

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS ON COVID-19 AND ANSWERS BY THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

Tuesday 05 May 2020

Written questions lodged on 05 May can be found on page 27 of this document.

Links to Topical Questions and oral answers relating to COVID-19 on 26 April, are included at page

ANSWERS TO PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS (Received on 05 May)

Government Initiated Questions

Bruce Crawford (Stirling) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government when it will publish further details on Scotland's approach to reviewing the COVID-19 restrictions currently in place.

(S5W-28873)

John Swinney: We have today published *Coronavirus (COVID-19): Framework for Decision Making: Further Information* which sets out further detail of the next steps we propose to take in combatting the virus including any varying of the current restrictions, when it is safe to do so. This is a further contribution to discussion, scrutiny and understanding of our approach within Scotland, in the rest of the UK, and beyond, including discussion as part of the Four Nations process within the UK, and with delivery partners, stakeholders and the public in Scotland, as we plan our approach. Alongside this, we have today launched an online platform to provide a forum for people to engage directly with the discussion around Scotland's next steps by submitting responses, as well as rating and commenting on responses submitted by others.

Ministerial portfolio: Communities and Local Government

Alexander Stewart (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what action it is taking to ensure that it will allocate to charities in Scotland as soon as possible the £30 million in Barnett consequentials arising from the UK Government's £750 million support package for England in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, and by what date it expects the charities to begin receiving this.

(S5W-28300)

Aileen Campbell: The Scottish Government announced support for charities via the Community Wellbeing Fund and Third Sector Resilience Fund on 18 March, more than 3 weeks before the UK Government announcement. These Funds provide support in excess of the consequential resulting from the UK Government's announcement. I am relieved that the UK Government has now also recognised the importance of the charitable sector.

Mark Ruskell (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Green Party): To ask the Scottish Government, in light of the COVID-19 outbreak, what assessment it has made of the number of households that might require emergency provision through the Food Fund; what proportion of these households are accessing this; what action it is taking to contact those that have not, and what plans it has to assess and report on the effectiveness of the Fund.

(S5W-28308)

Aileen Campbell: We currently estimate that around 308,000 adults are most likely to need emergency food provision. This figure will be constantly reviewed as new data and insights become available.

Of our £70 million Food Fund, up to £30 million is to support those clinically most vulnerable to coronavirus, known as the shielded group. A further £30 million has been allocated to local authorities to coordinate local efforts for those non-shielded and at risk and £10 million is being invested in national third sector infrastructure and community organisations to support food access.

We have put in place a national helpline to ensure those requiring additional support can access this and are raising awareness through correspondence to all households in Scotland – with information expected to be delivered from 24 April and complete by 1 May.

We are working closely with local authorities to understand demand levels and to ensure the total range of support available, including through third sector and community partners, is sufficient.

[Ministerial portfolio: Economy, Fair Work and Culture](#)

Donald Cameron (Highlands and Islands) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what discussions it has had with creative sector leaders regarding COVID-19 funding for Creative Scotland, and whether it plans to allocate further funding to the creative sector beyond what it has already announced.

Fiona Hyslop: COVID-19 is the biggest challenge we have faced in our lifetimes and the measures we take to deal with it must reflect its magnitude.

The Scottish Government recognises the importance of the creative sector and is committed to doing everything we can to ensure our world-class culture can continue to thrive.

That is why we have taken decisive steps to address the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on those working in the creative sector.

As part of the regular contact we have with creative sector leaders I led roundtable discussions with them in early April to understand the impacts and to consider possible solutions, including funding for Creative Scotland.

Our primary focus is to support the organisations we fund and other funders in order to keep funding flowing to individuals and organisations to enable them to sustain themselves through the immediate short-term impacts, while also keeping the medium to longer term recovery in view.

We continue to work hard and quickly to understand the different impacts on the various parts of the sectors as they become clear and we will use this information to identify new measures where we find that there are significant gaps in existing support provision.

We have moved quickly to introduce a range of schemes and measures to support businesses across the economy and welcome the initiatives being introduced by the UK Government.

The Scottish Government's total business support package now totals £2.3 billion.

Creative Scotland is providing an expected total budget of £14 million of support in response to the COVID-19 situation. The Scottish Government will continue to work urgently with Creative Scotland and Screen Scotland to use existing and new funds to support the sector, including the Third Sector Resilience Fund for Scotland-based charities, social enterprises or voluntary organisations, or organisations delivering community services and activities.

The £14 million fund is available to support those – including freelance creative practitioners – whose work in the arts, screen and creative industries has been affected by the measures introduced to reduce the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak. This includes £1.1 million of repurposed grant in aid and a further £1 million to top up Creative Scotland's Bridging Bursaries in the not-for-profit sector from the Scottish Government as well as National Lottery funds.

I have also announced that from the 30 th April the newly self-employed suffering hardship, and small and medium sized businesses (SMEs) in distress, can apply for help from a £100 million package of additional grant support.

This includes a £20 million Creative, Tourism & Hospitality Enterprises Hardship Fund, managed by the Enterprise Agencies with support from Creative Scotland and VisitScotland for small and micro creative, tourism and hospitality companies not in receipt of business rates relief to access grants of up to £25K.

