

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

Friday 15 May 2020

Written questions lodged on 15 May can be found on page 24 of this document.

There were no oral questions on 15 May.

ANSWERS TO PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS (Received on 15 May)

Ministerial portfolio: Communities and Local Government

Graham Simpson (Central Scotland) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government which organisations (a) have received and (b) will receive additional volunteers through the Ready Scotland scheme.

S5W-28469

Aileen Campbell: The 'Scotland Cares' Campaign has been a huge success and it is testament to the generosity and compassion of the people of Scotland that there are now over 77,000 sign-ups, from all across the country, to support the NHS, other public services and our local communities. Those sign-ups are in addition to the thousands of people who had already stepped forward, quickly and spontaneously, across the country, to help with the response to COVID 19, as soon as initial needs emerged.

Following 'sign-up' through the Ready Scotland website, the NHS recruitment campaign involves the relevant officials working with Health Boards and social care providers, to match applicants to placements. Offers of employment are being made across all Scottish Health and Social Care Partnerships. Please note that these are all paid positions.

'Scotland Cares' connects the British Red Cross and Volunteer Scotland schemes to local authority and third sector activity in communities, creating a pool of volunteers for local organisations to draw upon and deploy as required. Feedback from Local Authorities, Resilience Partnerships, and Third Sector Interface leads, confirms that local volunteering needs are currently being met for the organisations which require support. Although many of the volunteers who have signed up will not be needed immediately, they are likely to be critical in efforts to support and rebuild communities over the weeks and months to come.

Graham Simpson (Central Scotland) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what the processing time is

from individuals signing up to be a volunteer through the Ready Scotland scheme to them becoming an active volunteer for an organisation.

S5W-28467

Aileen Campbell: The ‘Scotland Cares’ Campaign has been a huge success and it is testament to the generosity and compassion of the people of Scotland that there are now over 77,000 sign-ups, from all across the country, to support the NHS, other public services and our local communities. Those sign-ups are in addition to the thousands of people who had already stepped forward, quickly and spontaneously, to help with the response to COVID 19, as soon as initial needs emerged.

Following ‘sign-up’ through the Ready Scotland website, the NHS recruitment campaign involves the relevant officials working with Health Boards and social care providers, to match applicants to placements. Offers of employment are being made across all Scottish Health and Social Care Partnerships, and processing times for that will vary, but the necessary occupational health and employment checks people normally have to undergo, which can take several weeks, are being streamlined as far as possible. The safety of patients, clients, and of staff themselves, must remain the highest priority, however, and inappropriate short cuts will not be taken. Please note that these are all paid positions.

The ‘Scotland Cares’ campaign also connects British Red Cross and Volunteer Scotland schemes to local authority and third sector activity in communities, creating a pool of volunteers for local organisations to draw upon and deploy as required. Feedback from Local Authorities, Resilience Partnerships, and Third Sector Interface leads, confirms that the volunteering needs of local organisations are being met in a timely way. Volunteers have been contacted to underline Ministers’ appreciation of their goodwill and desire to help, as well as to reassure them that, although many of the volunteers who have signed up will not be needed immediately, they are likely to be critical in efforts to support and rebuild communities over the weeks and months to come.

Graham Simpson (Central Scotland) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what the process is for assigning a Ready Scotland volunteer to a specific volunteering role, and how many people have been assigned specific roles since signing up to the scheme, broken down by the number of people assigned to each type of work.

S5W-28465

Aileen Campbell: The Ready Scotland campaign offers individuals three separate ways to offer their services—

1. To help the NHS, individuals are signposted towards the NHS Health & Social Care recruitment portal, for paid positions;

2. To help Public Services, individuals are directed towards the British Red Cross (BRC): Community Reserve Volunteer scheme;

3. To help Voluntary and Community organisations, individuals are directed towards the Volunteer Scotland (VS) recruitment website.

The 'Scotland Cares' Campaign is testament to the compassion and community spirit of the people of Scotland; there are now over 77,000 sign-ups, from all across the country, to support the NHS, other public services and local communities. Those sign-ups are in addition to the thousands of people who had already stepped forward, quickly and spontaneously, to help with the response to COVID 19, across the country, as soon as initial needs emerged and of course the many thousands already volunteering in their own communities.

Following 'sign-up' through the Ready Scotland website, the NHS recruitment campaign involves the relevant officials working with Health Boards and social care providers, to match applicants to placements. Offers of paid employment are being made across all Scottish Health and Social Care Partnerships with over 800 applicants available to be deployed and more than 3,700 NHS returners in the process of completing their pre-employment checks. Processing times for that will vary, depending on the necessary occupational health and employment checks people normally have to undergo. These are being streamlined as far as possible, but of course the safety of patients, clients, and of staff themselves, remains the highest priority.

The 'Scotland Cares' scheme connects British Red Cross and Volunteer Scotland schemes to local authority and third sector activity in communities, creating a pool of volunteers for local organisations to draw upon and deploy as required. As I have made clear through our communication with volunteers, many of the volunteers who have signed up will not be needed immediately and may be much more needed by organisations to support people and communities over the weeks and months to come. I have also expressed my gratitude to volunteers for their offers of help as we continue to counter the impacts of the pandemic.

