

Coronavirus – Labour says answers needed following BBC documentary

The BBC Disclosure programme was aired last night and it revealed that there were potentially multiple transmissions of coronavirus in Edinburgh in February, long before the first confirmed cases in Scotland.

The information does not appear to have been disclosed to the public.

A team of epidemiological scientists at the University of Edinburgh has said that more than 2,000 coronavirus deaths could have been prevented if Scotland had locked down two weeks earlier.

The programme tweeted yesterday some of what it was about to reveal.

Coronavirus: Earlier Scottish lockdown 'could have prevented 2,000 deaths'. Watch the documentary tonight at 8.30pm, BBC One Scotland [#scotlandslockdown](#) [@BBCDisclosure](#) <https://t.co/bHZCNpehlu>

– Liam McDougall (@McDougall_L) [May 11, 2020](#)

Labour MP for Edinburgh South, Ian Murray, said: “This revelation has sparked major questions which The Scottish

Government must urgently answer.

“Why was there a cover-up following the February outbreak, despite a clear risk to public health in Edinburgh?

“Why wasn’t lockdown introduced earlier, as was happening elsewhere, when the virus was spreading in our city?

“Why does testing for COVID-19 remain so pitifully low in Scotland, leaving us lagging well behind the rest of the UK?

“The findings of this explosive documentary deserve an immediate response from the First Minister. The buck stops with her.

“The bungling of this crisis by Boris Johnson and his team should not be a cover for the First Minister to absolve herself of proper scrutiny of her own government’s response to this crisis.

“We owe it to the families affected and the people of Edinburgh to get answers and to prevent further unnecessary loss of life.”

Scottish Labour Health Spokesperson Monica Lennon said: “The findings of this investigation are deeply troubling and require an immediate response from the First Minister. Public confidence is essential and that means full transparency. We are supporting the national effort against this pandemic. We want our governments to succeed in beating the virus, and this evidence presented tonight suggests lockdown should have taken place earlier.

“Information about a potential coronavirus outbreak in Edinburgh in February should have been made public as soon as the Scottish Government became aware of it.”

The First Minister will conduct the daily media briefing at 12.30pm today from St Andrew’s House.