This funding is intended to relieve the hardship of individuals and smaller firms that are ineligible for support from the UK Government or are not in receipt yet of the funds they need to survive. Our hospitality, tourism and creative sectors have been decimated by this crisis and previously profitable businesses have seen demand dry up overnight.

However, because of the decisions the Scottish Government has taken, thousands more self-employed people and small businesses will be able to benefit from support compared with elsewhere, and we have been able to help sectors of the economy that are not being supported in other parts of the UK.

Details of support for businesses are available at the Find Business Support website which is available at the following link: <https://findbusinesssupport.gov.scot>. This is frequently updated with the latest information.

Fuller information about the broader support for the creative sector beyond that of Creative Scotland is set out in my letter to the Convener of the Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Affairs Committee of 24 April which is available at the following link: https://www.parliament.scot/S5_European/General%20Documents/20200424_CabSecEFWCToConvener.pdf.

Lewis Macdonald (North East Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what provision will be made during the COVID-19 outbreak for self-employed workers, such as vets, who derive the majority of their income from dividends.

(S5W-28564)

Jamie Hepburn: There is no specific veterinary support scheme. However, there is a range of support measures that are in place for all non-domestic properties, including veterinary practices. They will be eligible for the universal 1.6% rates relief. Where veterinary businesses are in receipt of Small

Business Bonus Scheme relief and/or Rural Relief, they will also be eligible for a one-off £10,000 grant.

A new package of measures announced by the Scottish Government on 15 April includes £120 million to extend the Small Business Grant scheme to ensure that, in addition to a 100% grant on the first property, small business rate payers will be eligible to a 75% grant on all subsequent properties.

The Scottish Government has also made available a further £100m to protect self-employed people and viable micro and SME businesses in distress due to COVID. The fund is intended to relieve the hardship of individuals and smaller firms that are ineligible for support from the UK government or are not in receipt yet of the funds they need to survive. This fund will be channelled through local authorities and enterprise agencies to target newly selfemployed people and businesses who are ineligible for other Scottish Government or UK Government schemes.

Alison Johnstone (Lothian) (Scottish Green Party): To ask the Scottish Government what steps it is taking to ensure that people can continue to use cash safely as payment during the COVID-19 outbreak.

(S5W-28655)

Fiona Hyslop: The Scottish Government recognises that access to cash remains an important part of our society, especially for vulnerable groups. Like any other surface that large numbers of people come into contact with, banknotes can carry bacteria or viruses. However, the Bank of England and the World Health Organisation have confirmed that the risk posed by handling a banknote is no greater than touching any other common surface, such as handrails, doorknobs or credit cards .

To manage any risk, people are encouraged to use contactless payments where possible. Where that is not possible, the WHO advises that hand washing after touching coins and notes remains one of the most effective ways of preventing the spread of infection.

The Scottish Government's advice on hand washing is repeated frequently at daily briefings by the First Minister with further guidance available at the Gov.scot website www.gov.scot .

Ministerial portfolio: Education and Skills

Bruce Crawford (Stirling) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government when it will publish further details on Scotland's approach to reviewing the COVID-19 restrictions currently in place.

(S5W-28873)

John Swinney: We have today published Coronavirus (COVID-19): Framework for Decision Making: Further Information which sets out further detail of the next steps we propose to take in combatting the virus including any varying of the current restrictions, when it is safe to do so. This is a further contribution to discussion, scrutiny and understanding of our approach within Scotland, in the rest of the UK, and beyond, including discussion as part of the Four Nations process within the UK, and with delivery partners, stakeholders and the public in Scotland, as we plan our approach. Alongside this, we have today launched an online platform to provide a forum for people to engage directly with the discussion around Scotland's next steps by submitting responses, as well as rating and commenting on responses submitted by others.

Ross Greer (West Scotland) (Scottish Green Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether it still plans to publish the Morgan review into additional support for learning in Spring 2020.

(S5W-28480)

John Swinney: The Covid-19 pandemic presents unprecedented challenges for our education system. Our overriding priorities are ensuring the health and wellbeing of children, young people and staff and maintaining a continuity of learning wherever possible whilst schools are closed, as well as planning and preparing for a recovery phase.

We remain fully committed to publishing the review of implementation of additional support for learning which has been independently chaired by Angela Morgan. However, as we continue to focus on the overriding priorities in responding to the Covid-19 pandemic, we are unable to give a clearer indication of when the report will be published at this time.

This will be kept under constant review and a further update will be provided in due course.

Ross Greer (West Scotland) (Scottish Green Party): To ask the Scottish Government when its review into coordinated support plans for children with additional needs will begin.

(S5W-28481)

John Swinney: The Covid-19 pandemic presents unprecedented challenges for our education system. Our overriding priorities are ensuring the health and wellbeing of children, young people and staff and maintaining a continuity of

learning wherever possible whilst schools are closed, as well as planning and preparing for a recovery phase.

We remain fully committed to working with partners to undertake a review of the use of co-ordinated support plans to ensure that children and young people with the most significant additional support needs are receiving the support that they need to reach their full learning potential.

However, we recognise that it is critical that we do not make any additional demands on the system at this time. Therefore, we will keep the situation under close review and take forward this important work when it is appropriate to do so.