The British Red Cross and Volunteer Scotland do not currently track individual volunteer journey times from sign up through to formal volunteering roles, within individual organisations, and to do so would be very resource intensive, therefore deployment timescales are not readily available. Feedback from Local Authorities, Resilience Partnerships, and Third Sector Interface leads, suggests that the volunteering needs of local organisations are being met.

BRC have though put in place new systems to capture the roles the Response Volunteers are being asked to do, and record how many are

assisting, across the country. The system involves use of smartphone apps to alert and match volunteers to particular local needs, enabling the requisite number of sign ups, as well as signposting to further details of the task and the next steps to be taken. A new BRC dashboard developed to provide statistics and measure usage, has recorded that, since 13 April, 241 Community Reserve Volunteers have been deployed across the three (East, West and North) Resilience Partnership areas. The roles undertaken include: food-parcel distribution, shopping assistance, medicine delivery and making welfare calls.

Graham Simpson (Central Scotland) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many people are signed up to the Ready Scotland volunteer scheme, and how many are currently in a volunteering role.

S5W-28463

Aileen Campbell: As at the week ending Friday 01 May, there were 77,057 sign-ups to the Ready Scotland volunteer scheme, the breakdown is provided in the following table—

Date	NHS Health & Social Care	British Red Cross	Volunteer Scotland	Total
Fri 1-05-20	23,101	18,695	35,261	77,057

Following sign-up through the Ready Scotland website, the NHS Health and Social Care recruitment campaign involves both NHS Education for Scotland officials working with Health Boards, and the Scottish Social Services Council working with social care providers, to match applicants to placements. Offers of employment are being made across all Scottish Health and Social Care Partnerships with nearly 700 applicants ready to be deployed and more than 3,600 NHS returners in the process of completing their pre-employment checks. Please note that these are all paid positions.

The new British Red Cross deployment recording process has confirmed that, since 13 April, 112 Community Reserve Volunteers have been deployed across the East, West and North Resilience Partnership areas. Volunteer Scotland do not currently track individual volunteer journeys from sign up through to formal volunteering roles, so those figures are not readily available. It should be noted that thousands of individuals were already volunteering in their communities before the launch of the ‘Scotland Cares’ campaign.

The ‘Scotland Cares’ campaign connects British Red Cross and Volunteer Scotland schemes to local authority and third sector activity in communities, creating a pool of volunteers for local organisations to draw upon and deploy as required. Although many of the volunteers who have signed up will not be needed immediately, they may well be critical in efforts to support and rebuild communities over the weeks and months to come.

Stuart McMillan (Greenock and Inverclyde) (Scottish National Party): 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-28866

Aileen Campbell: As advised by the First Minister on 6 May, following the outbreak of Coronavirus in Scotland the Scottish Government allocated Inverclyde Council £749,000 in hardship funding and £500,000 from the food fund. An additional £447,000 has been allocated in respect of the Scottish Welfare Fund, bringing total funding available to date to £1.3 million.

£125 million of funding has also been committed to support third sector and community efforts across Scotland, and Inverclyde is benefitting from this.

From our Supporting Communities Fund we have awarded £40,000 to Inverclyde Community Development Trust and £140,000 to Oak Tree Housing Association, helping them respond to community needs.

Assessment of applications to the first round of the Wellbeing Fund is almost complete. At this stage, Inverclyde is benefitting from 22 projects approved for support and almost £230,000 of funding. Applications for the second round of funding are being invited by noon on Friday 22nd of May.

Ministerial portfolio: Economy, Fair Work and Culture

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether business interruption insurance policies that specify that local authorities must notify businesses of closure in the event of pandemics are satisfied by the actions it has taken to tackle the COVID-19 outbreak.

S5W-28805

Fiona Hyslop: Businesses that have had to close have quite rightly looked to their insurance provider for help and it is disappointing to hear that many businesses continue to be unsuccessful in making a claim. Scottish Ministers are engaging regularly with the industry and have made clear our expectation that they do everything they reasonably can to support businesses and citizens at this difficult time.

On 1 May, the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) announced it intends to seek legal clarity on business interruption insurance to resolve doubt for businesses who are facing uncertainty on their claims. The FCA will bring to court key relevant cases, carefully chosen to offer a representative sample of the most frequently used policy wordings that are giving rise to uncertainty.

This may include clauses of the kind you refer to. Ministers will be following the outcome of these proceedings closely.

Ministerial portfolio: Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will prioritise the re-opening of the local authority-run recycling centres that were closed due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

S5W-28824

Roseanna Cunningham: Local Authorities are responsible for recycling centres and need to consider several factors before reopening them. These include the ability to operate sites safely, ensuring physical distancing is maintained and discouraging the public from making unnecessary journeys.

As the First Minister indicated on 10 May, we are looking at the possibility of reopening waste and recycling centres. We are working closely with Cosla and local authorities on this issue and will provide a further update on those discussions in the near future.

Daniel Johnson (Edinburgh Southern) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what guidance it has issued to local authorities regarding waste uplift and recycling during the COVID-19 outbreak.

