

RUABON NEWS LETTER 320A

20.04.2020

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION WAS FORWARDED FOR THE RUABON NEWS LETTER BY DAVID GOODBAN, AN ASSEMBLY MEMBER OF THE SUPPORT STAFF, AFTER I HAD SENT OUT THE REGULAR NEWS LETTER. AS WAS THE 2ND ITEM SENT IN BY WCBC. BOTH SEEMED TOO IMPORTANT TO HOLD BACK. SYBIL.

Shielding Letters Explained

All those identified as being at **high risk of severe illness from coronavirus** (due to a serious underlying health issue) will receive a letter from the Chief Medical Officer for Wales.. This is known as a 'shielding letter'. Most people will have received their letter by 3 April but a number of letters have been re-issued and these will be with individuals by **no later than 17 April**.

The letter advises people to stay at home for 12 weeks and contains a range of further information and advice, including how those who have no-one else who can support them can get medication and other essential items such as food.

There is now a comprehensive Q&A on the Welsh Government Coronavirus portal which provides answers to questions about the shielding letters sent out by the Chief Medical Officer for Wales, which you can find here:

<https://gov.wales/cmo-letter-extremely-vulnerable-people-support-explained>

Staying at home for 12 weeks is a big ask but it is for your personal protection. It is your choice to decide whether to follow the measures we advise.

Individuals in special circumstances could decide not to follow this advice. This will be a deeply personal decision. We recommend calling your GP or specialist to discuss this.

Q. What if I think I'm extremely vulnerable and I don't receive a shielding letter?

A. To ensure all high risk patients are contacted, GPs have been provided with a list of those who've been sent shielding letters to check against their known patients. They will contact any additional high risk patients not identified to provide the advice outlined by the Chief Medical Officer. Whilst we appreciate that you might be anxious, please give your GP some time to look through the lists.

If you do not receive a shielding letter and your GP does not think you need to stay at home then it is possible that you are not, clinically speaking, in the extreme risk category, and we advise you follow the [social distancing guidance for people with other conditions](#).

Q. I have received a shielding letter and I don't know why because I don't think I am at extreme risk?

A. You have received a letter because our NHS systems have identified you as having a serious health issue - or that you care for someone who does. This means it is very important you or they take extra steps to avoid catching coronavirus.

Sometimes mistakes can happen - if you are certain that none of the groups we have identified as extremely vulnerable apply to you, then a mistake may have occurred. Read the list of the [groups identified as extremely vulnerable](#).

We apologise if this has happened; the process of identifying those considered extremely vulnerable involved NHS data staff pulling information from a number of NHS databases and health records. This process is as accurate as it can be, but may not be perfect.

We recommend calling your GP or specialist to check.

Q. What information did you use to decide I am extremely vulnerable?

A. We decided who to include in this group based on NHS professional advice

Read the list of the [groups identified as extremely vulnerable](#).

NHS systems have been searched for people who might fall into this category. Given the difficulties of identifying those most vulnerable, in some cases this is also going to require judgements by GPs about their patients. They may know of specific additional patients in their practice who they think are particularly high risk.

GPs will contact anyone within their practice who has not received a letter but who they think needs to follow the advice and may require extra support with food and collecting medicine.

Q. Why have I not been identified as extremely vulnerable when I have a health condition?

A. There is a much broader group of vulnerable people who have not been written to but have been previously been advised through [published guidance](#) to strictly follow the social distancing advice in order to help reduce the risk of catching coronavirus.

Read the list of the [groups identified as extremely vulnerable](#).

If you are vulnerable you should ask family, friends and neighbours to support you and use online services. If this is not possible, then the public sector, business, charities, and the general public are gearing up to help. Find out more from [Third Sector Support Wales](#).

If you are not within the shielding group, but are self-isolating and you have no support although you will not be able to request a food parcel, you should contact your local authority straight away to ask for help.

Q. I am unhappy that my condition (for example, Motor Neurone Disease; auto-immune condition) is not on the list of groups identified as being extremely vulnerable

A. The list of people to be regarded as extremely vulnerable was drawn up on expert clinical advice. If you feel you should be included amongst those who should be shielding and staying home for 12 weeks because of your own circumstances, then we advise you to discuss it with your GP or specialist.

Q. My GP says that they have not been contacted with a list of people?

A. GPs were sent a list of their patients who have been sent shielding letters on 31 March.

Given the difficulties of identifying those most vulnerable, in some cases this is going to require judgements by GPs about their patients. They may know of specific additional patients in their practice who they think are particularly high risk.

GPs will contact anyone within their practice who has not received a shielding letter but who they think needs to follow the advice and may require extra support with food and collecting medicine. Whilst we appreciate that you

might be anxious, please give your GP some time to look through the lists.

Q. A letter has been wrongly addressed to me or a family member

A. Sometimes mistakes can happen - if you are certain that none of the above groups apply to you or a member of your household - a mistake may have occurred. We apologise if this has happened, but as outlined above, whilst every care has been taken, the process may not have been perfect. We recommend calling your GP to check.

Q. My letter was sent to somebody else's address

A. We apologise if this has happened. Sometimes mistakes can happen with data entry which may have resulted in your letter going to the wrong address.

Q. Health and social care arrangements. What about the health and social care support I currently receive?

A. If you receive support from health and social care organisations, for example if you have care provided for you through the local authority or health care system, this will continue.

