

Nuclear industry donates £200,000 of lifesaving PPE to the NHS

The company and its owner, the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA), have pledged £200,000 to purchase the kit for the county's frontline NHS and social care staff.

An estimated 5,000 gowns should be ready by the end of this week. A further 2,500 will be delivered each week over the next 6 weeks.

They will be distributed to NHS facilities across the county, according to need identified via the Local Resilience Forum.

Gowns provide crucial protection to care workers treating Covid-19 patients and help prevent the spread of infection.

They are in short supply as global stocks of PPE dwindle amid the global pandemic.

The donation is part of a targeted response by Sellafield Ltd, co-ordinated with local communities to ensure the areas of greatest need are identified and addressed.

On top of the 20,000 gowns, Sellafield Ltd and its supply chain have donated:

- 1,562 disposable suits
- 187 disposable gown/lab coats
- 4,850 disposable FFP3 masks
- 102 reusable masks
- 3,500 pairs of gloves
- 164 pairs of safety glasses
- 10 full face visors

Martin Chown, Sellafield Ltd Chief Executive, said:

From the outset, we've been committed to doing everything we can to support our local communities through this unprecedented challenge.

Like everyone, we're in awe of the courage, compassion, and commitment of our frontline NHS staff.

We all know how vital it is to ensure healthcare workers have access to the right protective equipment to safeguard themselves, their patients, and their families.

Gowns were identified as being in particular short supply. Our knowledge of the PPE supply chain meant we could quickly establish

a reliable route for high quality items via a national manufacturer and a local distributor.

I'd like to thank the NDA for its unwavering support which has allowed us to balance our contribution to the Covid-19 response with our nationally-important mission to keep the Sellafield site safe and secure.

Andrew van der Lem, the NDA's Head of Government Relations said:

Our skilled workforce across the NDA group has risen quickly to the sudden and ongoing challenge of the Covid-19 pandemic. From donating PPE, to actually making it from scratch, our scientists, engineers, safety teams, and other personnel have been helping.

Donations from across the NDA Group include 32,000 pairs of gloves, more than 5,000 full protective suits, and over 8,000 face masks/respirators. Together with colleagues from across our supply chain and local communities, everyone has been pulling together and showing true spirit and determination.

Assistant Chief Constable Andrew Slattery, Chairman of Cumbria's Local Resilience Forum, said:

This is a fantastic effort by Sellafield Ltd, which will provide a huge amount of support here in Cumbria for efforts to increase the supply of PPE.

It demonstrates how key agencies and employers are pulling together during this public health emergency to do their best for our communities and our brave NHS and social care staff.

Increasing the amount of PPE available will help keep frontline staff safe during the Covid-19 outbreak and help slow the spread of the virus.

Demand for Personal Protective Equipment will not subside any time soon and any other organisations or businesses which are able to help in the manufacture of this equipment is also invited to support the national effort.

They will be potentially saving lives.

Jo Lappin, Chair of the Cumbria's Business and Economic Response and Recovery Group (BERRG) said:

This is excellent news and I would like to congratulate Sellafield Ltd for their generosity in making sure that both our most vulnerable citizens and our most precious assets, our health and social care workers, are protected by having the right PPE available.

Sellafield Ltd and the NDA collectively have a very strong track record in supporting our communities and this is the latest example of that commitment. They have previously provided a significant contribution to BERRG's call for the donation of surplus PPE and this financial donation and their volunteering efforts further demonstrates this. We are all hugely appreciative of their efforts.

As well as PPE provision, Sellafield Ltd has provided support for local response groups and encouraged employees not identified as key workers to volunteer. More than 250 people are now volunteering in their local communities.

Martin added:

I'm enormously proud of all of our employees throughout this extraordinary period in our history.

Our key workers have shown incredible professionalism and commitment in carrying out critical tasks on site, supported by thousands of colleagues working from home.

Supporting our communities is one of our core values as a business and we'll continue to play our part until we overcome this historic challenge together.