S5W-28334

Roseanna Cunningham: The Scottish Government has been working closely with COSLA, Local Government and partners from across the waste industry through our Waste and Resources Sector Forum to identify pressures that have arisen as a result of the Covid-19 outbreak and to ensure resilience across the sector. We have recognised that for the duration of the impact of the pandemic some temporary reductions or suspensions of waste and recycling services may be necessary.

We have set out expectations for service prioritisation through this Forum, with a particular focus on measures to maintain public health and support and sustain statutory waste collection and disposal services. Local authorities have been actively prioritising services taking account of key principles discussed at the Forum and in light of well-established local business continuity plans.

We are continuing to work closely with COSLA and local authorities on key issues and are keeping under review the need for any further guidance in relation to waste and recycling services.

Ministerial portfolio: Health and Sport

Monica Lennon (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what assumptions and modelling were made and reviewed regarding the distribution of the national influenza pandemic stockpiles between the completion of its training exercise, Silver Swan, in 2015 and January 2020, and how often it reviewed its frameworks in pandemic preparedness during this period to ensure that the lessons learned during the exercise were incorporated.

S5W-28636

Joe FitzPatrick: A point was raised through Exercise Silver Swan regarding assumptions on whether deliveries to NHS Boards would be to central locations or a wider range of delivery points. NHS National Services Scotland core approach to pandemic distribution has remained the same since 2015, in that it is based on delivery to single or multiple points depending on the size and infrastructure of the individual NHS Board.

During the exercise event there was a point raised around modelling allocations to Boards during a pandemic; specifically whether these would be based on proportionate population based allocations or other approaches. NHS National Services Scotland have continued to base their approach on initial allocations to Boards largely based on population size. Subsequent allocations are based on the individual needs of the Board.

Monica Lennon (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what improvements and changes were made to community and national influenza pandemic preparedness between the completion of its training exercise, Silver Swan, in 2015 and January 2020, and on what dates pandemic response plans were (a) reviewed and (b) updated during this period to ensure that the lessons learned during the exercise were incorporated.

S5W-28632

Joe FitzPatrick: A range of improvements and changes were made to local and national influenza pandemic preparedness arrangements since the multi-agency exercise Silver Swan in 2015 and up to January 2020. These are reflected in documents relevant to a pandemic response which have been updated during that period, including:

- Local and regional pandemic response plans which have been kept under review and updated at various points since 2015
- The NHS Standards for Organisational Resilience were published in 2016 and reviewed in 2018

- Guidance on dealing with mass fatalities in Scotland was revised in 2017
- Good Practice Guidance For Setting Up And Managing Body Storage Facilities was issued in 2017
- Guidance on death certification during a pandemic was revised in 2017
- The Scottish Risk Assessment was issued in 2018
- National pandemic response and guidance documentation for health and social care was updated and issued for consultation in 2019.
- Pandemic Influenza Guidance for Infection Prevention and Control was updated in 2019
- Pandemic Influenza Communications Guidance was issued to stakeholders in Scotland in 2019

Anas Sarwar (Glasgow) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what advice it offers on the prescribing of graded exercise therapy to people who are diagnosed with ME, and what impact the COVID-19 outbreak is having on access to this.

S5W-28899

Joe FitzPatrick: I refer the member to the answer to question S5W-28898 on 15 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>.

Anas Sarwar (Glasgow) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what support it provides to people who are diagnosed with ME, and what impact the COVID-19 outbreak is having on access to this.

S5W-28898

Joe FitzPatrick: The Scottish Good Practice Statement (SGPS) on ME/CFS provides information to assist professionals and members of the public with the diagnosis and treatment of this condition at: <https://www.scot.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/GoodPracticeStatement.pdf>

Last year we published a National Framework 'Neurological Care and Support in Scotland 2020-2025' that sets out an overview of current provision informed by lived experience engagement nationally with 17 commitments across five aims detailing how we will work with stakeholders and partners to drive improvement in health and social care from diagnosis to anticipatory care planning needs. Further information is available at

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/neurological-care-support-scotland-framework-action-2020-2025/>. While this is not condition specific, it defines neurological conditions in line with the World Health Organisation and ICD-10 classification codes of which ME is included.

The findings from two projects we are currently undertaking with the Scottish Health Council and Public Health Scotland, coupled with the forthcoming updated National Institute for Health and Care Excellence's guideline that takes account of latest evidence, will inform developments in care and support for ME/CFS in Scotland.

We are committed to ensuring people receive the correct information about the level of risk to them if they become infected by COVID-19 and what actions they should take to protect themselves if they are classed as at the highest risk of severe illness from the virus. We have published advice for people with long-term health conditions, including neurological conditions, at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-tailored-advice-for-those-who-live-with-specific-medical-conditions/>. The guidance has been widely circulated to clinicians, organisations supporting people with neurological conditions, including ME/CFS, for them to disseminate through their networks.