This work will be undertaken within the wider context of the independently chaired review of implementation of additional support for learning which will be used to inform the review of the use of Co-ordinated Support Plans.

Miles Briggs (Lothian) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many people shielding from the COVID-19 outbreak in each local authority have (a) requested and (b) started receiving prescription deliveries, and by what date it expects this to be available through its text-messaging service.

(S5W-28380)

John Swinney: The national SMS service first started signposting people who are shielding and need support for deliveries of medication to their Local Authorities on 21 April. Collection of data for performance monitoring purposes of this service is underway, but data are not yet available.

Anas Sarwar (Glasgow) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how many extremely vulnerable people who have been asked to shield at home from the COVID-19 outbreak have (a) requested and (b) received support from (i) local authorities (ii) supermarkets and (iii) the wholesaler, Brakes and Bidfood, and how many subsequently received this support.

(S5W-28759)

John Swinney: By 24 April, 100,961 grocery boxes had been requested by people shielding. The following table provides an illustration of this broken down by local authority area .

Local Authority	Percentage of total boxes ordered
Aberdeen City	3.9

Aberdeenshire	3.4
Angus	2.1
Argyle and Bute	1.9
City of Edinburgh	5.0
Clackmannanshire	0.9
Dumfries and Galloway	2.6
Dundee City	2.6
East Ayrshire	2.9
East Dunbartonshire	1.4
East Lothian	1.7
East Renfrewshire	1.3
Falkirk	2.7
Fife	6.6
Glasgow City	12.2
Highland	3.3
Inverclyde	1.9
Midlothian	1.9
Moray	1.5
Na h-Eileanan Siar	0.3
North Ayrshire	3.2
North Lanarkshire	7.9
Orkney	0.4
Perth and Kinross	3.0
Renfrewshire	2.5
Scottish Borders	2.2
Shetland	0.3
South Ayrshire	2.3
South Lanarkshire	12.5
Stirling	1.0
West Dunbartonshire	1.9
West Lothian	3.0
Total	100

Brakes and Bidfood, who are contracted to fulfil the orders, reported that by 24 April 2020, 92,316 grocery boxes had been delivered.

On any given date, the number of grocery boxes requested includes all boxes due to be delivered over the following week. This means that the number of boxes requested will always be higher than the number already delivered. The exact day on which person's box will be delivered depends on which day of the week Brakes and Bidfood deliver to their postcode. Under the Scottish Government's agreement with Brakes and Bidfood, people who are shielding receive their first grocery box within 7 days of their request reaching Brakes and Bidfood. Thereafter they receive their box(es) once a week, until they cancel the deliveries.

Ministerial portfolio: Finance

Neil Findlay (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will provide public money to support companies that are being affected by COVID-19 and are registered in tax havens.

(S5W-28536)

Kate Forbes: The Scottish Government believes that businesses and individuals should all pay a fair share of tax to support the vital services and infrastructure on which we all rely. We recognise the challenges presented by tax-motivated behaviours. The powers needed to address this fully are reserved to the UK Parliament. They should be devolved so that decisions which affect the people of Scotland can be made here.

Ministerial portfolio: Health and Sport

Miles Briggs (Lothian) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what support has been made available to private dentists during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Holding answer issued: 05 May 2020

(S5W-28579)

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Neil Findlay (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will provide a substantive answer to question S5W-27947, which received a holding response on 30 March 2020, regarding whether, in light of the COVID-19 outbreak, it will carry out an immediate independent review of social care.

Holding answer issued: 05 May 2020

(S5W-28594)

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how many hospital ventilation machines there are.

(S5W-27958)

Jeane Freeman: I refer the member to the answer to question S5W-28268 on 4 May 2020. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at <http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

Richard Lyle (Uddingston and Bellshill) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many cases of COVID-19 have been reported by care homes in the (a) Uddingston and Bellshill constituency and (b) rest of the country.

(S5W-28253)

Jeane Freeman: This data is not reported by constituency area. The following data is routinely published: The Scottish Government currently publishes a range of information on daily basis on COVID 19 including testing, NHS Board data on the number of people in Scottish hospitals with either confirmed or suspected COVID-19 and management information such as number of 111 calls and NHS absences. National Records of Scotland (NRS) also publishes a report every Wednesday on COVID-19 related deaths with a breakdown of deaths by age, sex, setting (hospital, care home or home) and area (NHS Board area and Local Authority). It is updated every Wednesday.

From 22 April the Scottish Government published further management information about how the COVID-19 outbreak is affecting care homes. This includes the proportion and total number of adult care homes that have reported a suspected COVID-19 case at any time during this outbreak; the number and proportion of care homes that have current suspected cases; and the daily and cumulative number of suspected individual COVID-19 cases reported by care homes. This information is available 2pm daily on the Scottish Government website and can be found here:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-daily-data-forscotland/>

David Stewart (Highlands and Islands) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government, further to its updated guidance on personal protective equipment (PPE) on 2 April 2020 in response to the COVID-19 outbreak,

whether it will confirm (a) what types and (b) how many items of PPE have been supplied to community pharmacies.

