

Public Health Link

From the Chief Medical Officer for Wales

Distribution:	As Appendix 1
From:	Dr Frank Atherton, Chief Medical Officer
Date:	06 March 2020
Reference:	CEM/CMO/2020/006
Category:	Immediate (cascade within 6 hours)
Title:	Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Key changes to case definition
What is this about:	This alert and updated pathway outline the initial assessment questions to identify a patient who may require isolation and testing.
Why has it been sent:	This letter updates the advice sent on 26 February 2020. The key change is in relation to Italy.

Message for all clinical staff encountering patients with respiratory infections arrived from overseas

The advice for returning travellers has been [updated](#) as a result of the increase in cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) in Italy. The complete list of affected countries and specified areas can be found [here](#) and this list, as at 06 March 2020, is replicated on the next page.

Anyone potentially affected by this change is being advised **not** to attend their GP practice or present at hospital Emergency Departments but to call 111 Wales. .

The four key principles to bear in mind in community settings are to:

- **Identify** possible cases as soon as possible.
- **Isolate** to prevent transmission to other patients and staff.
- Avoid direct physical contact unless wearing **appropriate personal protective equipment**.
- Get **specialist advice** from Public Health Wales (**0300 00 300 32**).

Countries and specified areas affected by COVID-19 with implications for returning travellers or visitors arriving in the UK (as at 06/03/20)

Category 1: People should self-isolate, even if asymptomatic, and call 111 Wales.

Category 2: People do not need to undertake any special measures, but if they develop symptoms they should self-isolate and call 111 Wales.

Category 1 countries/areas	Category 2 countries/areas
Wuhan city and Hubei Province (China, see map)	Cambodia
Iran	China*
Daegu or Cheongdo (Republic of Korea, see map)	Hong Kong
Any Italian town under containment measures (see map)	Italy* (see map) (the whole country, except areas listed under category 1)
	Japan
	Laos
	Macau
	Malaysia
	Myanmar
	Republic of Korea*
	Singapore
	Taiwan
	Thailand
	Vietnam

*Except areas of the country specifically referred to in Category 1.

The attached pathway which outlines the initial assessment questions to identify a patient who may require isolation and testing has been updated to reflect the changes to the geographical component of the case definition. All primary and secondary healthcare providers should make arrangements for such patients to be identified immediately and isolated according to the Public Health England (PHE) guidance.

PHE in collaboration with Public Health Wales (PHW) and the wider NHS has published guidance covering the following:

- [Initial assessment and investigation of cases](#)
- [Infection prevention and control and guidance](#)
- [Guidance on diagnostics](#)
- [Guidance for primary care](#)

Wales has so far seen two confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) but further cases are highly likely. We remain in the detection and containment phase.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Frank Atherton', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Dr Frank Atherton
Chief Medical Officer

To: NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership to forward to:

All General Practitioners - please ensure this message is seen by all practice nurses and non-principals working in your practice and retain a copy in your 'locum information pack'.

All Community Pharmacists

Dentists

Optometrists

Deputising services

HB Chief Pharmacists

HB Prescribing Advisers

Independent/Private clinics and Hospitals and Hospices throughout Wales

To: Health Boards and NHS Trusts:

Chief Executives

Medical Directors

Nurse Directors

Directors of Public Health

Hospital Principals and Chief Pharmacists

Onward distribution to:

Immunisation Leads,

Infectious Disease Departments

Acute medical units

Microbiologists

To: Public Health Wales:

Chief Executive

Director of Public Health Services

Consultants in Communicable Disease Control

Microbiologists

Consultant Epidemiologists

Vaccine Preventable Disease Programme

Cc: NHS Direct Wales

British Medical Association

Royal College of GPs

Royal College of Nursing

Royal College of Midwives

Royal Pharmaceutical Society

Community Pharmacy Wales

Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health Wales