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| **Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)**  **Public Health Advice for the Third sector in Neath Port Talbot and Swansea** | |
| **Author:** Swansea Bay Local Public Health Team | |
| **Date:** 31 March 2020 | **Version:** 0b |
| **Purpose and Summary of Document:**  It is crucial that all voluntary and community organisations, volunteers and those they help to stay safe follow and keep up to date with government measures and guidance during the novel coronavirus outbreak. This includes people who volunteer   * For a charity, organisation or agency * To help and support family, friends and neighbours in their community   This document provides a summary of public health information and guidance for the Third sector in Neath Port Talbot and Swansea.  This document is up to date at the time of writing, it should be read in conjunction with guidance from the UK and Welsh Government. | |

# **What are the symptoms of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)?**

A coronavirus is a type of virus. COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus first identified in Wuhan City, China in January 2020.

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) causes symptoms similar to other respiratory viruses such as the flu.

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of:

* new continuous cough and/or
* high temperature

Use the NHS direct Wales symptom checker at: <https://www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/SelfAssessments/symptomcheckers/COVID19.aspx>.

For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness. Generally, people with weakened immune systems, older people, and those with long-term conditions like diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease have more severe symptoms. If you have symptoms of coronavirus you must follow the [self-isolation advice](https://phw.nhs.wales/topics/latest-information-on-novel-coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-advice/):

* If you live alone and you have symptoms of coronavirus illness, stay home for 7 days from when your symptoms started.
* If you live with others and you are the first in the household to have symptoms, you must stay at home for 7 days, all other household members who remain well must stay at home and not leave the house for 14 days. The 14 day period starts from the day the first person in the house became ill.
* For anyone else in the household who starts displaying symptoms, they need to stay a home for 7 days from when the symptoms appeared, regardless of what day they are on in the original 14 day isolation period.
* It is likely that people living within a household will infect each other or be infected already. Staying at home for 14 days will greatly reduce the overall amount of infection the household could pass on to others in the community.

Contact NHS 111 if symptoms cannot be managed at home, get worse, or symptoms do not get better after 7 days. Contact 999 if it is a life threatening emergency.

For more information visit [Welsh Government Stay at Home and Away From Others Guidance](https://gov.wales/staying-home-and-away-others-guidance).

# **How to protect yourself and others**

On 23rd March the UK government introduced 3 new measures in response to coronavirus (COVID-19). These will initially be in place for 3 weeks (until 13th April 2020) when the government will decide if the measures need to stay in place or can be relaxed.

Everyone must comply immediately with the new measures, which are:

1. People to stay at home, except for very limited purposes
2. Closing of non-essential shops and community spaces
3. Stopping all gatherings of more than 2 people in public

Staying at home, except for very limited purposesmeans you should stay at home and only leave the house for one of the following reasons:

1. Shopping for food and medicine, which must be as infrequent as possible
2. One form of exercise a day, such as a run, walk or cycle, alone or with members of your household
3. Any medical need, to provide care or to help a vulnerable person
4. Travelling to and from work, but only if this cannot be done from home

When doing these activities, it is important to:

* Minimise your time spent outside of your home
* Stay at least 2 meters (6 feet) or 3 steps apart from people who do not live in the same household as you.

We all need to adhere to the social distancing measures introduced by the government. These are the steps taken to reduce the interaction between people to help reduce the spread of coronavirus. They are:

* Avoid contact with someone who has symptoms of coronavirus
* Increase the physical space between you and others
* Keep in touch with family and friends by phone, the internet and social media
* Use the telephone/ online services to contact essential services
* Avoid non-essential use of public transport when possible
* Where possible work from home.

People are who are at increased risk of severe illness from coronavirus are advised to be particularly stringent in following the social distancing measures. This includes people who are:

* Aged 70 or older (regardless of medical conditions)
* Under 70 with an [underlying health condition](https://phw.nhs.wales/topics/latest-information-on-novel-coronavirus-covid-19/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults/) (anyone instructed to get a flu jab as an adult each year on medical grounds)
* Pregnant.