(S5W-28254)

Jeane Freeman: All community pharmacies have been issued with 2 x boxes of 50 fluid resistant (type IIR) surgical facemasks in line with the updated Health Protection Scotland guidance on personal protective equipment (PPE). Advice accompanying the distribution of masks reiterates that masks should only be worn where 2 metres social distancing cannot be maintained, and every effort should be taken to maintain the 2 metres social distancing at all times. A dedicated telephone number has been established from Monday 20 April to allow community pharmacies to reorder facemasks.

Community pharmacies were also issued with 1 box of disposable gloves and 1 roll of disposable aprons for decontamination purposes where a patient or member of the public has spent time in a room whilst symptomatic with an infectious agent such as a respiratory pathogen.

David Stewart (Highlands and Islands) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what additional funding is being given to community pharmacies to support their enhanced role in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

(S5W-28255)

Jeane Freeman: In recognition of community pharmacy's response to the COVID19 pandemic we have provided additional financial support measures to ensure that the network is able to continue to operate safely and that those who need their medicines continue to get them.

I announced on 7 April 2020 initial funding of £5.580 million to support the unprecedented increase in dispensing activity, additional staff related costs and appropriate changes to premises to ensure members of staff and patients adhere to social distancing advice.

We continue to work with Community Pharmacy Scotland to ensure that a stable pharmacy network is able to provide access to patient medicines and advice. The Scottish Government will meet in full any necessary additional costs incurred by community pharmacies in supporting the NHS at this time.

Neil Findlay (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government for what reason officers from the Army and Royal Marines are advising NHS Lothian, and when it became aware that this was happening.

(S5W-28277)

Jeane Freeman: The military are standing members of local and regional resilience partnerships, alongside health boards and as such support local planning, training and exercising. They have also been providing specific planning support to NHS Lothian and other Health Boards since late March 2020. The Scottish Government were aware of this in advance.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how many ventilators it has ordered in response to the COVID-19 outbreak; (a) from where and (b) on what dates the orders were placed, and when the equipment is expected to arrive.

(S5W-28363)

Jeane Freeman: I refer the member to the answer to question S5W-28268 on 4 May 2020. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at <http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

Miles Briggs (Lothian) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government which NHS (a) wards, (b) respiratory wards and admission units (c) other facilities are not providing staff with full personal protective equipment (PPE) and for what reasons.

Holding answer issued: 05 May 2020

(S5W-28565)

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Lewis Macdonald (North East Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what discussions the Chief Scientist Office has had with counterparts elsewhere in the UK or internationally regarding development of a vaccine for COVID-19.

Holding answer issued: 05 May 2020

(S5W-28567)

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Daniel Johnson (Edinburgh Southern) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will provide urgent clarification on the shielding procedures for people who are deemed vulnerable to COVID-19 but not classified as "at risk".

Holding answer issued: 05 May

(S5W-28568)

2020

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Miles Briggs (Lothian) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many respirators have been available to staff in each NHS board.

Holding answer issued: 05 May

**(S5W-
28573)**

2020

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Miles Briggs (Lothian) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many staff are trained to care for a patient on a ventilator in each NHS board.

Holding answer issued: 05 May

**(S5W-
28574)**

2020

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Miles Briggs (Lothian) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many cases of hospital acquired (a) COVID-19, (b) MRSA and (c) C. diff have been recorded in each week since 1 January 2020.

Holding answer issued: 05 May

**(S5W-
28576)**

2020

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Miles Briggs (Lothian) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what representations it has made to UK Government ministers regarding the screening of people entering Scotland at airports.

Holding answer issued: 05 May

**(S5W-
28581)**

2020

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Miles Briggs (Lothian) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many COVID-19 tests have been carried out on care home (a) staff and (b) residents, broken down by NHS board.

Holding answer issued: 05 May

**(S5W-
28582)**

2020

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Miles Briggs (Lothian) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many eye protectors have been provided to (a) NHS and (b) social care staff in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Holding answer issued: 05 May

**(S5W-
28583)**

2020

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Miles Briggs (Lothian) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what personal protective equipment (PPE) has been provided to help support retirement and sheltered housing providers in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Holding answer issued: 05 May

**(S5W-
28584)**

2020

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Miles Briggs (Lothian) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what discussions it has had with the GMC regarding relaxing restrictions on retired medics being able to return to practice in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Holding answer issued: 05 May

**(S5W-
28586)**

2020

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Miles Briggs (Lothian) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what representations it has (a) made to and (b) received from the World Health Organization in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Holding answer issued: 05 May

**(S5W-
28591)**

2020

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Miles Briggs (Lothian) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many times its COVID-19 advisory has met and what it has discussed.

Holding answer issued: 05 May

**(S5W-
28601)**

2020

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Miles Briggs (Lothian) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what research its COVID-19 advisory group has carried out or plans on rates of infection and death from the virus among black and minority ethnic (BAME) people.

Holding answer issued: 05 May

**(S5W-
28602)**

2020

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Miles Briggs (Lothian) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what discussions it has had with the BMA, GMC and RCGP regarding the provision of exams for trainee GPs during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Holding answer issued: 05 May

(S5W-28604)

2020

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Miles Briggs (Lothian) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what plans are being developed to increase the capacity of elective surgery sites.

