start of your symptoms, even if you think your symptoms are mild. Do not go to your GP, pharmacy or hospital.

If you live with other people and have symptoms, they'll need to stay at home for 14 days from the start of your symptoms even if they don't have symptoms themselves.

If they develop symptoms within the 14 days, they need to stay at home for 7 days from the day their symptoms began.

You should only contact NHS24 by phoning 111 if:

- your symptoms worsen during home isolation, especially if you're in a high or extremely high-risk group
- breathlessness develops or worsens, particularly if you're in a high or extremely high-risk group
- your symptoms haven't improved in 7 days
- If you have a medical emergency, phone 999 and tell them you have COVID-19 symptoms.

If you need to go to hospital to be assessed the NHS can help by arranging transport.

Guide Communicator Service

The Deafblind Scotland Guide/Communicator Service continues to support deafblind people. It is focusing on helping with essential shopping and daily exercise and essential medical appointments and prescriptions.

If you are normally funded to receive a g/c to book contact:

Phone: 0141 777 7774

Email: servicesadmin@dbscotland.org.uk

If you do not currently have funding for a guide/communicator service but you are needing assistance please phone or email for further information.

New Deafblind Scotland Helpline

Deafblind Scotland is providing deafblind people with a point of contact should you need to reach out to someone. If you are **feeling lonely or in need of a chat**, you can contact Deafblind Scotland and we will ensure we have a member of staff available by phone or by email during this time.

This service is available Monday to Friday 10am - 2pm

Phone: 07715 421 399

Email: info@dbscotland.org.uk

Where to find out more information

NHS Inform is updated regularly and has all the health information that you need.

www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19

BDA Scotland COVID-19 News in BSL. The videos have no subtitles or voice-over; they are aimed for BSL users in Scotland only. Visit their website bda.org.uk/coronavirus/ to get up to date information in BSL.

UK Government Update

The Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, was diagnosed with coronavirus and has been ill, he was in hospital and spent time in the intensive care unit. He is now recovering and has left hospital. However, he is taking time off to recover, and in his absence the UK's Cabinet is running the country and the Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab is approving key decisions.

The general response to Covid-19 is agreed across the 4 nations of the UK however there are some differences in the way individual nations are responding to the pandemic and in the support being offered to citizens. As health is a devolved issue the Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon is giving regular daily updates on how Scotland is dealing with Covid-19.

Summary of the Queens Speech to the Nation

Sunday 5 April 2020

“Thank you to everyone who is working hard in the NHS and in social care. Also thank you to everyone who is staying at home to keep everyone safe. I hope that we will get through this together. It is good to see lots of people are helping their neighbours and looking after one another. I remember talking to children who were evacuated during the 2nd world war, that was a difficult and scary time. We are all facing a very difficult challenge again, but better days will return, and we will meet our friends and family again. The Queen sends her thanks and warm good wishes to everyone.”

Accessible Information

Deafblind Scotland can transcribe information and format it into accessible formats, these include; Large and Extra-Large Print, Braille, Moon, Audio CD.

To make a request please contact:

Phone: 07715 421 399

Email: information@dbscotland.org.uk