



Ref: ATISN 18699

2 August 2023

Dear _____,

ATISN 18699 – Infection Control

Thank you for your request to the Welsh Government for information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) received on 07 July 2023. You have requested the following:

- 1. What was the standard of infection control that NHS Wales and care homes in Wales should have complied with in 2019?*
- 2. Did this standard change in Q1 2020?*
- 3. Did this change from March to Dec 2020?*
- 4. Did Wales adopt all or part of this standard from another part of the UK e.g., Scotland?*
- 5. If yes, was it verified relative to the legal requirements?*
- 6. Was it assessed by the regulator of COSHH-HSE?*

Our response:

1. In 2019 we were using the National Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Manual as our overarching IPC standard ([NIPCM – Public Health Wales \(nhs.wales\)](#)). Care homes, particularly those privately run would have had their own IPC guidance based on the above standards. Public Health Wales (PHW) also provided specific outbreak management guidance and support for care homes.

2. The overarching IPC standards did not change and the NIPCM was available on the PHW website throughout. UK COVID-19 IPC Guidance became

available in Q1 2020, which was specific to the management of COVID in healthcare settings – in Wales it was also used by the care homes sector.

3. NIPCM continued to be in place and was regularly updated based on the manual produced by NHS Scotland. The UK COVID-19 IPC Guidance was regularly updated and reviewed throughout the pandemic.

4. The NIPCM is developed and produced by NHS Scotland, PHW host an online version on their website. The UK COVID-19 IPC guidance was developed by a 4-nations group of IPC specialists set up under emergency arrangements of NHS England & Improvement.

5. The NIPCM is consistent with but does not replace any requirement to comply with legislation that applies to healthcare services, for example the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (CoSHH) Regulations 2002.

6. The UK COVID-19 IPC guidance group developing the guidance followed COSHH – HSE regulations and engaged also with Health & Safety Executive in relation to specific queries and issues that arose during the pandemic.

Next steps

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit,
Welsh Government,
Cathays Park,
Cardiff,
CF10 3NQ

or Email: Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales

Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely,