

# Chief Medical Officer apologises – but opposition parties call for resignation

[The Scottish Sun](#) yesterday revealed that Dr Catherine Calderwood, the Chief Medical Officer, had been spotted visiting her second home in Fife.

She was accompanied by her husband and children during an overnight stay in Earlsferry.

This breaks all the rules about staying at home during the coronavirus lockdown and has been condemned by opposition parties, and the Scottish Police Federation.

The CMO issued a statement this morning: “I wish to apologise unreservedly for the issue reported in the media today.

“While there are reasons for what I did, they do not justify it and they were not legitimate reasons to be out of my home. While I and my family followed the guidance on social distancing at all times, I understand that I did not follow the advice I am giving to others, and I am truly sorry for that.

“I know how important this advice is and I do not want my mistake to distract from that. I have a job to do as Chief Medical Officer to provide advice to Ministers on the path of this virus and to support the medical profession as they work night and day to save lives, and having spoken with the First Minister this morning I will continue to focus entirely on that job.”



Dr Catherine Calderwood the Chief Medical Officer at a media briefing at St Andrew's House on 2 March 2020 PHOTO ©2020 The Edinburgh Reporter

The CMO would usually take part in a media briefing from St Andrew's House this afternoon.

Scottish Labour Health Spokesperson Monica Lennon said: "The First Minister and her top team must lead by example during this crisis which continues to take lives on a daily basis.

"The message that people should stay at home to save lives and protect the NHS is the right one.

"The Chief Medical Officer delivers that instruction on behalf of the government but has failed to follow her own advice.

"Her actions have undermined Scotland's pandemic response and her own credibility. Unfortunately, it means she cannot and should not continue in her role. Her position as CMO has become untenable."

Willie Rennie and Wendy Chamberlain said that tension in the East Neuk was already high with holidaymakers and second home owners flocking to the area over the weekend. They said it added insult to injury that the CMO was one of them.

The parliamentarians said: "It is difficult to see how the Chief Medical Officer will be able to carry the important messages about the virus and the lock down if she has not even followed it herself. There is no doubt she has worked incredibly hard and led the country well through the early stages of this crisis. Yet it is difficult to see how she can continue to do that when she has made this massive error of judgement.

"Local people are irate that holiday makers and second home owners have ignored the warnings from the Chief Medical Officer to stay at home. The main street was described as

being like a motorway and many second homes are full up. There is real concern that with a swollen population and a virus sweeping through the local health services will just not cope.

“If we are going to get through this pandemic we need medical leaders who everyone can follow. It is with great regret that we say that the Chief Medical Officer will need to go.”