One more patient dies at Western General

NHS Lothian says today it is continuing investigations after identifying that an outbreak of Covid-19 is affecting patients in a ward at the Western General Hospital in Edinburgh.

Sadly, one further patient who had tested positive for the virus has died. NHS Lothian say they are unable to provide further details as they must respect and maintain patient confidentiality, but they have confirmed that the total number of deaths remains under five.

A further three patients have tested positive for Covid-19 as well as six members of staff who are self-isolating. The outbreak is confined to a single ward which remains closed to new admissions and visitors while investigations continue.

Further testing is being carried out and contact tracing for all new confirmed cases is underway. Contact tracing for previously confirmed patient cases as at 9 October 2020 is complete and contacts have been advised to self-isolate for 14 days, from the time of their contact with a Covid-19 case, and provided with all necessary guidance and advice.

Enhanced infection control measures are in place to ensure patient and visitor safety across the Western General Hospital. All other hospital wards are open and continuing to treat patients safely.

Dr Donald Inverarity, Consultant Microbiologist, NHS Lothian, and Chair of the Incident Management Team (IMT), said: "We are greatly concerned that another patient has died and wish again to express our condolences to their grieving family."

"NHS Lothian responded promptly, implementing a range of infection control measures, which we believe has contained the outbreak to one ward."

"Patient safety is our main priority and we want to reassure patients attending our hospitals that they should continue to come for treatment. It is very important in particular, that patients undergoing treatment for cancer continue to attend their appointments and we assure them that it is safe to do so."

"Enhanced infection control measures are in place throughout the hospital. All outpatients, visitors and staff are required to wear face coverings or masks in all areas and there are hand sanitising stations throughout the hospital. We are also conducting increased COVID-19 screening of staff and patients."

"The situation continues to be closely reviewed and monitored. I want to thank everyone who has been affected for their ongoing cooperation and understanding."

In line with national guidance screening of patients and visitors attending the hospital is carried out . Alternative accommodation is being arranged for patients travelling from other health boards who cannot easily return home between episodes of treatment, and physical distancing during travel is being addressed and optimised.

Visitors and outpatients attending the hospital, must wear face coverings (unless exempt), use the hand sanitiser available and respect physical distancing measures in place. If someone has forgotten their mask, supplies are available at every entrance which are restocked throughout the day.