Holding answer issued: 05 May 2020

(S5W-28605)

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Miles Briggs (Lothian) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what plans it has to train COVID-19 contact tracers.

Holding answer issued: 05 May 2020

(S5W-28606)

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Joan McAlpine (South Scotland) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government what its response is to international evidence, including from the World Health Organization, which suggest that protective face masks can help prevent the wearer from spreading COVID-19.

Holding answer issued: 05 May 2020

(S5W-28609)

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Joan McAlpine (South Scotland) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government what information it has regarding what proportion of care workers have chosen to (a) wear and (b) not wear a protective mask in response to the COVID-19 outbreak on the basis of their own risk assessment since the four nations personal protective equipment (PPE) guidance was issued on 2 April 2020.

Holding answer issued: 05 May 2020

(S5W-28610)

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Joan McAlpine (South Scotland) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government what its position is on whether an asymptomatic care worker who has not been tested can make an accurate assessment that they are not carrying COVID-19.

Holding answer issued: 05 May

(S5W-28611)

2020

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Joan McAlpine (South Scotland) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether it agrees with table two of the four nations personal protective equipment (PPE) guidance in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, which was issued on 2 April 2020, which says that health and social care workers in the community need only wear a protective face mask if treating a person who has COVID-19 symptoms or is on the shielded list.

Holding answer issued: 05 May 2020

(S5W-28612)

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Joan McAlpine (South Scotland) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government what evaluation it has made of the ability of care workers to wear protective masks on the basis of self-assessed risk if this is not supported by their line managers.

Holding answer issued: 05 May 2020

(S5W-28613)

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Joan McAlpine (South Scotland) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government for what reason it has reportedly not instructed care workers who come within two metres of a vulnerable person to wear a protective mask in every instance, given that the rest of the population are obliged to stay two metres apart from each other in light of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Holding answer issued: 05 May 2020

(S5W-28615)

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Joan McAlpine (South Scotland) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government what information it has regarding how many vulnerable people received personal care from a worker not wearing a protective mask before the four nations personal protective equipment (PPE) guidance in response to the COVID-19 outbreak was updated on 2 April 2020 to allow individual self-assessment of risk.

Holding answer issued: 05 May 2020

(S5W-28616)

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Joan McAlpine (South Scotland) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government what information it has regarding how many vulnerable people receiving personal care might have contracted COVID-19 from a care worker not wearing a protective mask.

Holding answer issued: 05 May

**(S5W-
28617)**

2020

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Joan McAlpine (South Scotland) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether a vulnerable cared-for person, or their guardian if they do not have capacity, has a right to demand that the person caring for them wears a protective mask in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Holding answer issued: 05 May

**(S5W-
28618)**

2020

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Joan McAlpine (South Scotland) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government on what basis a care worker can self-assess that they do not need to wear a protective mask while administering care to a vulnerable person during the COVID-19 outbreak (a) given the reported rate of false negative test results and (b) if they have not been tested for the virus.

Holding answer issued: 05 May

**(S5W-
28620)**

2020

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Joan McAlpine (South Scotland) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether the testing it has announced for workers and residents in care homes will apply to all residential settings.

Holding answer issued: 05 May

(S5W-
28622)

2020

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Joan McAlpine (South Scotland) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government whether the testing it has announced for workers and residents in care homes will apply to (a) people receiving care in the community, including at home, and (b) disabled and other vulnerable people in supported accommodation.

Holding answer issued: 05 May

(S5W-
28623)

2020

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Neil Findlay (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how many patients who were previously categorised as delayed discharge patients have been discharged from hospital to make way for coronavirus capacity, and how many of them have been discharged (a) with and (b) without a care package in place.

Holding answer issued: 05 May

(S5W-
28626)

2020

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Monica Lennon (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what the daily absence rate of NHS staff has been each day in April 2020 for (a) COVID-19 and (b) non-COVID-19 reasons.

Holding answer issued: 05 May

(S5W-
28627)

2020

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Monica Lennon (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how many items had been stockpiled for a possible pandemic in January (a) 2016, (b) 2017, (c) 2018, (d) 2019 and (e) 2020.

Holding answer issued: 05 May

**(S5W-
28630)**

2020

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Monica Lennon (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether NHS staff who undertake overtime during the COVID-19 outbreak will be paid for the additional hours or be expected to take the time back in lieu.

Holding answer issued: 05 May

**(S5W-
28631)**

2020

Jeane Freeman: A holding answer was provided.

Neil Findlay (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government when personal protective equipment (PPE) for COVID-19 will be provided to all dental practices.

**(S5W-
28746)**

Joe FitzPatrick: NHS dental treatment is available to those with an acute dental problem, through 56 Urgent Dental Care Centres (UDCCs) across all Health Board areas. The UDCCs have been put in place in response to the initial closure of routine dental services on 23 March and ensure that the appropriate infection control measures and protective equipment are in place to deliver urgent dental care.

Dental practices have traditionally procured their personal protective equipment (PPE) through dental suppliers and not Health Boards, these supply chains are not currently in operation. The availability of Personal Protective Equipment and how this relates to clinical advice on safe working are critical to the decision making process about how NHS dental service may be extended in the coming period.