**How to protect extremely vulnerable people (shielding)**

Shielding is a practice used to [protect extremely vulnerable people](https://phw.nhs.wales/topics/latest-information-on-novel-coronavirus-covid-19/how-to-protect-extremely-vulnerable-people-shielding/) from coming into contact with coronavirus. This means that those who are extremely vulnerable should not leave their homes, and within their homes should minimise all non-essential contact with other members of their household.

Welsh Government is directly contacting people with these conditions from 29th March to provide further advice. Shielding is expected to last for 12 weeks.

**Preventing the spread of coronavirus - Hygiene and handwashing**

To help prevent the spread of coronavirus

* wash your hands more often - with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use a hand sanitiser when you
  + get home or into work,
  + when you blow your nose
  + sneeze or cough
  + use the toilet
  + eat or handle food
* avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
* avoid close contact with people who have symptoms
* cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in a bin and wash your hands
* clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces such as telephones, keyboards, door handles, desks and tables using your usual household cleaner.

# **Organisations that are not providing care to vulnerable people**

Organisations that are not providing care or help to a vulnerable person, should:

* Support employees and volunteers to follow the recommendation to stay at home and if possible facilitate working at home.
* Determine what arrangements and equipment are required to allow volunteers to work at home and the ongoing support they need.
* **Postpone large-scale volunteer events or training in the next few months.**

Follow further advice from:

Welsh Government Support for the Third Sector <https://gov.wales/coronavirus-covid-19-support-for-the-third-sector-html>.

WCVA Community response to Covid-19 - enabling safe and effective practice <https://wcva.cymru/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Community-response-to-Covid-19.pdf>.

# **Organisations that are providing care for vulnerable people**

**Essential** support can be provided to vulnerable people if staff and volunteers

* are well and have no symptoms of coronavirus and if nobody in your household does
* are under 70
* are not pregnant
* do not have any health conditions that make you vulnerable to coronavirus.

People with increased risk should not volunteer for roles or help with tasksthat could increase their risk of infection. Instead these people may wish to volunteer for roles or activities using IT, phones and social media platforms to connect with their community from home.

[Some simple practical ways to help include](https://gov.wales/safe-help):

* **Help with food shopping and collecting medication -** Do not enter the person’s house and keep a distance of 2 metres (3 steps) away from the person/people you are helping. Leave the shopping and any messages on the person’s doorstep and make sure they have been collected before leaving.
* **Stay in touch over the phone or via social media** - Just saying hello and regularly checking in over the phone is important, or you could help people by recommending information from [Mind](https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/)[.](https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/)
* **Encourage people to stay mentally and physically active – Encourage people to keep busy with activities they enjoy such as such as cooking, reading, on line learning, watching films, indoor hobbies. For people who are well enough; encourage them to do some light exercise and keep active around the home.**
* **Share trusted sources of information –Help by sharing trusted information (see section 5 of this document).**

Follow the information on <https://gov.wales/safe-help> to deliver services safely and protect everyone.

Follow further advice from:

Welsh Government Support for the Third Sector <https://gov.wales/coronavirus-covid-19-support-for-the-third-sector-html>.

WCVA Community response to Covid-19 - enabling safe and effective practice <https://wcva.cymru/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Community-response-to-Covid-19.pdf>.

Guidance on mental health and wellbeing: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-public-on-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-the-public-on-the-mental-health-and-wellbeing-aspects-of-coronavirus-covid-19>

**What to do if a staff member or volunteer becomes ill**

If a staff member or volunteer begins to feel ill with a fever or cough before their duties, they should immediately alert their manager or co-ordinator, and remove themselves from duty. If a staff member or volunteer begins to feel ill with a fever or cough during their duties they should go home to self-isolate, following the guidelines in section 2 of this document.

