



Media Release

embargo until 1pm Monday 30 March 2020

Date: 30 March 2020

COVID-19 cluster identified in Guernsey Residential and Nursing Home

Public Health Services were contacted on Saturday morning by a residential and nursing home who informed them that three of their residents were displaying respiratory symptoms. A GP assessed the three patients and one was transferred to the PEH. Swabs were taken and run through our on-island testing which confirmed that all three patients had COVID-19.

Director of Public Health, Dr Nicola Brink said:

‘I am extremely impressed by Community Services who immediately swung into action, deploying some of their own staff to help in the home overnight. Extra stocks of PPE were also delivered to the home. Public Health services performed an initial analysis of the confirmed cases, possible cases and contacts over the weekend and a decision was made for all residents and staff to be swabbed today and tested on our in-house testing kit.

We always knew that we would potentially be faced with clusters of cases and had therefore planned for this. Having our own on-island testing capability enabled us to manage this situation in real time, rather than waiting 2 to 3 days for a test result from the UK. I am therefore so impressed how our Pathology Services have risen to the challenge and made this testing available locally to support the management of this situation.’

As a result of this cluster and some members of our Community Services Team being deployed into the home, the team has had to prioritise essential calls to people they normally visit in the community. We understand that relatives will be worried by this but we have a plan in place for regular telephone welfare calls. The team are extremely grateful to those families that have taken over care giving where they can.

Sue Fleming, an experienced manager of residential and nursing care on the Island has agreed to lead a dedicated work ‘cell’ to support the care home, which will provide further assurance and support to this critical sector.

Ends

Notes to Media

On Island testing commenced over this weekend. Test results are now available within 24 hours instead of waiting for at least 2 – 3 days for them to be tested in the UK specialist laboratory.

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