

Unconfirmed Coronavirus cases in Edinburgh

Professor Jürgen Haas, who is a specialist in infectious diseases at University of Edinburgh, told the BBC today that there are four suspected cases of Coronavirus in Scotland, and three of those are in Edinburgh.

He also said that there was an increased likelihood of the virus spreading due to people travelling during Chinese New Year.

A Scottish Government spokesperson has responded to these claims saying there is no confirmation as yet. The spokesperson said : "There are currently no confirmed cases of Coronavirus (WN Co-V) in the UK and the risk to the Scottish public remains low.

"Following travel to Wuhan, China, two people confirmed as diagnosed with influenza are now being tested for Wuhan Novel Coronavirus as a precautionary measure only. Three further people are also undergoing testing on a similar precautionary basis.

"As the situation develops we will update should there be any confirmed cases of Coronavirus, rather than provide a running update on cases being considered on a precautionary basis.

"We are co-orientating with Health Protection Scotland a daily Incident Management Team to continue to monitor the situation as it develops, including on the number of any potential cases going forward."

Video courtesy of BBC

Today the matter was raised at First Minister's Questions :

- Kenneth Gibson SNP MSP for Cunninghame North asked :
_“Last month, coronavirus, which causes a respiratory disease, emerged in Wuhan in China. The virus has so far killed at least six people and infected hundreds more, and it has spread to other Asian countries and Australia. Concerns have already been expressed by virologists that, due to the virus's incubation time, when no symptoms are present, many other people will already be infected. Wuhan has international air links with around 60 cities, including London, and, of course, many more Chinese people travel at this time of year because of Chinese new year. Will the First Minister advise the Parliament as to what precautions have been and are being taken to deal with coronavirus, should it reach our shores?”

- The First Minister Nicola Sturgeon replied :
_“I assure Kenny Gibson and other members that, together with Health Protection Scotland, we are closely monitoring what is a rapidly evolving situation. I should say that the risk to the public in Scotland and, indeed, in the United Kingdom is currently classified as low, but obviously that is kept under review. Health Protection Scotland is liaising with national health service boards and is currently in daily contact with Public Health England and liaising daily with colleagues in the UK Department of Health and Social Care. We are also paying close attention to the decisions of and advice from the World Health Organisation. Enhanced monitoring measures have been implemented for flights from Wuhan city to Heathrow. Those will involve each flight being met by a port health team, who will check for symptoms of coronavirus and provide information to all passengers. We are considering whether any further information could

helpfully be provided at Scottish airports. Obviously, the situation is evolving and we will monitor it extremely closely. The Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport or I will ensure that Parliament is appropriately updated in the days and weeks to come.”

Public health information

The statement continued : “We have robust arrangements to manage emerging diseases and are monitoring this situation closely.

“We are making appropriate preparations and anyone arriving at Heathrow from Wuhan and transferring to a flight to Scotland will, along with all other arriving passengers, be met by a health team from Public Health England at Heathrow who will check for symptoms.

“The current advice to travellers is against all but essential travel to Wuhan. Passengers should take precautions such as practicing good hand hygiene, personal and respiratory hygiene, and to minimise contact with birds and animals in markets in Wuhan or elsewhere in China.”

“Any travellers returning from Wuhan or elsewhere in China who become unwell, particularly with respiratory symptoms, within 14 days of their return, are advised to call their GP or NHS 111 and report their recent travel.

“Health Protection Scotland will be issuing updated guidance to NHS Scotland boards this evening.”

The UK Government issued the following advice on Wednesday 22 January 2020 : “From today, enhanced monitoring will be in place from all direct flights from Wuhan to the UK. The enhanced monitoring package includes a number of measures to provide [advice to travellers](#) if they feel unwell.”

In Edinburgh there are direct flights to Beijing flown by

Hainan Airlines.



It is believed that the suspected cases are in the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary