

# Community testing introduced for coronavirus

**The Scottish Government says that public should only contact their GP or NHS 111 if their symptoms worsen.**

Surveillance testing for COVID-19 (coronavirus) will be expanded to monitor the spread of the virus in the community.

The programme will be extended to GP practices covering up to 1.2 million people across all health boards across the country.

It will test people who have relevant symptoms, including with flu-like symptoms or general respiratory illness and underlying health conditions. It will also support the continued testing of people admitted to hospital with symptoms.

People following the guidance to stay at home for seven days if they have mild symptoms of a new cough or raised temperature will not be routinely tested – and will continue to be advised to only phone NHS 111 or contact the GP if their condition worsens.

Surveillance testing will provide real-time information on how the virus is spreading in Scotland, which will inform NHS planning and allow resources to be directed where they are needed most. Key workers such as NHS staff will continue to be tested if they show symptoms.

Scotland's Chief Medical Officer said. "This new approach to testing will enable us to understand the pattern and spread of coronavirus in the community, to develop a clear assessment of

the situation and to predict the peak number of cases, without having to test everyone with possible symptoms.

“Those with mild symptoms do not need to be tested. They should continue to stay at home for seven days and only contact their GP or 111 if their condition worsens.

“Everybody has a role to play in helping contain this outbreak by following the latest health advice and basic hygiene precautions such as washing hands frequently, not touching their face and covering their nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.”