

# Private hospitals helping with elective care

**With 30% more patients in hospital today than at any time since the pandemic began, and 260 patients in ICU in Scotland, (when normal levels would be around 170), it is clear that the NHS in Scotland is under pressure.**

The NHS retains a booking for around 75% of all private sector healthcare, to be called upon if needed according to the Chief Operating Officer of NHS Scotland, John Connaghan. This is there to be called upon if necessary.

NHS Scotland is now to call upon five of these hospitals to help with elective care from this week. In normal times these hospitals do help the NHS to clear waiting lists of certain procedures.

In NHS Lothian, the Spire hospital in Murrayfield will be conducting such care on behalf of the health board. There is already support and extra capacity in NHS Golden Jubilee and NHS Louisa Jordan for elective and outpatient treatments. These two Glasgow based hospitals are what is called 'green' in that they will not deal with any Covid cases unless the position becomes much worse than it is at present.

Private sector hospitals will primarily support procedures such as urgent care and cancer treatment, including breast surgery, urology and gynaecology.

All of this is to allow the NHS all over Scotland to concentrate on responding to Covid-19 and A&E services.

Health Secretary Jeane Freeman said: “The additional capacity provided by the independent sector, NHS Golden Jubilee and NHS Louisa Jordan is very welcome, and I am extremely grateful to all staff involved for their continued hard work.

“The Scottish Government will continue to work closely with Health Boards to ensure those requiring urgent elective and vital cancer care can be seen as quickly and safely as possible.

“Even as we expand our vaccination and testing programmes, the number of Covid patients within our hospitals remains very high – so it is absolutely vital that people continue to stay home, protect the NHS, and save lives.”