



Media Release

Embargo until time/date

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Public Health reminds people of the symptoms associated with infection with the virus that causes COVID-19

Public Health Services are reminding people of the symptoms associated with infection with the virus that causes COVID-19.

Dr Nicola Brink, Director of Public Health said:

“I am concerned that there are reports from Primary Care that GPs are noticing more patients with symptoms that could be associated with COVID-19. This is a change from previous observations. All have tested COVID-19 negative so far but we can’t be complacent.

It is important to stress that these symptoms could be associated with many other viral conditions and we still have no known positive cases on Island. However, I would urge islanders to be vigilant and to arrange for a COVID-19 swab if they have any of the symptoms. It is also essential that they self-isolate at home until they receive a negative COVID-19 result.”

A local GP added:

“We would like anyone with a recent onset cough, sore throat, fever, muscle aches, loss of sense of smell or taste and other symptoms associated with COVID-19 to self-isolate at home and arrange a COVID-19 swab.

This could be via the COVID-19 helpline if the person does not require a doctor’s examination, or otherwise by phoning for an appointment with their GP. Please inform the telephonist at the practice that you have these symptoms so an appropriate appointment slot can be made.

It is just as important now in stage 5 of the pandemic, as it has been in the past months, not to go to work, shops or socialise until COVID-19 has been ruled out.”

The initial case definition adopted by the Bailiwick of Guernsey used the symptoms as defined by Public Health England. These focussed on the presence of fever, cough or shortness of breath.

However an analysis of the symptoms present in people with COVID-19 in the Bailiwick, with a consideration of symptomatology reported in international publications led us to revising our case definition on the 8th April 2020 to include:

- Fever (rigors, chills, can't get warm, high temperature.)
- Muscle ache (fatigue, exhaustion)
- Headache (sinus pain, pain around eyes)
- Loss of smell/taste
- Continuous new cough
- Sore throat
- Shortness of breath, chest tightness
- Over 80s and 90s – loose stool, mild fever, not themselves with a cough presenting later

Director of Public Health, Dr Nicola Brink said:

“I really want people to come forward for testing if they have any of these symptoms, no matter how mild. Please contact the Clinical Helpline by calling 01481 756938 or 01481 756969 to arrange for testing.”

Ends

Notes to Media

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