



COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROCEDURE

Edinburgh Napier University – Card 1b

COVID-19 EMERGENCY/INCIDENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE

This note sets out the procedures to be followed for there is a confirmed case(s) of Covid 19 or an outbreak of the virus in the University community. It has been informed by and is aligned to the COVID-19 Universities and Colleges *SOP/Joint Plan on the Management of Outbreaks in places of Further and Higher Education in Lothian*.

Definition

The disease COVID-19 is caused by a new strain of coronavirus (SARS-Co-V2). Typical symptoms of coronavirus include fever, a continuous cough or loss of taste or smell that may progress to a severe pneumonia causing shortness of breath and breathing difficulties.

Public Health departments have a major role in managing COVID-19 ensuring that there are adequate prevention and surveillance programmes and in the prevention of community transmission through the 'Test and Protect' (TaP) approach. Lothian Health Protection Team (HPT) are in regular contact with the University's Health and Safety Team to provide advice and guidance on managing the University's COVID-19 response.

Procedures to be followed on confirmation of a single case

When a positive case of COVID-19 infection is identified in the University community, standard contact tracing will be implemented through the National Test and Protect (TaP) system. Officials from the HPT will then be notified of a case of COVID-19 in someone who attended or worked in the University during the infectious period. HPT officials will contact the University's first line contact i.e. the Head of Health and Safety or other named contacts if the Head of Health and Safety is not available. HPT will advise on further action which may include identification of wider contacts for an inform and advise letter; communication to students and staff on the same course or same halls; support for prevention on campus; alerting other universities and colleges; and arranging for testing as required.

If a staff member tests positive they should contact their line manager in accordance with normal absence management procedures who will, in turn, notify Health and Safety by email (safetyoffice@napier.ac.uk). Staff members should also send a copy of their test result (positive or negative) to HR at the following email address humanresources@napier.ac.uk.

Students who also test positive should contact Health and Safety by email (safetyoffice@napier.ac.uk) and inform the Student Accommodation Team if living in communal settings such as halls of residence so they can advise and support students as appropriate.

HPT will request that contact data is provided for further investigation in line with the TaP procedures and this will be collated by the University's Health and Safety Team.

The Health and Safety Team will immediately notify the Director of Finance and Operations following contact from the HPT, who will normally oversee the response. If the Director of Finance and Operations is not available then the Team will notify the appropriate ULT member to establish the overseeing officer.

The following staff will be notified and requests for information/actions coordinated as appropriate to assist the HPT and co-ordinate the University's response:

- University Leadership Team
- Director of Marketing & External Relations/Communications Manager for consideration of reputational matters and communications to staff and students and liaison with the NHS Communications Team;
- Head of HR Operations for any relevant staffing matters;
- Director of Student Services and Academic Registrar for student administration and welfare matters including timetabling;
- Head of Facilities or Student Accommodation Manager if the infected student is in University residential accommodation;
- Director of Property and Facilities for any additional Property and Facilities requirements e.g. cleaning as directed by HPT;
- Head of ENSA for accessing information student activities/clubs.

Where there is concern or anxiety amongst students or staff, HPT will advise on information to be provided to these communities including the use of appropriate web resources such as NHS Inform. This may include advice from the Communications Team at NHS Lothian on the release of an appropriate press statement in liaison with the University's communication team.

HPT will keep the Head of Health and Safety informed of the clinical status of anyone who has been infected (maintaining confidentiality) and any further action required.

Outbreak management: Procedure for more than one suspected or confirmed linked case

An outbreak is defined as two or more linked cases (confirmed or suspected) of COVID-19 in a setting within 10 days where cross transmission has been identified or an increase in staff absence rates due to suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19.

If a COVID-19 outbreak is suspected the Health and Safety Team should immediately inform HPT officials if they have not already contacted the University as a result of confirmation via TaP process or other sources. The Director of Finance and Operations will also be immediately informed. If the Director of Finance and Operations is not available, the appropriate ULT member will be informed. The Health & Safety Team will oversee requests for information/actions as appropriate to assist the HPT and co-ordinate the University's response as outlined in the previous section.

In the event of an outbreak the guidance below will be followed:

- HPT will undertake a risk assessment and conduct a rapid investigation advising on the most appropriate action taking account of the measures that have been put



in place to aid infection prevention and control;

- Staff and students who have had close contact with case(s) will be asked to self-isolate at home. In some cases, a larger number of other staff and students may be asked to self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure; and
- HPT may establish an Incident Management Team (IMT) to help manage the situation depending on the risk assessment outcome.

IMT meetings will be chaired by a consultant in public health and will include University and other NHS Lothian staff. IMT will lead the response and investigations and work with the University response team (as above) to put in place appropriate interventions including control measures to manage the outbreak which may include:

- cleaning in the setting where there is a risk of contamination - refer to guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings – section 2.5 in the following [guidance](#);
- wider testing of population and staff potentially affected;
- communication of information as appropriate to ensure that staff (and other relevant people) are aware of what has happened and the actions being taken; and
- closure of an area of a building or building which may be required following advice from HPT and IMT or as agreed by ULT as a precaution. Any response requiring closure of all or part of a building will be escalated to ULT.

The HPT or IMT will declare when the outbreak is over. If there are no further cases after an agreed period, the IMT will be stood down and a final review meeting held to consider lessons learned.

Data Protection/ GDPR

Information relating to a student or staff member's health should not normally be shared internally beyond those staff who require it for their role, or externally with third parties (other than public health authorities) without consent.

On rare occasions it may be deemed necessary to share information with a third party such as the emergency services without a student or staff member's permission. This should only be done in exceptional circumstances, in "life or death" situations where it is in the individual's vital interests to do so. This should only be done in consultation with the relevant line manager and on the advice of [Governance & Compliance](#).

In these rare occasions, strictly limited information proportionate to the situation that has arisen may be disclosed to University staff or third parties, including health care professionals. If any such data is to be provided by email rather than verbally, this must be done appropriately and by taking the necessary precautions- by marking any message as strictly confidential and externally by encrypting the email in accordance with University policy. All information must be stored in line with the University's Data Protection Code of Practice. Further information can be obtained from [Governance & Compliance](#).

Support for Students and Colleagues

Access to support for both staff and students can be accessed via the staff FAQs [here](#) or student FAQs [here](#).