**What to do if care is provided in people’s homes**

Do not physically visit people in their own homes or go on a car journey with people who are in isolation or shielding unless absolutely essential and necessary for their health and care. This should be discussed with the person and if appropriate their health professional.

Prior to a home visit, find out if the person, or member of the household is in self-isolation via telephone, text or e-mail. If they are self-isolating and a visit is deemed essential, then a risk assessment should be undertaken to decide the best course of action. If you are supporting someone who is in isolation, regularly wash your hands and keep a distance of at **least 2 metres** apart. If it is not possible to keep 2 metres apart, then follow the official guidance on infection, prevention and control and personal protective equipment at <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>.

The [Wales Council of Voluntary Services (WCVA)](https://wcva.cymru/availability-of-supplies-for-voluntary-organisations-carrying-out-vital-roles/) is working closely with the Welsh Government to be able to provide access to personal protective equipment.

# **Trusted sources of information**

* Public Health Wales <https://phw.nhs.wales/topics/latest-information-on-novel-coronavirus-covid-19/>

Public information posters, social media resources and videos are available at <https://phw.nhs.wales/topics/latest-information-on-novel-coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-resources/>

* NHS Direct Wales

To find out what to do if you think you have symptoms, visit the [Coronavirus symptom checker](https://www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/SelfAssessments/symptomcheckers/?ScName=CoronaVirusCOVID19&SCTId=175), or the [encyclopaedia page](https://www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/coronavirus(2019ncov)) which has general information and includes a British Sign Language (BSL) video.

* UK NHS Advice

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

* Welsh Government **-** <https://gov.wales/coronavirus>
* Welsh Government: Looking Out for Each Other Campaign - <https://gov.wales/safe-help>
* UK Government**-**<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>
* World Health Organisation coronavirus myth busters <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/myth-busters>
* Asthma UK <https://www.asthma.org.uk/advice/triggers/coronavirus-covid-19/>
* Diabetes UK <https://www.diabetes.org.uk/about_us/news/coronavirus>
* WCVA <https://wcva.cymru/coronavirus-statement/>

**Accessible formats**

* Public Health Wales Coronavirus information Easy Read

<https://www.wlga.wales/SharedFiles/Download.aspx?pageid=62&mid=665&fileid=2700>

* Public Health England Coronavirus (COVID-19) Easy Read

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/874281/COVID-19_easy_read.pdf>

* Public Health England Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance on protecting people most likely to get very poorly from coronavirus (shielding) Easy Read

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/875126/Easy_read_guidance_on_shielding_March_2020.pdf>

* Welsh Ambulance Service Trust COVID-19 Information in BSL

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VPUTLv3um94>

* SignHealth is a charity dedicated to making sure Deaf people get the same sort of access as hearing people to healthcare and health information. Coronavirus (COVID-19) information in British Sign Language is updated DAILY with the PM talks and other useful information. <https://www.signhealth.org.uk/coronavirus/>
* Mencap has lots of useful [Easy Read information about COVID-19](https://www.mencap.org.uk/advice-and-support/health/coronavirus) for people with learning difficulties
* Stay at home guidance for household with possible coronavirus infection

<https://gov.wales/stay-home-guidance-households-possible-coronavirus>

Available in Arabic, Bengali, Cantonese, Mandarin, French, Gujarati, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Urdu.

**Social media platforms**

The UK Government has launched a GOV.UK Coronavirus Information service on WhatsApp. This means you can get advice on coronavirus direct to your phone using the GOV.UK WhatsApp information service. To use the free service simply add 07860 064422 in your phone contacts and then message the word ‘hi’ in a WhatsApp message to get started.

**Information for service providers**

Guidance aimed at those who support and deliver care to people in their own homes, including community health services is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-residential-care-supported-living-and-home-care-guidance/covid-19-guidance-on-home-care-provision>