Medical Directors, NHS Boards; Nurse Directors, NHS Boards; Directors of Public Health, NHS Boards; Consultants in Public Health Medicine, NHS Boards

For information: Health Protection Scotland; Chief Executive, NHS Health Scotland; General Practitioners; Practice Nurses; Practice Managers

Dear Colleague

**COVID-19 – IMPLICATIONS OF MOVE TO DELAY PHASE**

As we are now in the **delay** phase of our response to COVID-19 I want to update you on the changes in how we identify and manage potential cases of COVID-19.

**All symptomatic people to stay at home (self-isolate) from Friday 13 March**

All people with a new continuous cough and/or high temperature (37.8 degrees centigrade or higher), regardless of their travel history or contact with confirmed cases will be asked to stay at home for 7 days and will not be tested.

**The geographic element of the case definition has now been removed**

Travel and contact history are no longer important for diagnosis. People who have travelled and do not have symptoms do not need to stay at home.

**Those with mild symptoms do not need to call their GP or NHS24 (111)**

If people are concerned about more serious symptoms or if their symptoms worsen, they should contact their GP in hours, or out of hours NHS24 on 111.

**Testing will not be offered routinely to individuals staying at home**

Patients who require overnight admission to hospital should still be tested if they present with either clinical or radiological evidence of pneumonia; **or** acute respiratory distress syndrome **or** influenza like illness.

We will also continue to test people in ICU and in an increased number of GP practices which cover approx. 1 million people in Scotland from early next week.

**Further advice to the public**

The public can find the latest information at <https://www.nhsinform.scot/coronavirus>

**Further advice for health professionals and practitioners**

Health Protection Scotland have published a range of guidance which will continue to be updated here <https://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/a-to-z-of-topics/covid-19/>

I will update you on any further changes in our response to the virus. Thank you to all staff within the health sector for your continued dedication, hard work and high quality care in responding to this fast-moving and evolving situation.

Yours sincerely,

**Catherine Calderwood**

**Chief Medical Officer**