

Coronavirus -omicron variant identified in Scotland

The Covid-19 omicron variant has been identified in Scotland with four cases in Lanarkshire and two others in the Greater Glasgow and Clyde area.

The government announced that Public Health Scotland and local health protection teams are supporting and contact tracing is being undertaken to establish the origin of the virus and any individuals they have come into contact with in recent weeks.

Health Secretary Humza Yousaf said: "This will be a worrying time for the six people now identified as having the new variant. All will receive expert help and support and Public Health Scotland will undertake enhanced contact tracing in all cases. This will help establish the origin of the virus and any further individuals they have come into contact with in recent weeks.

"There is still much to learn about the Omicron variant. Questions remain about its severity, transmissibility and response to treatments or vaccines and scientists are working at pace to provide additional information. Until more is known we must be cautious and do everything we can to minimise the risk of spreading infection.

"We have already taken steps and are aligning with the new border restrictions being introduced by the UK Government which will require fully vaccinated arrivals to take a PCR test within two days of arrival and to self-isolate until a

negative result is received. These measures will be introduced as soon as possible and kept under constant review. However, we reserve the right to go further if necessary. We are also adopting the expanded red list of countries identified by the UK Government. This will also be kept under review.

“We must now redouble our efforts to follow the basic rules that have served us well throughout the pandemic – wear a face covering on public transport and in all indoor settings for food and retail; open windows especially if you have people visiting at home; keep washing your hands regularly and thoroughly. Work from home where possible, take regular lateral flow tests – especially before mixing with others outside your household.

“If you have symptoms, self-isolate and take a test and if contacted by Test and Protect or public health teams please co-operate and follow their advice. All close contacts of suspected Omicron cases will be advised to self-isolate for 10 days, regardless of their vaccination status.

“And of course, if you are eligible for your booster, or are still to have any dose of the Covid-19 vaccine, please get vaccinated now.”

WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION



Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

Director-General



**World Health
Organization**

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General, World Health Organisation explained in a speech on Monday that 103 countries have still not reached the 40% target for

vaccination, that most of them are in Africa and it is because they simply cannot access the vaccines.

In a hard hitting speech, advocating collaboration and sharing of vaccines and also information, he outlined that more than five million people have died worldwide of Covid-19 and that many continue to suffer from Long Covid. He said that sixty per cent of the population of the world has not had a single dose of vaccine as yet.

Dr Ghebreyesus said that vaccines have saved many lives and quelled the pandemic in many countries. He said: "It is in every country's best interests. No country can vaccinate its way out of this pandemic along. We are all in this together. Vaccines save lives although they do not prevent transmission."

[Travel restrictions](#) have been changed as a result of the omicron variant.

The First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon will conduct a media briefing at 10.30am on Monday.