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

This statement will be updated daily at 2pm

Updated: 2:00pm Wednesday 29 July

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

"On the Public Health Wales surveillance dashboard, please note the weekly update of the hospital cases tabs (hospital admissions, hospital inpatients and hospital onset) has been delayed due to a problem with data transfer. The other dashboard tabs are not affected.

"**Face coverings** are now mandatory in Wales for people using public transport and taxis.

"Recently the Minister for Health and Social Services announced that anyone arriving in Wales, and the rest of the UK, from Spain (or who has been in Spain during the past 14 days) will now be required to quarantine for 14 days.

"The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has updated its guidance, advising against all but essential travel to mainland Spain. People currently on holiday in Spain are encouraged to follow the local rules, return home as normal and check the FCO's travel advice pages on GOV.UK for further information.

"We continue to caution and remind the public and business-owners that we all have a vital role in preventing the spread of Coronavirus by always sticking to social distancing guidelines - staying two metres away from others, and washing hands regularly. When travelling you should also avoid car sharing with people outside your household.

"Anyone with suspected symptoms of COVID-19 infection - a high temperature, a new, continuous cough, or a loss of smell or taste (anosmia) - must self-isolate and seek an urgent test.

"Confirmed cases must isolate for seven days, with members of their household isolating for 14 days until the risk of passing on further infection has gone. Combined, these simple but effective actions will ensure the virus does not spread.

Updates on current incidents

"In Wrexham, mobile testing units are being introduced today (29 July) to make it easier for people living in communities on the edge of Wrexham town centre to get a COVID-19 test.

"The easy-access testing facilities will initially be based in Hightown and Caia Park. As well as making it easier to get a test, these units will help public health experts gain a better understanding of the situation in Wrexham.

"The work is being coordinated by Public Health Wales, Wrexham Council, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and other partners, with support from the Association of Voluntary Organisations in Wrexham (AVOW) and other community groups. As in other parts of the country, the testing stations will be managed by the army.

"Residents living in these areas are being encouraged to get a test if they think they have symptoms, no matter how mild.

"There are no significant updates since yesterday on the previously reported incidents in Llangefni, Ebbw Vale and Merthyr.

Contact tracing and general information

"Contact tracing continues in Wales as part of the Welsh Government's *Test, Trace, Protect* strategy. Anyone who has a positive Coronavirus test will be contacted by a team of contact tracers, and asked for details of everyone they have had close contact with while they have had symptoms.

"Please keep a note of your activities so you can easily remember your whereabouts on a given day, along with who you were in contact with.

"If you are asked to self-isolate, you should also comply with this request to prevent further spread of the virus.

"Tracers are trained staff and personal information that you provide will handled in line with data protection regulations and will not be shared widely.

"Further information about the symptoms of Coronavirus is available on the Public Health Wales website, or members of the public can use the NHS Wales symptom checker.

"Anyone experiencing Coronavirus symptoms can apply for a home testing kit by visiting www.gov.wales/coronavirus, or by calling the national 119 phone service.

"Anyone with suspected coronavirus 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.

"Only call 999 if you are experiencing a life-threatening emergency, do not call 999 just because you are on hold to 111. We appreciate that 111 lines are busy, but you will get through after a wait."

"Public Health Wales' user-friendly data dashboard takes information from a range of different sources. The total number of positive cases now includes those reported from non-NHS Wales laboratories, which are subject to ongoing de-duplication, refinement and reconciliation. This may result in fluctuation of the total positive cases as this process takes place.

"It should be noted that the cases from non-NHS Wales laboratories are not new cases, and have been on the dashboard for a number of weeks. They have previously been reported on a separate tab, but are now incorporated into the totals for the local authority area and Health Board area in which the patient resides, to give a complete picture for Wales.

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