Q. What about planned GP appointments?

A. Wherever possible, GP appointments will be provided by phone, email or online. If you need to be seen, your GP practice will contact you to let you know what you should do

Q. What about planned hospital appointments?

A. Your hospital or clinic will contact you if any changes need to be made to your care or treatment. Please phone your hospital or clinic if you have any questions about your appointment. Some hospital appointments may need to be cancelled or postponed. This is part of the plans to help the

NHS to respond to the coronavirus outbreak. You will still be able to contact your hospital care team if you have an urgent issue.

Q. Delivery of medicines. What about medicine deliveries?

A. If you've received the letter from the Chief Medical Officer (or your GP) and are following the 'shielding measures' then you'll firstly need to see if family, friends or neighbours can collect your medicine from the pharmacy for you.

If this isn't possible, please speak to your regular community pharmacy to discuss how you can get your medicine.

Pharmacies will shortly have extra capacity to make more deliveries and will also have a record of who has been identified as extremely vulnerable in your area.

Q. Going to work. What about my work?

A. If you are employed, please show the shielding letter from the Chief Medical Officer for Wales (or your GP) to your employer. You should not go to your normal place of work - you will need to work at home for the next 12 weeks, if you can do so. You do not need to get a fit note from your GP.

If you need help from the welfare system you can find out more information on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

Q. Delivery of food. Am I able to access a priority delivery slot for online shopping deliveries if I have received a letter notifying me I'm part of the shielded group?

A. Major supermarkets now have the details of all those who have or are due to receive a shielding letter from the Chief Medical Officer for Wales to enable them to prioritise orders for those who are shielding. Details of any further high risk individuals identified by GPs will also be passed on to the major supermarkets.

Q. Am I eligible for a food box?

A. Only if you have received a shielding letter from the Chief Medical Officer for Wales (or your GP) advising you to stay at home for 12 weeks; **and** you have no other means of getting food - meaning you are unable to do online shopping and you have no family, friends, neighbours or support groups who can deliver to you.

Local authorities now have the details of all those who have or are due to receive a shielding letter from the Chief Medical Officer for Wales to enable them to support those who are shielding. Details of any further high risk individuals identified by GPs will also be passed on to the local authorities.

Q. How do I arrange for a food box delivery?

A. If you are unable to do online shopping and have no family, friends, neighbours or support groups who can deliver to you, then you can contact your local authority to request a food box - the contact number for your Local Authority is on the shielding letter you received from the Chief Medical Officer (or your GP).

Q. When will I get my food box?

A. Deliveries have started but you need to get in touch with your Local Authority. Your Local Authority will authorise orders and the food box will be delivered directly

to your home by a food service business. Once your delivery begins, it will be a weekly delivery. Local Authorities also have local arrangements in place to help people who are in immediate need - before the deliveries begin.

Q. What will be in my food box? What about specialist diets and religious requirements?

A. The box will contain essential foods in packages and tins but only limited fresh produce. We are not able to vary boxes to take account of dietary requirements but contents will be labelled. We hope to improve this and offer choice at a later stage if that is possible. Please do make sure you check the ingredients very carefully if you have an allergy or other dietary requirement.

A box will provide food and essentials for one person for one week. If there are two eligible people in the house, there will be two boxes.

Q. Do I need to register? Do I need to register as shielding/vulnerable?

A. People in Wales are not being asked to register as vulnerable. We realise that this is different to the arrangements in England, but in Wales we have decided to take a different approach. If you are vulnerable but not in the shielding group you should ask family, friends and neighbours to support you and use online services. If this is not possible, then the public sector, business, charities, and the general public are gearing up to help. Find out more from [Third Sector Support Wales](#).

Q. Do others in my household have to stay at home?

A. No, they do not have to stay at home as well. However, we would advise that you try to separate yourselves in the home environment as much as possible, for example by

having separate rooms, and that family members who have to go out take extra precautions when they come home.

The logo for Businessline, featuring the word "Businessline" in a bold, sans-serif font. The "B" is significantly larger and more stylized than the rest of the letters.

THE JOB RETENTION SCHEME PORTAL IS NOW LIVE!

Businesses are now able to submit a claim (some of you will have asked your accountant to do this on your behalf).

Before you start the claim process you will need to:

- [check that both you and your furloughed employee can use the scheme](#)
- [work out how much you can claim](#)

If you are eligible to make a claim, this link gives you full details of all the information you will need to provide, together with information about what happens after you have submitted a claim.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-for-wages-through-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme>

OTHER NEWS:

HMRC clarifies income and trading profit calculation

HMRC has published guidance outlining how total income and trading profits will be calculated under the Self-employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS). HMRC will use the figures provided on tax returns for total trading income (turnover), then deduct any allowable business expenses and capital expenditure. Examples of allowable expenses include office and premises costs, travel costs, staff costs and the cost of raw materials.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-hmrc-works-out-total-income-and-trading-profits-for-the-self-employment-income-support-scheme>

New lenders announced under the Coronavirus Loan Scheme

The British Business Bank has announced that it has approved four new lenders for accreditation under the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS). The

lenders are The Co-operative Bank, Cynergy Bank, OakNorth Bank and Starling Bank. Full details: <https://www.british-business-bank.co.uk/british-business-bank-announces-new-lenders-under-the-coronavirus-business-interruption-loan-scheme/>

Business Rates Grant Update

Wrexham Council would like to thank everyone involved in paying out more than £14 million to 1,220 businesses in Wrexham as part of the business rates relief support announced by Welsh Government.

Claims are still being received every day and anyone who hasn't applied yet is encouraged to check if their business is eligible and if so, submit an online application. If you do apply, please check the details you provide very carefully – especially bank account numbers and sort codes – as incorrect details can lead to delays in payment.

Online application form: <https://beta.wrexham.gov.uk/service/covid-19-help-businesses>

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