We have been clear that patient safety remains the utmost priority and NHS Scotland continues to deal with urgent non-Covid related referrals as well as providing on-going essential care provision. NHS Boards have mobilised their activity including the use of telephone and video consultations to minimise face to face contact unless absolutely necessary. The Chief Nursing Officer in Scotland has also written to NHS Board Nurse Directors to ensure they prioritise community support for the most vulnerable people to enable them to manage their conditions and remain in their own homes. We continue to work with NHS Boards and Integrated Joint Boards alongside the wider neurological community to understand and address the emerging implications from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Anas Sarwar (Glasgow) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government how many people with (a) chronic lymphocytic leukaemia, (b) myeloproliferative neoplasms and (c) other blood cancers have received a letter from (i) the Chief Medical Officer and (ii) their local clinical care team asking them to shield at home for 12 weeks from the COVID-19 outbreak.

S5W-28757

Joe FitzPatrick: The Scottish Government does not hold the specific breakdown of information requested. In total, there were 20,883 individuals on the shielding list that were requested to shield as part of the bloods cancers category the question refers to. This figure excludes non-Scottish residents. A specialist group of Haematologists in Scotland convened to further inform which patients should be considered at high risk. This work concluded on 14th April.

Miles Briggs (Lothian) (Scottish Conservatives and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what plans it is making to allow the safe reopening of independent podiatry services.

S5W-28750

Joe FitzPatrick: We are considering how best to bring all services back on stream, but in doing so we must be very careful that we do not do anything that might compromise the fragile gains that we are making in containing Covid-19.

We recently published '[COVID-19: A Framework for Decision Making](#)' which sets out the challenges we face and how we will approach them. However, our priority at this time is to preserve life and reduce harm.

The current restrictions remain in place and we need to stick with them for now, in order to be able to relax things in future. Independent podiatrists who are still practicing should continue to adhere to national Covid-19 guidance and the guidance produced by their professional bodies.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of the impact of COVID-19 by area of deprivation.

S5W-28719

Joe FitzPatrick: Public Health Scotland include deprivation analysis by Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) in their new weekly COVID-19 statistical reports. The first of these reports was published on Wednesday 6th May.

<https://publichealthscotland.scot/our-areas-of-work/sharing-our-data-and-intelligence/coronavirus-covid-19-data/>.

National Records of Scotland (NRS) will publish a report which examines COVID-19 deaths by Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) in mid-May.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of the impact of COVID-19 on black and minority ethnic (BAME) people.

S5W-28718

Joe FitzPatrick: The Scottish Government is concerned by recent reports (from England and the US) suggesting that minority ethnic communities are disproportionately affected by Covid-19.

Collection of ethnicity data is undertaken on a voluntary basis in Scotland in order to provide useful information for medical and other research purposes.

Ethnicity questions are included in the death registration process, with informants to a death provided with a short statement as to their purpose, and noting that these questions, unlike the rest of the death registration process, are not statutory, and can be passed over if the informant does not wish to answer them.

More information on the quality of the data on ethnicity can be found on the NRS website via the following link:

<https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/vital-events/deaths/deaths-background-information/ethnicity-of-the-deceased-person>

Analytical partners across the Scottish Government, NRS, Public Health Scotland and the NHS are working together to consider how we can better understand the impact of COVID-19 on those from all minority ethnic communities including from Black and Asian backgrounds. This data will be published when work is completed.

Neil Bibby (West Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what support it provides to NHS boards to ensure that people with epilepsy can access specialist neurological practitioners, and what impact the COVID-19 outbreak is having on this.

S5W-28927

Joe FitzPatrick: Last year we published a National Framework 'Neurological Care and Support in Scotland 2020-2025' that sets out an overview of current provision informed by lived experience engagement nationally with 17 commitments across five aims detailing how we will work with stakeholders and partners to drive improvement in health and social care from diagnosis to anticipatory care planning needs. Further information is available at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/neurological-care-support-scotland-framework-action-2020-2025/>

This National Framework builds on support already available to NHS Boards through the Specialist Nursing and Care Fund that invests £2.4 million annually to enhance the specialist nursing care for people living with a range of conditions across the life spectrum and across hospital and community settings. As of May 2017, reports from NHS boards show that specialist nursing capacity had been enhanced through the additional investment by 31.4 whole time equivalents (WTE).

We are committed to ensuring people receive the correct information about the level of risk to them if they become infected by COVID-19 and what actions they should take to protect themselves if they are classed as at the highest risk of severe illness from the virus. We have published advice for people with long-term health conditions, including neurological conditions, at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-tailored-advice-for-those-who-live-with-specific-medical-conditions/>. The guidance has been widely circulated to clinicians, organisations supporting people with

neurological conditions, including Epilepsy Scotland, for them to disseminate through their networks.

We have been clear that patient safety remains the utmost priority and NHS Scotland continues to deal with urgent non-Covid related referrals as well as providing on-going essential care provision. NHS Boards have mobilised their activity including protecting critical neurological services and establishing mechanisms to support their local population including the use of telephone and video consultations to minimise face to face contact unless absolutely necessary.

The Chief Nursing Officer in Scotland has also written to NHS Board Nurse Directors to ensure they prioritise community support for the most vulnerable people to enable them to manage their conditions and remain in their own homes.

We continue to work with NHS Boards and Integrated Joint Boards alongside the wider neurological community to understand and address the emerging implications from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Oliver Mundell (Dumfriesshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government, in light of the COVID-19 outbreak, whether people can still access regular vitamin B12 injections.

