

SNP care homes strategy branded an 'abject failure'

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The SNP's approach to testing for coronavirus in care homes has been an "abject failure", the Scottish Conservatives said today.

At First Minister's Questions, leader Jackson Carlaw said staff and vulnerable residents were still going untested despite SNP pledges to the contrary.

He raised the example of Highgate care home in Uddingston, where 22 residents have died.

It was reported that carers there are still waiting to be tested, and are fearful they are the ones who have brought the deadly infection into the facility.

Nicola Sturgeon confirmed another 415 Covid-19 deaths in care settings, which pushes the nationwide total to beyond 3000.

It shows again that care homes are now the most vulnerable places in the country to the virus.

Yet still the SNP government is failing to carry out enough tests to ensure it is not being brought into facilities.

Mr Carlaw pointed out that, at the start of this month, ministers promised all staff and residents would be tested wherever there is an outbreak.

But as the example of the North Lanarkshire facility shows, this has not been happening.

And when asked if she accepted this was a failing, she responded: "No I don't."

Scottish Conservative leader Jackson Carlaw said:

"We know that Scotland is lagging behind badly other parts of the UK when it comes to carrying out coronavirus tests.

"And as new statistics again showed, care homes are where the most people are losing their lives to this virus.

"In other words, fewer tests are being carried out in the very places we need them most.

"It's clear nothing like enough focus has gone on testing in care homes, and

that has been a very costly mistake.

“When it comes to this strand of the fight against coronavirus, by any standards, the SNP government’s strategy has been an abject failure.

“And the First Minister’s refusal to accept that her approach to testing in care homes has been inadequate is nothing short of staggering.”