

Edinburgh Airport COVID-19 testing centre opens to Key Workers

A drive-through coronavirus testing facility has opened at Edinburgh Airport as part of the Government's UK-wide drive to increase testing for thousands more NHS and other key workers.

The Edinburgh Airport site sits alongside a rapidly expanding network of testing sites being set up around the UK, and is operating on an appointment-only basis for NHS staff and other key workers. The facility will be piloted for its first few days of operation.

This follows the launch of the Government's partnership with universities, research institutes and companies to begin rollout of the network of new 'lighthouse' labs and field testing sites across the UK, with 27 testing sites opened to date.

This network will provide thousands more PCR swab tests – which are used to identify if you currently have the virus – for critical key workers, starting with NHS front line staff. This means those who test negative for coronavirus can return to work as soon as possible, and those who test positive are able to recover.

The Edinburgh Airport testing centre is being operated in partnership with Sodexo, with Boots medical staff administering some tests and others being self-administered. Those tested will receive their results within 48 hours.

Health Minister Lord Bethell said:

“The UK Government is rapidly scaling up the national effort to boost testing capacity for coronavirus to protect the vulnerable, support our NHS, and ultimately save lives.

“This new service will help end the uncertainty of whether NHS and social care staff need to stay at home meaning those who test negative will be able to return to work.

“This is a national effort and we are proud to be working with a number of partners to turn this ambition into a reality and roll out additional capacity to where it is needed.”

Scottish Secretary Alister Jack said:

“This new testing centre at Edinburgh Airport, which is funded by the UK Government, will help key workers continue to do their lifesaving work and look after those who need it most.

“The UK Government has committed to expand our testing capacity right across the UK and this new centre is now one of three in Scotland. We will continue to work for everyone in the UK to save lives and protect our NHS.”

Professor John Newton, National Coordinator for the UK Coronavirus Testing Strategy, said:

“New testing sites such as this one are a key pillar of our 5-pillar plan to scale up testing, and are critical in supporting NHS staff who are isolating at home to return safely to work if the test is negative.”

“This is a brilliant example of industries and businesses turning their resources to creating and rolling out mass testing at scale, which will help to deliver on our aim of carrying out 100,000 tests a day across the UK by the end of the month.”

A Boots UK Spokesperson said:

“We feel incredibly proud to be supporting COVID-19 testing for critical workers in Edinburgh.”

“Boots has been at the heart of UK healthcare for 171 years and has always come forward to support the community in times of need. Our team in Edinburgh is no exception. Some of our colleagues have already stepped forward to volunteer to run this COVID-19 testing station, which will start testing its first critical workers today.”

Sean Haley, regional chair of Sodexo UK & Ireland said:

“Sodexo teams have moved quickly to set up COVID-19 testing centres as part of the industry-wide effort to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic. The opening of the Edinburgh Airport testing site will mean more frontline NHS and other staff can be tested and cleared to provide care to those who need it most.”

“I am proud of our colleagues who are working together with pace and dedication to support the NHS.”

Gordon Dewar, Chief Executive of Edinburgh Airport said:

“We understand that the coronavirus pandemic is a national issue that requires a national response, and we realise we have a role to play by offering up space that can be utilised for crucial testing.”

The Government is also urgently working on setting up a home-testing service for critical key workers, supported by Amazon’s logistics network and other commercial partners.