S5W-28941

Joe FitzPatrick: Saving lives is at the forefront of the Government's response and in the interests of patients' safety, healthcare professionals have been re-deployed to provide critical care to seriously ill people and the risk of spreading infection has been minimised by restricting General Practitioner (GP)/ hospital visits for non-urgent appointments. The British Society for Haematology (BSH) has recently published guidance on B12 treatment - <https://b-s-h.org.uk/media/18275/bsh-guidance-b12-replacement-covid-1901052020finalv.pdf>. This advises that GPs should use their clinical judgement to consider if changes are appropriate during the pandemic and to discuss and agree a personalised plan with individual patients that are affected. This may be to decrease the frequency of injections to minimise visits to GP practices or hospitals. Alternatively, there are situations where it is possible for people to self-inject hydroxocobalamin if their GP or health professional agree this would be suitable.

Neil Bibby (West Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what action it is taking, alongside the Neurological Conditions National Action Plan, to improve the lives of people with epilepsy, and what impact the COVID-19 outbreak is having on this.

S5W-28930

Joe FitzPatrick: I refer the member to the answer to question S5W-28927 on 15 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>.

Neil Bibby (West Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what the (a) referral and (b) treatment waiting times are in each NHS board area for people with epilepsy, and what impact the COVID-19 outbreak is having on this.

S5W-28929

Joe FitzPatrick: The data for epilepsy referral and treatment waiting times are reported within the wider Neurology speciality. The most recent published data for the quarter ending 31 December 2019 is available from the Public Health Scotland website at: <https://beta.isdscotland.org/find-publications-and-data/healthcare-resources/waiting-times/nhs-waiting-times-stage-of-treatment/>. The data for the quarter ending 31 March 2020 will not be published until 26 May 2020.

We have been clear that throughout this unprecedented and difficult time that vital services will remain in line with clinical priority and that some scheduled non-urgent procedures and care will be postponed to ensure other, seriously ill people can be treated and cared for. We expect NHS Boards to reschedule appointments as soon as clinically appropriate or advise of alternative arrangements where possible to minimise physical contact, including the use of telephone and video consultations facilities.

Anas Sarwar (Glasgow) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what consideration it is giving to possible increases in post-viral fatigue as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.

S5W-28900

Joe FitzPatrick: Some degree of post-viral fatigue is fairly common after a viral infection. We need to understand more about COVID-19 in particular to better know how to prevent infection, how to treat people that contract it and how to support people afterwards during rehabilitation and the longer term affects. Working with partners across the UK, Scotland is leading, enabling and delivering world-class COVID-19 research, a key element of the Government's overall response to the pandemic. Scotland forms part of a single national UK process led by the National Institute for Health Research and draws on expert advice to prioritise time critical COVID-19 studies, which hold the most potential for tackling the challenges faced (<https://www.nihr.ac.uk/covid-studies/>). In addition, the Chief Scientist Office is funding 55 rapid research projects to better understand the effects of infection in order to inform and improve treatment and consequences of the virus. Further information is available at <https://www.cso.scot.nhs.uk/rarc19projects/>.

Miles Briggs (Lothian) (Scottish Conservatives and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many people who have been asked to

shield at home from the COVID-19 outbreak are receiving immunosuppression therapies that might significantly increase their risk of infection.

S5W-28922

John Swinney: It is not possible to provide information on the exact reasons why individuals have been asked to shield within each specific shielding group as this is not recorded in the list of people who have been asked to shield.

The following table provides information on the number of individuals who have been asked to shield categorised by shielding group. Individuals who fall within more than one shielding group are counted under each group but only once in the overall total.

Number of individuals on the Shielding list by shielding group (as at 11 May 2020)

Shielding group	On shielding list
1 (Transplant)	6635
2 (Cancer)	20984
3 (Respiratory)	79708
4 (Rare disease)	10553
5 (Immunosuppression)	38153
6 (Pregnant with heart disease)	56
7 (Individual clinician judgment)	41704
Total (number of individuals)	174937

Source: Public Health Scotland

Notes:

The same individual may be counted in one or more of the shielding groups.

There may be variation, across Health Boards, in the way that patients in group 7 are identified.

Individuals are categorised as group 7 if no other group is specified.

Group 7 also includes patients who are receiving renal dialysis treatment.

Figures exclude individuals with an unknown area of residence and those recorded as outwith Scotland.

Figures exclude individuals who have died and those flagged for removal from the shielding list. Individuals may be flagged for removal for a number of reasons including false positive identification, having moved away or no longer requiring to shield following discussion with a clinician.

Miles Briggs (Lothian) (Scottish Conservatives and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many pregnant women are being asked to shield at home from the COVID-19 outbreak, also broken down by how many have (a) (i) congenital and (ii) acquired heart conditions and (b) other underlying health conditions, broken down by type.

S5W-28923

John Swinney: It is not possible to provide information on the exact reasons why individuals have been asked to shield within each specific shielding group as this is not recorded in the list of people who have been asked to shield.

The following table provides information on the number of individuals who have been asked to shield categorised by shielding group. Individuals who fall within more than one shielding group are counted under each group but only once in the overall total.

