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

This statement will be updated daily at 2pm

Statement: Wednesday 14 October 2020

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

"Public Health Wales' daily dashboard is today reporting the largest number of positive Coronavirus cases on a single day for the entire pandemic at 946 new cases. This demonstrates the high growth in numbers of positives, and reminds us how important it is that we all stick to the local restrictions, and to follow the social distancing measures to prevent the spread of the disease.

"We have seen an increase in transmission of the Coronavirus in social clubs, and would like to remind the public that the virus spreads really well in social situations. If you need to visit these type of venues, then:

Don't mix with anyone other than the people that you live with;

Stay 2m apart from people that you don't live with;

If you are contacted by the Test, Trace, Protect service, then please be honest about where you have been and with whom – the contact tracers aren't going to judge you, they are trying to restrict the spread of the virus. By giving them the correct information you will help others avoid infection, and possibly getting seriously ill.

"Local restrictions are now in place in Blaenau Gwent, Bridgend, Caerphilly, Cardiff, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Merthyr Tydfil, Neath Port Talbot, Newport, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Swansea, Torfaen, Vale of Glamorgan, and Wrexham local authority areas, and in the hyperlocal areas of Bangor and Llanelli.

"People who live in these areas must abide by these restrictions to protect themselves, their families, friends, older and vulnerable people, and keep Wales safe. For more information about restrictions in your area, visit the Welsh Government website.

"It is vital that people in every part of Wales stick to social distancing guidelines – that's staying two metres away from others, and washing hands regularly. They must also self-isolate immediately when asked to do so.

"We are aware of misinformation circulating on social media which suggests that testing for COVID-19 generates a positive result for flu or common cold viruses. This is completely incorrect. The swab (PCR, antigen) test for COVID-19 has been specifically developed to detect the presence of the SARS-CoV-2 virus – also known as COVID-19 – and has a proven accuracy rate of 99.91%.

"We would remind everyone to ensure that they are getting their information from established, trusted organisations: Public Health Wales, Welsh Government, and NHS Wales, and not to share anything from unverified sources.

"We are also reminding everyone not to delay in booking a Coronavirus test if you or a member of your

household develop symptoms of the virus, however mild such as a cough, fever or change in sense of taste or smell. You must book a test for Coronavirus promptly to help control the spread of infection. Visit www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test or call 119. Tests are free, there is no charge.

 "You and your household must self-isolate while waiting for the result of your test, and comply with any restrictions in the event of a positive result. If you test positive for Coronavirus should continue to self-isolate for 10 days. Other household members, including those who do not have any symptoms, must stay at home and not leave the house for 14 days.

"Even if you don't have symptoms, you may also be contacted by contact tracers as part of the Welsh Government's Test, Trace, Protect strategy. In this event, you must comply with their instructions. Tracers are trained staff and personal information that you provide will handled in line with data protection regulations and will not be shared widely. 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.

"Helpful advice and support is available via the NHS COVID-19 app. As well as providing alerts if you have been in contact with someone with Coronavirus, the app will also tell you the current risk level in your area.

"Information about the symptoms of Coronavirus is available on the Public Health Wales website, or via the NHS 111 Wales symptom checker.

"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.

"Advice on travelling abroad, including the latest information on quarantine requirements on returning home, can be found on the Welsh Government and FCO websites.

"A recent Public Health Wales survey revealed that more than one in five (21 per cent) of people have been worrying a lot about their mental health, with 55 per cent of those with children in the house also worrying a lot about their children's wellbeing.

"There are resources to support mental health and wellbeing from the How Are You Doing campaign at www.phw.nhs.wales/howareyoudoing. If you have serious concerns for your mental health please do contact your GP."

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