

Public Health Scotland: 'Cancel your Christmas party to stop Omicron spreading'

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People have been urged to delay their Christmas parties.

Credit: PA Images

You should cancel your Christmas parties, Public Health Scotland has said, amid rising concerns of a mutant **coronavirus** strain which scientists think is **much more transmissible**.

Dr Nick Phin, the director of public health science and medical director at Public Health Scotland, urged people to put off their parties this festive season to help in the fight against coronavirus.

“To help minimise the further spread of Covid-19 - and Omicron in particular - I would strongly urge people to defer their Christmas parties to another time.”



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The call comes as Scotland has reported another new Omicron case, bringing the total to 109. Latest Scottish Government figures also showed there were 16 coronavirus deaths and 3,196 cases recorded within the past 24 hours.

The Covid-19 death toll in Scotland under the daily measure - of people who first tested positive for the virus within the previous 28 days - now stands at 9,688.

In his plea to Christmas revellers, Dr Phin said: "There is much that we still need to learn about Omicron but early evidence suggests that this new Covid variant is much more transmissible. The impact of this transmissibility has been seen in recent weeks, with a number of Omicron outbreaks linked to parties.

"We still need to learn more about the severity of disease caused by Omicron and the effectiveness of vaccines, but there are important things that we can do to help protect ourselves and our families now.

"I appreciate that everyone is keen to celebrate this festive season, particularly after the pressures of the last 20 months but by postponing some plans we can all do our bit to protect ourselves and our loved ones."

Dr Nick Phin, Public Health Scotland

The health body urged people to test at least twice weekly with lateral flow devices, and each time they are socialising with people outside their household.

It also said that as well as vaccinating and getting boosters, people should follow other public health advice including handwashing and wearing face-masks.

The latest statistics on Thursday said a total of 4,358,725 people have received their first dose of a Covid-19 vaccination in Scotland, 3,967,477 have received their second dose, and 2,000,915 have received a third dose or booster.



Scotland."

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