

Cyfarwyddwr Cyffredinol Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol/
Prif Weithredwr GIG Cymru
Grŵp Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol

Director General Health and Social Services/
NHS Wales Chief Executive
Health and Social Services Group



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

To: Chief Executives Health Boards & Trusts

11 December 2020

Dear colleagues

Actions required to reduce the risk of nosocomial transmission of Covid-19: The physical environment.

I am acutely aware that as community transmission of COVID-19 has increased, we continue to see hospital transmission and outbreaks in all health boards and trusts across Wales. Evidence shows that transmissions are occurring between staff and between patients. It is important patients and staff feel confident that all necessary measures are being taken to ensure the safety of the environment in which services are delivered.

This letter and accompanying documents detail a range of measures I expect all health boards and trusts to prioritise and comply with in order to minimise the transmission of Covid-19 in our hospital settings.

A relentless focus on stringent infection prevention and control remains paramount and the attached document 'Key standards for Environmental Cleanliness' sets out our expectations in this area. The document contains a series of recommended standards and principles that all NHS organisations must apply in relation to environmental cleaning and decontamination. The document is based on UK guidance [UK guidance for COVID-19](#) and has been specifically updated to reflect requirements of the NHS in Wales. Changes primarily relate to the frequency of cleaning and decontamination which is necessary to prevent and minimise nosocomial transmission of COVID-19 as services move towards a return to business as usual. I expect health boards to comply fully with these standards but I recognise that there will be resource implications in achieving full compliance. Therefore funding considerations are being looked at through the Directors of Finance Group and further clarification will follow.

I want to re-iterate the importance of adequate bed spacing in healthcare settings and urge you to revisit the letter I issued on 26 June (letter and accompanying guidance attached).

The guidance contains a host of practical advice on a range of issues and I expect all health boards and trusts to use this to plan their physical space accordingly. The guidance applies equally to field hospitals that have recently been stood up. Local risk assessments should be undertaken and consideration given to mitigating actions in cases where it may be difficult to achieve best practice recommendations.

Finally, I would like to draw your urgent attention to the Specialist Estates Services Notification (SESN) issued by NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership - Specialist Estates Services (document attached) on 4 December. This attached guidance is to inform NHS organisations in Wales of the suite of estates and facilities guidance documents released to date to be considered for ventilation in areas where Covid-19 patients may be present.

Thank you for your continued efforts in these challenging times.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Goodall', is positioned above the printed name.

Dr Andrew Goodall CBE

cc: Medical Directors, Health Boards & Trusts
Directors of Nursing, Health Boards & Trusts
Chief Operating Officers, Health Boards & Trusts