

Coronavirus – community testing results

Public Health Scotland have released figures showing that more than 10,000 tests have been carried out on people without coronavirus symptoms since 18 January.

Of those, 251 (2.4%) tests were positive for the virus, despite people showing no symptoms, and they were asked to self-isolate to avoid unknowingly passing on the virus to those around them.

As of Thursday 4 March, there are 24 asymptomatic test sites providing Covid-19 testing for people without symptoms in targeted areas. (None of these is in the NHS Lothian area) A further 24 sites across Scotland are set to open over the next month.

Nine Mobile Testing Units (MTUs) are also currently deployed to provide community testing for local residents, whether they have symptoms or not.

Over 5,600 tests have been carried out for people reporting Covid-19 symptoms at these MTUs since 18 January, 847 (15%) of which tested positive.

The Scottish Government has committed £5 million in additional funding to support community testing programmes across the country, and 320 military personnel have been deployed to support initial set up, training and delivery. Proposals for targeted community testing have so far been agreed with the

Ayrshire & Arran, Borders, Dumfries & Galloway, Fife, Greater Glasgow & Clyde, Grampian, Lanarkshire and Forth Valley health boards, and the 20 Local Authority areas they cover.

Discussions are underway with the remaining health board areas and their local authorities aiming to agree proposals in the coming weeks.

Waste water sampling has been undertaken by SEPA and Scottish Water to track Covid prevalence and this has been expanded to around 160 tests per week, supported by £1.1 million in additional funding.

Public Health Minister Mairi Gougeon said: "These results show the impact that targeted community testing can have – identifying 251 asymptomatic cases of Covid-19 that might otherwise have gone undetected, helping to break chains of transmission within those communities.

"This is especially important given new Covid strains are more infectious, and not everyone who has coronavirus will have symptoms, so people could be spreading the disease to those around them without knowing it.

"Dedicated support is available for anyone who needs to self-isolate. So, whether you think you have Covid-19 symptoms or not, I would encourage everyone in these areas where community testing is available to come forward and get tested.

"Alongside our vaccination programme and the FACTS guidance, early identification of new cases through testing gives us the best chance of protecting the progress we've made so far to suppress Covid-19 in Scotland, so that restrictions can continue to be eased, and we can all move back to some greater normality in our lives."

If you need to self-isolate there is guidance [here](#).