



An update on our support activity - what it means for your service and care across Scotland

When the pandemic began to affect Scotland, business as usual stopped for everyone. We quickly changed our operations to focus on how best to support you and your services during this unique event. That continues to be our focus and we have ensured we can flex and adapt our approach to provide the right support at the right time as the situation evolves.

It is our absolute priority to do all we can to support Scotland's care sector to get the help it needs to keep people and staff as safe as possible. This already includes our inspectors calling every care home for adults, older people, and young people, all care at home and housing support services, and all nurse agencies across Scotland. This is a significant amount of activity, with care homes for older people alone numbering over 800, and so important. We are speaking directly to staff in these services to find out their current situation, and we are providing much wanted advice, guidance and support. Services have thanked us for our proactive support, and this support will continue.

We have been training our inspection staff to use [Near Me](#), a video consultation tool to help us meet with care services. This will help us provide advice and guidance tailored to individual settings.

We introduced notifications for you to tell us about cases of COVID-19 in your settings and to tell us about how COVID-19 is affecting your staffing levels. We are sorry to put this extra burden on you at this time, but this vital information helps us target support where it is needed, and it helps us build a national picture. The Scottish Government has now begun publishing overall figures for COVID-19 in care homes, provided by us, and we are working with them continuously to understand the detail of how COVID-19 is impacting care. This work is helping us, government and other national bodies such as Public Health Scotland and Health Protection Scotland come together to provide the co-ordinated and effective response that the care sector needs so urgently.

Nearly 100 of our own specialist staff, with backgrounds in care have volunteered and been approved to re-enter the care workforce during the pandemic, where and when they are needed. Any redeployment of our staff volunteers will be managed by the new SSSC/NES redeployment hub. You can find out more about the hub [here](#).

Lastly, we want to give clarity on how we interact with the media. We have heard of some upsetting instances of journalists and photographers taking intrusive pictures of affected care homes and knocking on windows to try and talk to staff and residents. We want to reassure you that we never have and never will approach the press to offer them a story about a service. However, journalists do approach us

daily, asking us about individual services. Where journalists have quoted in an article numbers of cases in individual care services, we have not provided them. Although we are asked to, we do not comment on or provide the numbers of cases in individual services. What we will do, if we are approached by a journalist asking about cases of COVID-19 in a particular service, is provide a simple statement that confirms we are aware and that we are working to provide support.

The job you are doing has never been tougher than it is right now. We will continue to dedicate all our efforts to supporting you throughout these difficult times.