

Coronavirus – Call for increased testing for NHS staff

NHS staff testing must be stepped up

Testing frontline NHS staff for coronavirus must be the urgent priority to ensure resilience in the health service, the Scottish Greens say today

Health Secretary Jeane Freeman pledged to expand testing for staff, but current guidance is that NHS staff with symptoms will not be tested.

Scottish Greens health spokesperson Alison Johnstone said: “Those working in health and care are the most important people in the country right now. It’s absolutely critical that governments heed the warnings from doctors to give frontline staff priority access to tests. Because anyone showing symptoms must self-isolate for two weeks, we could quickly get to a situation where doctors and nurses are forced off work.

“Jeane Freeman has told MSPs frontline staff will be prioritised, but the current guidance to NHS staff remains that staff with symptoms will not be tested. That needs to be turned round fast.

“This also applies to family doctors and social care staff too, who are already stretched to the limit. Those workers also say they urgently need adequate protective equipment like masks and gloves to keep them safe.”