

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Your Questions Answered



May 2020

In order to prevent the spread of coronavirus and limit the risk of infection, more help with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is now available to unpaid carers across Scotland who need it. This briefing is to help carers, and those working to support them, understand how this will work.

Do all carers now need to use PPE?

No. Not all caring situations will require the use of PPE and there is no need to begin to use it, unless you fall within one of the categories listed below. Priority is being given to carers who need PPE because their circumstances put them, or the person that they care for at higher risk from coronavirus.

Who will be able to access PPE?

PPE will be available to carers providing personal care, such as washing and dressing, in cases where they are unable to access it through their normal routes. Carers should read the Scottish Government **advice** for [unpaid carers providing personal care](#) to find out if they should be wearing PPE and which type of PPE they require for their situation.

In addition, priority may be given if carers, or the people they care for, are in the following categories (Please note these are listed alphabetically and not by priority level)

- caring situations where either the carer or the person with care needs is shielded
- higher risk groups such as over 70s
- those with symptoms of coronavirus
- where the carer is working outside of the home

How do I access PPE?

Using the Scottish Government advice as a guide, if you require PPE and can't get it through your normal routes you will be able to access it through your local carers centre. You can find your local carers centre on [Care Information Scotland](#)

If your local carers centre is unavailable and you cannot wait until it reopens, you can call the NHS National Services Scotland (NSS) Social Care PPE Support Centre on 0300 303 3020.

What should I expect if I request PPE?

When you make contact with the carers centre or PPE support centre, you should expect to be asked a number of questions to establish your eligibility and level of priority. Questions are likely to cover things such as the type of care you provide and how often. For example, if you are providing personal care you will be asked how many sets of PPE you are likely to use. You may also be asked questions on whether or not you are able to travel to pick-up supplies of PPE from a local hub.

Your local carers centre will then guide you as to what happens next, based on how they are managing things locally and your own circumstances.

What PPE do I need?

Whether you need to use PPE, and the type of PPE that you need to use, will depend on your unique caring situation. For example, if you usually wear an apron and gloves in order to carry out personal care, then you should continue to do so. If you, or the person you care for, is within the shielded group, or symptomatic for coronavirus, you may also be required to wear a mask. You should read the Scottish Government advice and your local carers centre will be able to help you with understanding what you need to wear and when.

I can still get PPE in the way I normally do, do I now need to order through my local carers centre instead?

No, if you are still able to access affordable PPE that you require through your normal supply routes, or if you already have a stock, then you should continue to use it. It may be that you have a stock of gloves and aprons but you now need masks. If so, you can access them through your local carers centre.

How do I know if I am using PPE correctly?

Using PPE for the first time, or using items you are not familiar with, can sometimes be confusing. There are guides to help you get to grips with 'donning and doffing' PPE (that means putting it on and taking it off safely). You might find this video by Health Protection Scotland useful:

<https://vimeo.com/393951705>

It might also be useful to remind yourself of the general advice on infection control and good hand hygiene on the NHS Inform website here <https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19>

Where can I go for more information?

Full advice for unpaid carers providing personal care, including information on when to wear PPE, is available on the Scottish Government website here

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-unpaid-carers-providing-personal-care/pages/overview/>

Further Information

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