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Figures exclude individuals with an unknown area of residence and those recorded as outwith Scotland.

Figures exclude individuals who have died and those flagged for removal from the shielding list. Individuals may be flagged for removal for a number of reasons including false positive identification, having moved away or no longer requiring to shield following discussion with a clinician.”

Miles Briggs (Lothian) (Scottish Conservatives and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what support it routinely provides to unpaid carers, and whether it plans to increase this during the COVID-19 outbreak.

S5W-28700

Joe FitzPatrick: The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 has established a system of carers' rights designed to listen to carers; improve consistency of support; and help sustain caring relationships by protecting carers' health and wellbeing. This includes each carer's right to a personalised plan to identify what is important to them and set out any support they might need.

Ministers and COSLA have written to local authorities encouraging them to prioritise additional carer support in their local plans for responding to the pandemic. This is on top of the extra £11.6 million for carer support in the 2020-21 budget.

We are working alongside key organisations to ensure carers have the advice they need to help protect themselves and their loved ones during the COVID-19 outbreak, as well as advice on how to access support and changes to carers' benefits carers. We have also established a £500,000 fund to help local carer services adapt to providing advice and emotional support remotely. This includes advice on accessing personal protective equipment (PPE). We have also made changes to our £3 million Short Breaks Fund so that carers can access breaks that are suitable at this time.

We support around 80,000 unpaid carers in Scotland with Carer's Allowance and Carer's Allowance Supplement. Through the Coronavirus (Scotland) Bill 2, we propose to make an extra payment of £230.10 to Carer's Allowance recipients in Scotland this June, on top of Carer's Allowance Supplement.

We understand that many carers are under additional emotional pressure at present. We have provided an additional £3.8 million to begin to increase the capacity of NHS 24's telephone and online services, including making the NHS 24 Mental Health Hub available 24/7 and expanding the Breathing Space helpline and web support service.

A webpage has been published on the Scottish Government website which provides specific information for unpaid carers during the COVID-19 outbreak: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-unpaid-carers/>.

Neil Findlay (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what targets it has set for testing for COVID-19 each week since 1 February 2020, and how it has performed against each target.

S5W-28422

Jeane Freeman: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Neil Bibby (West Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether doctors will attend non-COVID-19 medical cases that arise in care homes.

S5W-28423

Jeane Freeman: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S5W-27952 by Jeane Freeman on 15 April 2020, when sampling of COVID-19 started.

S5W-28442

Jeane Freeman: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Jackie Baillie (Dumbarton) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S5W-27952 by Jeane Freeman on 15 April 2020, how many samples have been taken each week; what this confirms about prevalence, and when it will publish prevalence data.

S5W-28443

Jeane Freeman: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Alasdair Allan (Na h-Eileanan an Iar) (Scottish National Party): To ask the Scottish Government when the necessary components will be delivered to NHS Western Isles to ensure that tests for COVID-19 can be processed within the islands rather than sent to the mainland.

S5W-28450

Jeane Freeman: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Rachael Hamilton (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what action it took to ensure that care homes and nursing homes were provided with adequate personal protective equipment (PPE) at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

S5W-28451

Jeane Freeman: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Rachael Hamilton (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what guidance it issued to local authorities on limiting the transmission of COVID-19 in care homes and nursing homes at the start of the pandemic.

S5W-28452

Jeane Freeman: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Rachael Hamilton (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what

guidance has been issued by local authorities to care homes and nursing homes on the provision of personal protective equipment (PPE).

S5W-28453

Jeane Freeman: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Rachael Hamilton (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government what correspondence the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport has had with the relevant representatives of care homes and nursing homes during the COVID-19 pandemic.

S5W-28454

Jeane Freeman: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Rachael Hamilton (Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many personal protective equipment (PPE) kits were ordered specifically for use in care homes and nursing homes in response to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

S5W-28455

Jeane Freeman: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Graham Simpson (Central Scotland) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government how many volunteers have been assigned to directly assist the NHS through the Ready Scotland volunteer scheme.

S5W-28468

Jeane Freeman: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Neil Findlay (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will hold a public inquiry into the handling of the COVID-19 outbreak.

S5W-28801

Jeane Freeman: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Neil Findlay (Lothian) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will introduce a public holiday as mark of respect for the people who lost their lives during the COVID-19 crisis, and in recognition of the contribution of workers at this time.

S5W-28806

Jeane Freeman: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Monica Lennon (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government when it will publish the data being collected through the community surveillance testing programme for COVID-19.

S5W-28810

Jeane Freeman: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Monica Lennon (Central Scotland) (Scottish Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what data is being used for calculating or estimating the R number for COVID-19 in communities.

S5W-28811

Jeane Freeman: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Ministerial portfolio: Justice and the Law Officers

Liam Kerr (North East Scotland) (Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party): To ask the Scottish Government for what reason police officers who are asymptomatic but attend incidents where there is a high risk of exposure to COVID-19 are reportedly not being tested for the virus.

S5W-28818

Jeane Freeman: I shall reply to the member as soon as possible.

