

WELSH HEALTH CIRCULAR



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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Title: Clinical Assessment of COVID-19 in the Community (Updated)

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For Action by:

GP Senior Partners and Practice
Managers

GP Out of Hours

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WAST ambulatory teams

Action required by: December 2020

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Enclosure(s): None

Dear colleagues

CLINICAL ASSESSMENT OF COVID-19 IN THE COMMUNITY – UPDATE DECEMBER 2020

The Welsh Government issued a Community Framework for the Management of COVID-19 in March 2020 and an update in June 2020. The Framework has now been reviewed and replaced with a national Guideline. This reflects lessons learned over the course of the pandemic and new opportunities for models of delivery. Key developments in the latest guidance include:

- The widespread use of COVID-19 community testing, meaning that primary care clinicians are seeing more patients with proven diagnosis.
- The ability to segment patients with proven or suspected COVID-19 into three risk categories with separate recommended actions.
- The potential to use pulse oximetry to support self-monitoring at home for patients at moderate risk of complications.
- The availability of clear thresholds for admission or staying at home with safety-netting advice.
- The potential for delivering point of care testing in the community for COVID-19 prior to admission in order to stream patients and reduce the risk of transmission.

The Guideline has been produced through the collaborative working of clinicians in primary care and community services, including respiratory nurses, palliative care and respiratory medicine. I am pleased to offer my support for the updated and expanded Guideline ([hyperlinked](#)):

[The All Wales Guideline for the Management of patients with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 in the Community during winter 2020/21](#)

I would also like to thank all of the people who have worked together to develop this latest version. The Guideline will help clinicians, nurses, paramedics and other healthcare professionals to determine which patients should be managed at home with specific safety-netting advice and which patients should be admitted to hospital.

The Guideline is supported by an ethical framework and advice on advance care planning and palliative care in the community.

The Guideline is delivered on a new digital platform and provides educational material and training videos to support your team. Once registered with the website, users can be updated by email whenever the guidance is updated or new education material is uploaded.