

NHS Lothian issue update on leak issue at Royal Infirmary

NHS Lothian say the number of operations being carried out daily at NHS Lothian is expected to return to normal by the end of the week.

Yesterday the Health Board announced that most non-emergency operations had to be postponed due to a small water leak in its Hospital Sterilisation and Decontamination Unit (HSDU) at the Royal infirmary of Edinburgh. The ultra-clean facility, which serves the whole of NHS Lothian, is where surgical instruments are cleaned and prepared for surgery.

Sufficient capacity for the provision of up to 400 trays of surgical instruments daily has now been secured which means normal levels of activity will resume by the end of the week. NHS Lothian's instruments are being processed by NHS Lothian staff at NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde's HSDU facility and by Steris, a national supplier.

NHS Lothian Medical Director, Tracey Gillies, said "We are very pleased that we can now focus on re-booking those patients whose operations had been postponed and we will do so by prioritising the most urgent cases first.

"Our teams will be in touch with their patients directly in the next few days to reschedule as soon as possible, so there is no need for patients to do anything. We do not anticipate that any more surgeries will have to be postponed as a result of this problem.

“Once again I’d like to apologise to everyone who has been affected for the worry and inconvenience caused.”

Work to repair, test and recommission the facility is expected to take at least two to four weeks.