

Public Health Wales statement on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak

This statement will be updated daily at 12pm

Updated: 12pm Thursday 19 March 2020

Dr Robin Howe, Incident Director for the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak response at Public Health Wales, said:

"Twenty-four new cases have tested positive for Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Wales, bringing the total number of confirmed cases to 170, although the true number of cases is likely to be higher.

"As has been reported previously, two people in Wales who tested positive for Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) have died.

"Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) is now circulating in every part of Wales, and this is reflected in the Welsh Government decision yesterday to close schools in Wales.

"We are working closely with health boards, NHS 111 and the Welsh Government to develop systems so that NHS Wales and members of the public have appropriate access to Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) testing. Based on careful risk assessment, a phased rollout of testing will commence starting with health care workers involved in frontline patient facing clinical care.

"Testing capacity is being expanded and is currently prioritised for patients, health care workers involved in frontline patient facing clinical care and others where recommended by health board medical directors. As our testing capacity increases, further guidance will be issued on those who are eligible for testing.

"Members of the public should follow the latest public health advice, which was updated on Monday 16 March."

The updated guidance is:

- **People who live with others** should stay at home for 14 days if they, or anyone in their household, has either a high temperature or a new and continuous cough
- **People who live alone** should stay at home for seven days if they develop a high temperature or a new and continuous cough
- **Everyone** should avoid non-essential contact with others and unnecessary travel
- **Everyone** being asked to work from home where they possibly can, and avoid pubs, clubs, theatres and social venues
- **People over 70, and vulnerable groups of any age** will be asked within days to be shielded from social contact for several weeks

For the guidance in full, visit the Department of Health and Social Care website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>

Dr Robin Howe said: "People no longer need to contact NHS 111 if they think they may have contracted Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19).

"People with a fever or persistent cough should stay at home for seven days if they live alone, or 14 days if they live with others. Anyone who lives with someone displaying coronavirus symptoms should also stay at home for 14 days. They should not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital.

"They should only contact NHS 111 if they feel they cannot cope with their symptoms at home, their condition gets worse, or their symptoms do not get better after seven days.

"The public play an important role in the 'delay' phase. By following the latest advice, you will protect yourself, protect the most vulnerable, and delay and flatten the peak, which will reduce the pressure on NHS Wales and minimise the impact of the virus."

Health Board	New Cases	Cumulative Cases
Swansea Bay	1	33
Aneurin Bevan	13	76
Betsi Cadwaladr	0	7
Cardiff and Vale	8	28
Cwm Taf	1	6
Hywel Dda	1	12
Powys	0	8
Wales	24	170

The latest information is available from GOV.UK:

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): UK government response](#)