Jeremy Balfour (Lothian) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what plans it has to add people who have

undergone a splenectomy to the COVID-19 shielding list, in line with the position in England.

(S5W-28772)

Jeane Freeman: Since becoming aware that NHS England have been shielding splenectomy patients, the Interim Chief Medical Officer for Scotland and Interim Deputy Chief Medical Officer for Scotland engaged urgently with the UK Government, as the UK Chief Medical Officers have all agreed to seek consistency across the shielding list to support patients across the UK.

Following a meeting of the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable Group UK Clinical Review Panel on 29 April, and subsequent discussions with the other nations, the Interim Chief Medical Officer for Scotland and Interim Deputy Chief Medical Officer for Scotland agreed to include splenectomy patients in the 'highest risk' groups that require shielding.

We will, as a matter of urgency, issue letters to those affected and update guidance for GPs and clinicians.

Ministerial portfolio: Justice and the Law Officers

Liam McArthur (Orkney Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will provide regular updates on the prevalence of COVID-19 within the prison estate, and, if so, how often.

(S5W-28259)

Humza Yousaf: I have asked Teresa Medhurst, Interim Chief Executive of the Scottish Prison Service (SPS), to respond. Her response is as follows:

Testing for COVID-19 is undertaken by local NHS Health Boards, responsible for the delivery of healthcare at Scotland's prisons.

On a daily basis SPS publishes on our website:

- The number of people who are self-isolating in our prisons;
- The number of prisons that this total is held across; and
- The number of people in our care who have tested positive for COVID-19.

Liam McArthur (Orkney Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government what measures it has put in place to manage the shielding of people within the prison estate who it has advised should be during the COVID-19 outbreak.

(S5W-28261)

Humza Yousaf: I have asked Teresa Medhurst, Interim Chief Executive of the Scottish Prison Service (SPS), to respond. Her response is as follows:

NHS partners have identified those in our care who, as a result of underlying conditions, are placed at greater risk from COVID-19. NHS Boards have issued those identified with letters advising them that they should self-isolate for up to 12 weeks.

Where someone is advised that they should be shielding then they should be accommodated in a single room and their meals should be provided in their cell. They should continue to be given access to the phone and showers. However, these should be thoroughly cleaned prior to use.

SPS staff have been issued with information on how to identify those individuals who may be struggling to cope while in isolation. Self-help support leaflets for both those who live and work in our prisons have been issued and provide information and tools designed to assist people in maintaining good mental wellbeing during the pandemic. A range of innovative in-cell activities and means of family contact are also being progressed.

Liam McArthur (Orkney Islands) (Scottish Liberal Democrats): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will provide regular updates during the COVID-19 outbreak on staff absences within (a) Police Scotland, (b) the Scottish Prison Service and (c) the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service.

(S5W-28262)

Humza Yousaf: We are discussing with justice partner organisations how best to publish data on levels of staff absence during the COVID-19 pandemic, and anticipate providing an update on this topic in the near future. At this stage, the position regarding staff absence in Police Scotland, the Scottish Prison Service and the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service, as at 27 April, is as follows. Some care is advised in the interpretation of this information as organisations can have different ways of classifying staff absence within their own administrative systems.

(a) Police Scotland

On 27 April, a total of 1,926 Police Scotland staff (headcount), or approximately 8% of the workforce, were absent overall. A subset of this (1,122 staff or approximately 5% of the workforce) were absent due to a range of reasons related to COVID-19. The equivalent figures for the position on 23 March (the day when the 'lockdown' was announced) were 13% of the workforce being absent overall and 9% being absent for COVID-19 related reasons.

(b) Scottish Prison Service

On 27 April, a total of 876 Scottish Prison Service staff (headcount), or approximately 20% of the workforce, were absent overall. A subset of this (607 staff or approximately 14% of the workforce) were absent due to a range of reasons related to COVID-19. The equivalent figures for 23 March were 16% of the workforce being absent overall and 8% being absent for COVID-19 related reasons.

(c) Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service

On 27 April, a total of 264 Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service staff (full time equivalent), or approximately 15% of the workforce, were absent overall (due to all sickness absence types, carers leave and COVID-19 shielding). This compares to the position on 23 March when 19% of the workforce were absent.

Neil Findlay (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how many prisoners have tested positive or self-isolated due to COVID-19, broken down by prison.

(S5W-28638)

Humza Yousaf: I have asked Teresa Medhurst, Interim Chief Executive of the Scottish Prison Service (SPS), to respond. Her response is as follows:

The Scottish Prison Service publishes a daily update on the number of individuals self-isolating across our estate, as well as the current number of individuals who have tested positive. This information is published on the COVID page of our website.

As at 27 April 2020, there were 87 people self-isolating across 9 sites, 9 of whom have tested positive. This information is published on the COVID page of our website.

It is not possible to provide a breakdown by establishment levels, as in some instances, the numbers are so small that to provide this information may lead to indirect identification of individuals and their health status.

I can confirm that, as at 27 April 2020, there have been a total of 412 individuals who have required to self-isolate across all 15 of our establishments. Of this number, 27 have been confirmed to have had COVID-19. This has been across 7 establishments.

