

Care homes can't be forgotten in PPE emergency

8 Apr 2020



Scottish Conservative leader Jackson Carlaw has urged Nicola Sturgeon not to forget about care homes as her government attempts to roll-out delivery of personal protective equipment.

Much of the SNP government's focus has been on providing PPE to hospitals and GP surgeries as the country battles the Covid-19 pandemic.

But care homes across the country are now raising concerns that they haven't been supplied with the adequate gear for their staff.

The Scottish Conservatives have spoken to a number of care homes across the country who back that argument up.

They say they either don't have the PPE they need, or are concerned about supplies running out.

Some care homes across Scotland have already recorded a number of deaths in their facilities, and the First Minister is expected to make an announcement later about the challenges facing care homes.

And today, it was reported in the *Times* that Scottish care home workers have been denied PPE because a key distribution centre was closed for the day.

It is understood that home providers in four parts of the country were unable to obtain supplies because local health and social care partnerships had closed the centres.

Donald Macaskill, the chief executive of Scottish Care, said that other hubs had indicated they would shut for the Easter weekend, potentially leaving those looking after the elderly and vulnerable short of supplies.

Yesterday, care homes in the north east described themselves as "cannon fodder" in the coronavirus fight.

Scottish Conservative leader Jackson Carlaw said:

"Much of the attention has understandably gone on hospitals and GPs when it comes to the provision of PPE.

"But the SNP government needs to remember that care homes are on the front line too.

"Many of them feel they've been treated like second-class citizens amid this pandemic, and things aren't changing quickly enough.

"We know from our own work that care homes across the country simply don't have the equipment they need to save lives and protect their hardworking staff.

"And when they do have PPE equipment, they're fearful of it running out soon.

"At a time when we're seeing some care homes record alarmingly high numbers of deaths, it's something Nicola Sturgeon must focus her attention on as a matter of urgency."