Ministerial portfolio: Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity

Mark Ruskell (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Scottish Green Party): To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S5W-28294 by Michael Matheson on 30 April 2020, how many vehicle trips it estimates have been made on each day since 9 March 2020, broken down by the percentage of vehicles making these trips that it estimates travelled above the speed limit on (a) roads managed by Transport Scotland and (b) other roads.

S5W-28830

Michael Matheson: As I noted in my answer to S5W-28294, Transport Scotland maintains a number of automatic traffic count sites across the motorway and trunk road network that are able to record vehicle speeds. The following table presents the answer to part (a) the total recorded number of vehicles that passed this group of sites from 9 March 2020 up to 07 May 2020. In addition, the table also reports the number of vehicles that were recorded as travelling over the speed limit and as a proportion of the total vehicles.

With regard to part (b) of the question, the Scottish Government does not hold this information. The collection and collation of speed data on other roads in Scotland is the responsibility of the respective 32 local authorities. Any

specific requests for such data should therefore be directed to the relevant local authority.

I would further note that the additional data presented in this response continues to show that since the COVID-19 lockdown was announced on the 23 March, the proportion of vehicles recorded over the speed limit has risen, while the actual number of vehicles observed speeding has fallen by approximately 50% compared with a typical weekday or weekend prior to COVID-19 restrictions being introduced.

Table: Response to part (a) Vehicles over the Speed Limit on roads managed by Transport Scotland

Date	Total recorded vehicles (at sites where data was available)	Number of vehicle movements over the speed limit	Proportion of vehicle movements over the speed limit
09-03-2020	1,528,929	300,470	19.7%
10-03-2020	1,547,452	312,407	20.2%
11-03-2020	1,559,566	314,360	20.2%
12-03-2020	1,564,448	299,124	19.1%
13-03-2020	1,606,097	384,164	23.9%
14-03-2020	1,166,771	336,332	28.8%
15-03-2020	1,042,651	297,450	28.5%
16-03-2020	1,431,085	296,135	20.7%
17-03-2020	1,359,666	276,409	20.3%
18-03-2020	1,341,195	313,061	23.3%
19-03-2020	1,345,437	323,522	24.0%
20-03-2020	1,356,171	342,792	25.3%
21-03-2020	902,376	271,477	30.1%
22-03-2020	776,166	239,532	30.9%
23-03-2020	1,090,990	289,940	26.6%
24-03-2020	803,308	226,453	28.2%
25-03-2020	633,380	175,697	27.7%

26-03-2020	589,997	158,421	26.9%
27-03-2020	573,025	162,939	28.4%
28-03-2020	322,254	98,542	30.6%
29-03-2020	270,126	79,468	29.4%
30-03-2020	517,039	149,108	28.8%
31-03-2020	530,146	152,681	28.8%
01-04-2020	532,787	154,942	29.1%
02-04-2020	535,028	154,754	28.9%
03-04-2020	556,168	170,071	30.6%
04-04-2020	335,472	108,830	32.4%
05-04-2020	273,387	90,734	33.2%
06-04-2020	528,218	153,462	29.1%
07-04-2020	540,414	160,820	29.8%
08-04-2020	551,759	166,432	30.2%
09-04-2020	568,367	169,019	29.7%
10-04-2020	497,763	162,433	32.6%
11-04-2020	332,285	109,498	33.0%
12-04-2020	256,464	87,412	34.1%
13-04-2020	392,037	125,101	31.9%
14-04-2020	547,055	163,160	29.8%
15-04-2020	561,405	170,333	30.3%
16-04-2020	569,542	173,280	30.4%
17-04-2020	578,703	183,008	31.6%
18-04-2020	369,127	122,672	33.2%

19-04-2020	311,722	105,787	33.9%
20-04-2020	575,655	173,821	30.2%
21-04-2020	587,684	175,720	29.9%
22-04-2020	600,393	182,072	30.3%
23-04-2020	613,779	188,777	30.8%
24-04-2020	624,363	198,912	31.9%
25-04-2020	400,861	136,473	34.0%
26-04-2020	338,994	111,982	33.0%
27-04-2020	600,773	180,156	30.0%
28-04-2020	617,454	185,149	30.0%
29-04-2020	623,926	183,284	29.4%
30-04-2020	640,638	193,722	30.2%
01-05-2020	652,740	205,004	31.4%
02-05-2020	430,369	141,547	32.9%
03-05-2020	363,890	120,441	33.1%
04-05-2020	618,414	179,945	29.1%
05-05-2020	661,830	197,008	29.8%
06-05-2020	672,190	202,531	30.1%
07-05-2020	673,977	205,908	30.6%

Bruce Crawford (Stirling) (Scottish National Party): 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-28876

Michael Matheson: All road traffic legislation relating to cyclists' access to roads and pavements in Scotland remains fully in place during the period of measures to tackle the COVID-19 outbreak.

Bruce Crawford (Stirling) (Scottish National Party): 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-28875

Michael Matheson: The primary source of guidance to all road users in Scotland, including cyclists, remains the Highway Code. This sets out all legal obligations for cyclists, as well as advice on safe practices. The Code encourages cyclists to be considerate of other users and to clearly indicate their intentions to other road users. There are now additional challenges as a result of physical distancing measures to help prevent the spread of the COVID-19 outbreak, and we therefore encourage all road users to be extra vigilant during these times.

