

Swindon coronavirus update

The UK Chief Medical Officer has today (6 March 2020) confirmed further cases of COVID-19 infection in the UK. One of these cases is a resident from Swindon who became infected while in Northern Italy and is self-isolating.

The individual is getting all necessary support from relevant agencies. Public Health England, the council and local NHS colleagues are working closely together to respond.

Public Health England is currently contacting people who may have had close contact with the confirmed case. Close contacts will be given health advice about symptoms and emergency contact details to use if they become unwell in the 14 days after they had contact with the confirmed case. This tried and tested method will ensure that any risk to them is minimised and the wider public is protected.

Based on current evidence, Coronavirus COVID-19 presents with flu-like symptoms including a fever, a cough, or difficulty breathing. The current evidence is that most cases appear to be mild.

There is a lot going on nationally to ensure we are prepared to manage this risk and locally, we have tried and tested plans in place which means we are prepared to deal with a whole range of issues.

Whilst the confirmation of a case in the county will undoubtedly increase people's anxiety, it's important to remain calm but vigilant and take necessary steps.

The best action we can all take is to ensure we continue to have good personal and hand hygiene, which includes:

- Giving your hands a good wash with soap and water is the most effective action you can take (but hand gels can be a good substitute).

- Maintaining personal hygiene when coughing or sneezing is also important – use a tissue rather your hands and then throw it away.
- It is good general practice to use cleaning wipes to give your keyboard, desk, phone etc. the once over on a regular basis.

Anyone who is concerned about their health symptoms is advised to follow the advice about what to do on the Government's website at

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-information-for-the-public>

The advice for anyone who is experiencing a cough or fever or shortness of breath, is to stay indoors and call NHS 111, even if symptoms are mild.

People are asked **NOT** to turn up at their GP surgery or other health services (e.g. hospital).

If people have trips planned, they should follow the Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice.

To stay up to date with the national situation and response and any advice PHE is giving you can visit their [website](#). Alternatively, you can follow the Department for Health and Social Care on Twitter- @DHSCgovuk

I will keep you up to date with local developments.

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