



Scottish Seniors

Special Edition Update

March 2020

The Newsletter of the Scottish Pensioners' Forum

Coronavirus: Keeping in touch during the Crisis

Although much of the campaigning and outreach work carried out by our volunteers, themselves all older people, cannot be fulfilled at this time, the SPF will continue to be looking after the interests of our members, affiliates and older people during this period of social isolation and social distancing.

We are conscious that not all older people have access to digital services so to help with this we will be circulating more regular newsletters for those who don't whilst also posting regular articles which we feel may be of interest, through our website and social media pages, for those who do.

Please feel free to get in touch and if you think of anything that may be of interest to others which could be included in our newsletters, please let us know.

Our telephone number is 0141 337 8113

Our website details are www.scottishpensioners.org.uk

We can also be found on Twitter @ScotPensForum and on Facebook too

Please be rest assured that the SPF will still be working on behalf of our members, affiliates, retired members branches and older people across Scotland, just in a slightly different way for the time being.

Stay safe.



Our OPSAF colleagues at **Age Scotland** have been awarded additional funding to help cope with the increased volume of calls they have been receiving in response to the coronavirus issue,

This is a very important resource during this time so please get in touch if you need them, they'll be more than happy to help.

SCAM ALERT

Already the SPF are hearing of bogus callers and email scams trying to profit from the challenges many people are facing. As everyone struggles to deal with a sense of normalcy during this time, we urge you to please be vigilant. There are many great community organisations working tirelessly to help during this time so please don't be sucked in by the scammers out there.

Here is just one example from our Executive Committee member, Colin Wakeling. Hope this helps!

Inevitably fraudsters have already got in on the Coronavirus scare, scamming some £1 million from unwitting victims who may have tried to purchase protective face masks from bogus sellers, or opened emails claiming to be from Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or the World Health Organisation offering to provide a list of infected people in the area.

As always: Do not click on links or attachments in suspicious emails and if you are buying from a company or person you don't know, do some research first. Do not respond to unsolicited messages or calls asking for personal or financial details.

Coronavirus Isolate your household Stay at home

If you or anyone in your household has a high temperature or a new and continuous cough – even if it's mild

- ✓ Everyone in your household must stay at home for 14 days and keep away from others.
- ✗ DO NOT go to your GP, hospital or pharmacy.
- ✓ Go to nhsinform.scot to check your symptoms and follow the specialist medical advice. Only call NHS 24 (111) if you can't get online or your symptoms worsen.
- ✓ Protect older people and those with existing health conditions by avoiding contact.

Find out how to isolate your household at nhsinform.scot/coronavirus



Coronavirus: Important Guidelines from NHS Scotland

Recent advice from NHS Scotland is urging everyone to stay at home, and this is particularly relevant for anyone over the age of 70 and also those with underlying health conditions. These promotional guidelines highlight all the information you might need.

For your convenience, we've also put together a list of other handy numbers we thought might be of use to our members and others.

Age Scotland Helpline 0800 12 44 222

**Alzheimer Scotland
0808 808 3000**

**Asthma UK Scotland
0300 222 5800**

**British Heart Foundation 0300 330
3322**

Capability Scotland 0131 337 9876

**Diabetes Scotland
0141 212 8710**

NHS 24 111

Alzheimer Scotland

Detailed below is a great resource reproduced with kind permission from Alzheimer Scotland

Coronavirus:
guidance for people with dementia and carers

Over the coming weeks and months, we are all being asked to change the way we live our lives so that those who may be most at risk of coronavirus are kept as safe as possible. For people with dementia, their families and carers this period of change will be unsettling. In collaboration with Alzheimer Scotland Dementia Nurse Consultants, we have prepared some information to help you through this time.

During this time Alzheimer Scotland's local teams will be on hand to help if you need any assistance with things such as accessing medication or shopping. Please call our 24 Hour Freephone Dementia Helpline on 0808 808 3000 and we will do our very best to help you.

What is coronavirus?
Coronavirus is a respiratory illness which can spread from person to person.

The symptoms of coronavirus are:

- A high temperature or fever
- A new, continuous cough
- Shortness of breath

For the most up to date information on coronavirus visit www.nhsinform.scot or call 0800 028 2816

How can I reduce my risk of getting coronavirus?

- Wash hands with water and soap/antiseptic for at least 20 seconds
- Cough or sneeze into a tissue and dispose immediately
- Avoid touching your face
- Avoid large gatherings or gatherings in smaller public spaces (such as public and gym)
- If you live alone, and are displaying symptoms, stay at home for 7 days from the start of your symptoms. Stay away from anyone who's unwell
- If you live with others, and are displaying symptoms, you should all stay at home for 14 days from the start of the first person's symptoms
- If you can, stay a safe distance (two metres) from people and sleep alone

Preparing for coronavirus

People over the age of 70 and those with pre-existing health conditions are at high risk of developing coronavirus. If you fall under these categories then the UK governments are advising you to socially distance yourself. To prepare for this:

- Order any medication you may need, including repeat prescriptions.
- Have a list of contact details clearly labelled and keep them visible. This should include family, friends, neighbours, your GP and pharmacy, Alzheimer Scotland's Freephone Dementia Helpline and any emergency numbers such as NHS 24's phone service.
- Have enough food to last you for a couple of weeks. Many foods can be frozen, and a supply of meals kept in the freezer will be easy to heat up.
- Ensure you have access to soap and hand sanitizer. Leave visual prompts near sinks to remind you to wash your hands for at least 20 seconds.
- Plan for any indoor activities. This could include listening to music, reading or puzzles.

Other helpful tips

- Having a routine is important. Try to incorporate activities which can structure your day.
- Stay as active as possible. If you have a secure outdoor space get some fresh air or do some gentle exercise.
- Housework is a great way of staying active and also helping to get rid of germs. Use prompts around the house to encourage these activities.
- Make regular phone calls to friends, family and trusted neighbours to maintain social interaction.
- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Many local groups will be cancelled during this time. If you haven't heard from them, it may be worth phoning or checking their websites.

Helpful links

- Information hub: www.nhsinform.scot/coronavirus
- Alzheimer Scotland 24 hour Freephone Dementia Helpline: 0808 808 3000
- www.alzscot.org/useful-products technology may help you at this time. This webpage gives unbiased reviews on what might be useful to you.
- NHS24: call 111

24 HOUR Dementia Helpline
Alzheimer Scotland
Freephone 0808 808 3000
Email: helpline@alzscot.org

And finally.....

The Scottish Pensioners' Forum wouldn't be the organisation we are if we weren't continuing with our campaign against the means testing of the free TV licence for over 75s, particularly at this time.

Despite the recent BBC announcement to extend the status quo until August 2020, the SPF has recently contacted them to argue that this decision still does not go far enough, with the recent crisis only strengthening our demands as even more older people are now unable to leave their homes

Chairperson Maureen Gardner argued-

"Access to television and news services are vital during this very worrying period for many people."

"As many older people do not have access to social media and the internet, television is their only platform for gaining information on developments and care"

We really hope they do the right thing!

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