Road Safety Scotland (RSS) is encouraging all road users to help reduce the strain on the emergency services during the coronavirus pandemic by taking extra care when making essential journeys. These messages are posted regularly on RSS and Transport Scotland social media channels.

Scottish Ministers have also provided additional guidance regarding physical distancing on the Scottish Government website and Transport Scotland delivery partners have been active on social media and other channels amplifying those messages. The guidance can be accessed at the following location: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others/>

Written questions lodged on 15 May 2020

(Expected answer date 2 June 2020)

S5W-29072 Daniel Johnson: To ask the Scottish Government how many people who have been identified as (a) vulnerable, (b) clinically vulnerable and (c) clinically extremely vulnerable to COVID-19 and should shield from the virus have been issued with a letter informing them of this.

S5W-29073 Daniel Johnson: To ask the Scottish Government how many people who have been identified as (a) vulnerable, (b) clinically vulnerable and (c) clinically extremely vulnerable to COVID-19 and are shielding from the virus have indicated that they do not require assistance with access to food supplies and/or other essentials.

S5W-29074 Daniel Johnson: To ask the Scottish Government what analysis it has carried of the capacity of the dedicated local authority phone lines that have been set up to provide support for people who are vulnerable to COVID-19 and are shielding from the virus with getting access to the food supplies and/or other essentials that they require.

S5W-29077 Neil Findlay: To ask the Scottish Government for what reason the Gartnavel COVID-19 testing centre was closed at a time when concerns were reportedly being raised by care home staff that they were passing on the virus to residents, some of whom subsequently died.

S5W-29078 Neil Findlay: To ask the Scottish Government whether the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport was advised of the closure of the Gartnavel COVID-19 testing centre before it happened, and what her position on its closure was.

S5W-29086 Claudia Beamish: To ask the Scottish Government whether it will provide an update on its discussions with local authorities regarding the reopening of recycling centres as a means of addressing issues relating to fly tipping across Scotland, particularly in rural areas and on farmland.

S5W-29087 Rachael Hamilton: To ask the Scottish Government whether, in its next review of lockdown restrictions, it will consider allowing for angling that is local to home and socially distanced.

S5W-29097 Daniel Johnson: To ask the Scottish Government how many people who have been identified as (a) vulnerable, (b) clinically vulnerable and (c) clinically extremely vulnerable to COVID-19 and are shielding from the virus, and who have indicated that require assistance with access to food supplies and/or other essentials, are receiving this support, also broken down by what information it has regarding how this is being provided and by which organisations.

S5W-29098 Daniel Johnson: To ask the Scottish Government how many people who have been identified as (a) vulnerable, (b) clinically vulnerable and (c) clinically extremely vulnerable to COVID-19 and should shield from the virus it estimates require assistance with access to food supplies and/or other essentials.

S5W-29100 David Stewart: To ask the Scottish Government, in light of previously published scientific trials in 1994, 2006 and 2015 stating that negative ion ionisers are effective at reducing cross infectivity, whether it has considered using them as an additional method to protect care workers against COVID-19.

S5W-29101 Claudia Beamish: To ask the Scottish Government which local authorities have used the Spaces for People initiative, and whether it will provide a breakdown of the funding that each has received.

S5W-29102 Donald Cameron: To ask the Scottish Government how many grants from the Newly Self-Employed Hardship Fund have been awarded that are less than the amount applied for, also broken down by where the award was (a) 75%, (b) 50%, (c) 25% and (d) 10% of the value of the amount applied for.

S5W-29103 Donald Cameron: To ask the Scottish Government what percentage of applications to the Pivotal Economic Resilience Fund has been awarded the full amount applied for.

S5W-29104 Donald Cameron: To ask the Scottish Government what percentage of applications to the Pivotal Economic Resilience Fund has been awarded funding that is less than the amount applied for.

S5W-29105 Donald Cameron: To ask the Scottish Government how many grants from the Pivotal Economic Resilience Fund have been awarded that are less than the amount applied for, also broken down by where the award was (a) 75%, (b) 50%, (c) 25% and (d) 10% of the amount applied for.

S5W-29106 Donald Cameron: To ask the Scottish Government what percentage of applications to the Creative, Tourism and Hospitality Enterprises Hardship Fund has been awarded the full amount applied for.

S5W-29107 Donald Cameron: To ask the Scottish Government what percentage of applications to the Creative, Tourism and Hospitality Enterprises Hardship Fund has been awarded funding that is less than the amount applied for.

S5W-29108 Donald Cameron: To ask the Scottish Government how many grants from the Creative, Tourism and Hospitality Enterprises Hardship Fund have been awarded that are less than the amount applied for, also broken down by where the award was (a) 75%, (b) 50%, (c) 25% and (d) 10% of the amount applied for.

S5W-29109 Donald Cameron: To ask the Scottish Government what percentage of applications to the Newly Self-Employed Hardship Fund has been awarded the full amount applied for.

S5W-29110 Donald Cameron: To ask the Scottish Government what percentage of applications to the Newly Self-Employed Hardship Fund has been awarded funding that is less than the amount applied for.

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](#).