



COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROCEDURE

Edinburgh Napier University Emergency Action Card 1

COVID-19 OUTBREAK RESPONSE PLAN

This procedure note provides guidance on actions to take if a staff or student member displays COVID-19 symptoms whilst on campus including residential accommodation. It also sets out the procedures to be followed if there is a confirmed case(s) or outbreak of the virus in the University community. It has been informed by and is aligned to the COVID-19 Universities and Colleges *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.

Procedure to be followed if a student or staff member feels unwell or displays symptoms of COVID-19

If a staff or student member feels unwell or displays the symptoms of COVID-19 they should stay at home or go home if attending campus (wearing a face covering if possible), and seek medical advice from their GP (daytime hours), NHS 111 (evenings and weekends) or by using NHS Inform web resource www.nhsinform.scot. They should seek to be tested at the earliest opportunity - information on how to access testing can also be found on the NHS Inform web site. If a member of staff or student is unable to access NHS Inform they should call 0800 028 2816 or 0300 303 2713 to arrange a test. The second number is an additional helpline that has been made available for students. In addition there is a walk through Test Centre at the Usher Hall on Lothian Road.

Individuals will be notified of the outcome of their test by TaP staff. Staff and students should only leave home when they have been told it is safe to do so.

Staff members should request an isolation note through NHS Inform, let their line manager know they are isolating and send a copy to humanresources@napier.ac.uk. Their line manager will alert the Health and Safety Department of the suspected case as a precaution. Staff members should also obtain an isolation note if they are living with someone who has symptoms or are requested to isolate by TaP and also keep HR informed via the same email address. HPT will contact the University where a student or member of staff have tested positive.

If the symptomatic student is living in a residential/household setting with others, the

whole household should self-isolate as a precaution until the outcome of the test of the symptomatic person is known. The symptomatic student should advise student accommodation staff who will inform the rest of the household. If the test is negative, there is no need for household contacts to continue to self-isolate. If, however, the test is positive then tracing of household contacts will be started through the established TaP approach.

If a staff member or department is contacted by colleagues or students advising that they have symptoms or have had a positive test result they should report any such contact to the Health & Safety team (email: safetyoffice@napier.ac.uk) to enable cross reference with and reporting to HPT of any suspected outbreak.

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 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.

For students in communal settings such as halls of residence, self-isolation advice may need to be applied to others living in the setting, in a similar way to household contacts. This may apply to those who live on the same floor, share facilities (kitchen or bathrooms) or live in the same building etc.

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 University Secretary following contact from the HPT, who will normally oversee the response. If the Secretary is unavailable 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:

- ULT
- Director of Student Services and Academic Registrar for student administration and welfare matters including timetabling;

- Head of Facilities and Hospitality Services if the infected student is in university residential accommodation;
- Director of Property and Facilities for any additional requirements e.g. cleaning as directed by HPT;
- Head of HR Operations for any relevant staffing matters; and
- Director of Marketing & External Relations/Communications Manager for consideration of reputational and communication to staff and students. Communications including liaison with the NHS Communications Team;
- 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 14 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 University Secretary will also be immediately informed. If the University Secretary is not available then the appropriate ULT member will be informed. The Health & Safety Team 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 accessed via the staff FAQs [here](#) or student FAQs [here](#).