



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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7 June 2021

Dear colleagues

As joint chairs of the Welsh Nosocomial Transmission Group (NTG), we would like to draw your attention to the update, as of 1 June 2021, to the UK COVID-19 Infection Prevention and Control (IP&C) guidance which has been published by Public Health England on the UK.Gov website - [Infection Prevention and Control guidance](#). As you will be aware, throughout the pandemic via membership of the UK IP&C cell, Wales has played an active part in developing and updating this guidance and compliance with it by health and social care organisations in Wales has been consistently required.

The most recent update has been drafted following extensive discussion and consultation between the four UK nations, and has been agreed by the UK's four chief medical and nursing officers. It is issued jointly by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), Public Health Wales (PHW), Public Health Agency (PHA) Northern Ireland, Health Protection Scotland (HPS)/National Services Scotland, Public Health England (PHE) and NHS England as official guidance.

The main amendments to this version of the guidance are:

- Inclusion of the hierarchy of controls as these apply to COVID-19, with definitions and supporting materials for implementation;
- Further advice on the use of valved respirators with examples of sterile procedures in the clinical setting;
- Further advice on minimising sessional or extended use of gowns where cohorts of confirmed COVID-19 patients are managed;
- Amendment to the AGP list to state 'upper gastro-intestinal endoscopy where open suction of the upper respiratory tract occurs beyond the oro-pharynx'; and
- Details on protective IP&C measures for individuals who are clinically extremely vulnerable from COVID-19.

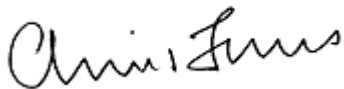
A full list of changes to the previous version are listed on page 8 of the guidance.

You will wish to note that following continued extensive clinical and scientific review, no changes to the recommendations, including PPE, have been made in response to the new variant strains at this stage. This position, however, remains under constant review.

We are grateful to health and social care workers in Wales, whose compliance with good IP&C practice as contained in earlier iterations of this guidance has, in part, been responsible for the significant and sustained reduction in COVID-19 outbreaks in hospitals and other enclosed settings.

Our expectation is that health boards, trusts and social care organisations in Wales should continue to ensure reliable application of all IP&C recommendations contained in this guidance and provide frequent assurance on adherence.

Yours sincerely



PROF CHRIS JONES



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