Neil Findlay (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government for what reason it considers Addiewell prison to reportedly have more prisoners testing positive or self-isolating than any other prison.

(S5W-28639)

Humza Yousaf: I have asked Teresa Medhurst, Interim Chief Executive of the Scottish Prison Service (SPS), to respond. Her response is as follows:

The reason for the variation in the level of people testing positive or selfisolating between different prisons is not immediately apparent at this stage. It is too early in the pandemic to draw any reliable comparisons.

The majority self-isolating in Addiewell prison are doing so on a precautionary basis and this is based on bespoke advice from NHS Lothian.

Ministerial portfolio: Rural Affairs and Tourism

Rachael Hamilton (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government (a) when it will implement and (b) how much funding it is allocating to each of the policies in its Agricultural Transformation Programme, and when it expects each policy goal to be achieved.

(S5W-28282)

Fergus Ewing: Options for the Agricultural Transformation Programme are continuing to be worked through and may need to respond to the evolving impacts of Covid-19. On-going work includes the feasibility of uptake, value for money and effective delivery to meet the desired outcome for delivering transformational change. Details of the Programme, including the funding allocations, are expected to be announced later this year. Some aspects of the Programme will involve immediate actions but the key policy purpose of the Programme is to promote long term change for the future.

Ministerial portfolio: Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity

Colin Smyth (South Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government, further to the First Minister's media briefing of 22 March 2020, on what date (a) P&O Ferries and (b) Stena Line restricted non-essential travellers from using passenger ferry services from Cairnryan.

(S5W-28598)

Paul Wheelhouse: The Scottish Government does not hold this information. P&O Ferries and Stena Line operate commercial ferry services connecting Scotland with Northern Ireland, including ensuring the movement of critical

category 1 goods and essential workers. Questions regarding specific operating criteria of the routes should be directed to the ferry operators.

Both ferry operators have implemented a number of measures to minimise the risks including intensifying the cleaning protocols on board their ships, and enforcing social distancing at terminal and onboard to protect staff and customers.

ORAL QUESTIONS ON 06 MAY 2020

Topical Questions

The following questions were asked:

1. **Alison Johnstone:** To ask the Scottish Government whether it plans to regularly test all staff and residents in care homes for COVID-19. ([S5T-02138](#))
2. **Monica Lennon:** To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has carried out of the impact of the lockdown on the mental and physical health of older people, in light of the views of the BMA and Royal College of GPs that age alone should not determine social distancing rules. ([S5T-02133](#))
3. **Graham Simpson:** To ask the Scottish Government when it will pass on £155 million in Barnett consequentials to councils. ([S5T-02130](#))
4. **Joan McAlpine:** To ask the Scottish Government how soon it will begin to test asymptomatic people in the community as part of its test, trace, isolate and support strategy. ([S5T-02136](#))
5. **Alex Rowley:** To ask the Scottish Government when recycling centres will be designated as an essential service and reopened. ([S5T-02144](#))

Oral answers can be found in the Official Report of proceedings [here](#).

Written Questions

Government Initiated Questions lodged on 05 May 2020

[S5W-28872](#) Maureen Watt: To ask the Scottish Government whether the go-live date for the transition from the Cattle Tracing System (CTS) to ScotEID in Summer 2020 will still be met.

Written questions lodged on 05 May 2020

[S5W-28835](#) Colin Smyth: To ask the Scottish Government how many staff are employed by South of Scotland Enterprise; what impact the COVID-19 outbreak has had on this number, and how many it expects will be in position by March 2021.

[S5W-28836](#) Colin Smyth: To ask the Scottish Government what impact the COVID-19 outbreak has had on the (a) establishment and (b) governance arrangements of South of Scotland Enterprise.

[S5W-28838](#) Colin Smyth: To ask the Scottish Government what support South of Scotland Enterprise will provide to small- and medium-sized enterprises to help reset, restart and recover from the COVID-19 outbreak.

[S5W-28839](#) Colin Smyth: To ask the Scottish Government whether it has considered or is considering issuing ministerial directions to the agency under Section 17 of the South of Scotland Enterprise Act 2019 in response to the impact of COVID-19 and, if so, for what purposes.

[S5W-28851](#) Donald Cameron: To ask the Scottish Government how much it would cost it to replicate the business grants system that has been put in place in England and Wales in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

[S5W-28852](#) Donald Cameron: To ask the Scottish Government how many business properties are eligible for additional grant funding worth up to 75% of the value of the first business support grant in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, and how many are claiming this.

[S5W-28853](#) Donald Cameron: To ask the Scottish Government how much it would cost to extend 100% business grant funding in response to the COVID-19 outbreak to additional properties eligible for business support grants.

[S5W-28855](#) Donald Cameron: To ask the Scottish Government what analysis it carried out before deciding to offer 75% grants for additional properties eligible for business support grants in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

[S5W-28857](#) David Stewart: To ask the Scottish Government whether it will introduce a programme of targeted lung (a) health checks and (b) cancer screening to support earlier diagnosis of conditions following the COVID-19 outbreak.

S5W-28858 David Stewart: To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of capacity in (a) radiology and (b) pathology to prevent delays in lung cancer diagnosis (i) during and (ii) following the COVID-19 outbreak.

