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The Scottish Government must follow up a pay rise for social care workers with a package of measures to ensure they are protected and have access to testing.

Health secretary Jeane Freeman confirmed the wage increase after striking a deal with local authorities across the country.

However, fears remain about provisions of personal protective equipment (PPE) for both care workers in the community and in nursing homes.

And staff, residents and families are concerned about testing after a spate of deaths in care facilities across the country.

Ms Freeman admitted yesterday there was “still work to do” in this area.

At the weekend, a leaked report stated provisions of PPE among health and social care workers in Scotland’s capital city was a “concern”.

It said “supply chains remain complicated”, which chimes with First Minister Nicola Sturgeon’s admission that her government’s performance on the delivery of PPE hadn’t been up to scratch.

Scottish Conservative leader Jackson Carlaw said:

“The pay rise for care workers is welcome and will boost morale at a very important time.

“But it must be backed up by supplying these vital workers with the PPE they need to keep them, and the people they care for, safe.

“It’s also crucial that staff and the vulnerable people being cared for have access to testing as this pandemic takes hold.

“We’re now several weeks into this crisis, but still the care industry is extremely concerned about these two areas.

“A pay rise does not cancel out these concerns.

“We need to remember that carers working in homes and in the community are very much on the frontline – their safety should be of the utmost importance.”