S5W-28859 David Stewart: To ask the Scottish Government what the (a) timeline and (b) criteria will be for resuming cancer screening programmes following the COVID-19 outbreak.

S5W-28860 Stuart McMillan: To ask the Scottish Government what analysis it has carried out of the reasons why Inverclyde is recording the highest average level of COVID-19-related deaths among local authority areas.

S5W-28861 Stuart McMillan: To ask the Scottish Government what additional action it is taking to help reduce the number of COVID-19-related deaths in Inverclyde, in light of it recording the highest average level among local authority areas.

S5W-28862 Stuart McMillan: To ask the Scottish Government what discussions it has had with (a) NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde and (b) Inverclyde Council regarding Inverclyde recording the largest number of COVID-19-related deaths among local authority areas.

S5W-28863 Stuart McMillan: To ask the Scottish Government what additional messaging it plans to help reduce the level of COVID-19-related deaths among the older population, in light of reports that 74% of such deaths are among people over 75.

S5W-28864 Stuart McMillan: To ask the Scottish Government what additional COVID-19 testing will be carried out in Inverclyde, in light of it recording the highest level of COVID-19-related deaths among local authority areas.

S5W-28865 Stuart McMillan: To ask the Scottish Government how many people in Inverclyde have tested positive for COVID-19 but have recovered, broken down per NRS Scotland age category, and how this compares with the national average.

S5W-28866 Stuart McMillan: To ask the Scottish Government what additional funding it is providing to (a) public bodies, (b) third sector organisations and (c) volunteer groups in the Inverclyde to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak, in light of it recording the highest average level of COVID-19-related deaths among local authority areas.

S5W-28867 Stuart McMillan: To ask the Scottish Government what assistance it is providing to the care home sector in Inverclyde to reduce the number of COVID-19-related deaths.

S5W-28868 Stuart McMillan: To ask the Scottish Government what discussions it has had with (a) Police Scotland, (b) the Inverclyde Health and Social Care Partnership and (c) the retail sector regarding people's adherence in Inverclyde to the social distancing guidelines, in light of it

recording the highest average level of COVID-19-related deaths among local authority areas.

S5W-28869 Stuart McMillan: To ask the Scottish Government what its position is on whether stricter guidelines are required to help reduce the number of COVID-19-related deaths.

S5W-28870 Alex Cole-Hamilton: To ask the Scottish Government how many category (a) purple and (b) red ambulance callouts took more than 20 minutes to arrive at the incident in each (i) of the last three calendar years and (ii) month to date in 2020, and what proportion of the calls in these categories each represents, also broken down by NHS board.

S5W-28871 Alex Cole-Hamilton: To ask the Scottish Government how many category (a) purple and (b) red ambulance call-outs took more than (i) 8, (ii) 10, (iii) 15 and (iv) 20 minutes to arrive at the incident in each (A) of the last three calendar years and (B) month to date in 2020, and what proportion of the calls in these categories each represents.

S5W-28874 Neil Findlay: To ask the Scottish Government what its position is on the National Clinical Director's reported comment on *Channel 4 News* on 16 March 2020 that "we have absolutely adequate testing in Scotland".

S5W-28875 Bruce Crawford: To ask the Scottish Government what advice it is offering to cyclists regarding (a) safely accessing roads and pavements and (b) complying with the law and social distancing guidelines during the COVID-19 outbreak.

S5W-28876 Bruce Crawford: To ask the Scottish Government whether all road traffic legislation relating to cyclists' access to roads and pavements remains fully in place during the COVID-19 outbreak.

S5W-28890 Dean Lockhart: To ask the Scottish Government, following the report in *The Times* on 4 May 2020 that the sale of Glasgow Prestwick Airport has been delayed because of the COVID-19 outbreak, whether it will provide an update on the work to find a buyer for the airport, and what the implications for its budget would be of a delay or cancellation of any proposed sale.

S5W-28891 Alexander Burnett: To ask the Scottish Government what progress is being made with implementing the R100 high-speed broadband programme, and what additional work is being carried out to accelerate this to facilitate home (a) schooling and (b) working during the COVID-19 outbreak.

S5W-28892 Alex Cole-Hamilton: To ask the Scottish Government whether it will provide a breakdown by group of the 97,000 children who have been classified in its report on the impact of COVID-19, *Supporting Vulnerable Children and Young People*, as "vulnerable".

S5W-28894 Annie Wells: To ask the Scottish Government what the timeline will be for the full resumption of (a) bone infusions, (b) radiotherapy and (c) other cancer treatments following the end of the COVID-19 lockdown.

S5W-28897 David Stewart: To ask the Scottish Government whether it will consider discounting any periods of maternity leave in its assessments of self-employed women in each year since 2017 for COVID-19 self-employed business support, on the basis that the period of time away from work on maternity leave will reduce the average profits over the assessment period and consequently potentially reduce the amount of financial support that women receive.

Searching for questions and motions

While this report contains only questions and answers relating to COVID-19, answers to all parliamentary questions can be found in daily written answer reports, which are published [here](#).

All parliamentary questions and answers can also be searched for by keyword, MSP asking, Scottish Government Minister answering, as well as by date and other filters, through the advanced search function on the Parliament's website [here](#).