



May 2020 Special Info Burst - Coronavirus Update

Special Coronavirus Info Bursts

Thank you to everyone for doing all you can to keep yourselves and others safe during the pandemic and for all your good wishes to Welsh Ambulance Staff. During the Covid 19 Pandemic we have been doing our utmost to ensure you get the most up to date information and support regarding symptom checkers and 111 services, as well as important Government Information and the latest Public Health Wales news. We have done this by sending out special Info bursts more frequently as things have changed. Please let us know if you have found these helpful as this will guide our future work.

The Welsh Ambulance Service Patient Experience and Community Involvement Team would like to hear from you!

During the Coronavirus pandemic everyone has had to change the way they work, and the Welsh Ambulance Service Patient Experience and Community Involvement Team are no exception. If you have been accustomed to visits from us to your community groups over the years, we are sorry that we have not been able to do this for a while, and that all our visits have had to be cancelled. We are however very much “open for business”. However for the foreseeable future it will not be “business as usual”. Please do continue to tell us about your experiences about how things have gone for you,

We are interested to hear from you if you have:

- Used any services delivered by the Welsh Ambulance Service during the pandemic (i.e. called 999, called 111/0845 46 47, accessed the NHS 111 Wales website)?
- How was your experience, did you get the help, support or information you needed
- Have you found any of the specialist easy read/BSL/Audio information we have produced useful?
- Have you avoided using our services during the pandemic? If so why?
- Where else have you gone for help?



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We would urge people with medical emergencies (other than suspected covid-19) to contact the Welsh Ambulance Service, GP or hospital. There has been an alarming drop in demand for non-covid19 services. There have been genuine concerns that people with medical emergencies may have been avoiding or delaying seeking help.

We want to know from you how best you would like us to continue to engage with you until the restrictions are lifted. Such as, through online meetings which are possible through platforms such as Facebook Live and Zoom etc., if the community group you are part of are meeting already via these platforms and you would like to involve us, please do invite us to take part in your 'virtual' meetings. Or for instance, if you would prefer telephone calls, surveys, both online, and face to face via Facebook Live and Zoom in order to keep in touch. Please do share your ideas with us.

Soon people will be able to send us their feedback by text using WhatsApp, we'll be making the number available very soon. We are also considering a 'virtual conference' where we would ask you to save the date, and invite you to join us face to face, via Zoom. Please let us know your ideas or what you would prefer. You can continue to give us your feedback as always in the following ways:

- Have your say by visiting the Get Involved page on our website www.ambulance.nhs.uk
- Via email through our PECI Mailbox Peci.team@wales.nhs.uk
- Via Twitter [@WelshAmbPIH](https://twitter.com/WelshAmbPIH)
- Telephone: 01792 311773

NHS Direct Wales Rebrand

The NHS Direct Wales (NHSDW) website and social media platforms have been sources of trusted health information for many years, with millions of web visits every year. During the pandemic, the website has hosted the Covid-19 symptom checker which has been a key resource in providing support to patients and managing demand on the 111 telephone service. An early decision was taken by Welsh Government that, during the pandemic the 111 Freephone number would be made available to the whole of Wales for Covid-19 related enquiries, including those areas of the country where the full 111 service is yet to be rolled out. While this development has allowed the public to access advice and support for Covid-19 queries, the website and social media platforms continued to be branded NHS Direct Wales. To ensure there was consistent messaging and avoid any confusion, a decision was made to rebrand the website and our social media platforms to NHS 111 Wales. Any existing links that you may have bookmarked to the NHS Direct Wales website will continue to be redirected to the new website address. The 0845 46 47 NHS Direct Wales telephone number remains in use for non-Covid-19 related enquiries in those areas of Wales where the full 111 service is yet to be made available.



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COVID-19 symptom checker hits one million visits milestone

The COVID-19 online symptom checker which gives people advice on what to do based on their symptoms has received one million visits since its launch in March. The aim of the symptom checker is designed not only to signpost users to the most appropriate care, but also to ease the pressure on its 111 service. To make the symptom checker even more accessible and direct people to the right advice and information, a 'ChatBot' facility has also been launched on the [NHS 111 Wales website](#) and [NHS 111 Facebook page](#) to enable the public to check their symptoms via a social media platform.

Check out all our Symptom Checkers

In addition to any symptoms linked with Covid 19, you are also able to check other Health Symptoms. Symptoms such as:

Stomach pain [HERE](#) **Rash** [HERE](#)

Back pain [HERE](#)

If you are generally unwell [HERE](#)

If you have breathing problems [HERE](#)

COVID Symptom Tracking App

First Minister Mark Drakeford and NHS Wales are appealing to the Welsh public to download a new [COVID \(Coronavirus\) Symptom Tracker app](#) and report your health, even if you feel well. By answering some quick questions on a daily basis, the app will help NHS Wales understand the symptoms and spread of COVID-19.



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Advice for parents/guardians when a child is unwell or injured

Whilst Coronavirus (COVID-19) is infectious to children, it is rarely serious. If your child is unwell it is likely to be a non-coronavirus illness, rather than coronavirus. Whilst it is important to follow Government advice to stay at home, if your child is unwell or injured remember that NHS 111, GPs and hospitals are still open to provide safe advice and care. For further information visit Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health.

Nationwide survey of children and young people

An important survey has been designed to help children and young people to tell Welsh Government how they've felt about lockdown: how it's impacted on their health; any worries they've had; how they think it might affect their education; and also any positives. The survey makes clear where children can seek help if they are affected by any of the topics in the survey and it has been adapted for different age ranges and needs.

People who can make a difference to your life want to hear from you about how life has been like over the last few weeks. The Children's Commissioner for Wales, the Youth Parliament and Children in Wales have been working with the Welsh Government, to make sure that they hear and listen to what you have to say. All of those people want to make sure they are doing their best for all children and young people in Wales. They want to make sure that they are giving you the information and support you need to feel as happy as possible during this time and afterwards. The survey should take you around 15 minutes. The survey closes on 27th May.

You can complete the survey [HERE](#). Or through social media: #CoronavirusAndMe: <https://bit.ly/2Anb7Px>

Please share your views: www.childcomwales.org.uk/coronavirusandme



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Coronavirus information available in different formats

To ensure everyone in the community has access to up to date information, [Easy Read leaflets](#) about the Coronavirus, social distancing, staying at home, self-isolation and ways your Pharmacy can help, are now available on the NHS Direct Wales website. You can also change the page settings on the [Coronavirus encyclopaedia](#) page to meet your needs using a new accessibility toolbar. Functions include play audio aloud, change font size, page colour, magnify and translate.

Videos in British Sign Language (BSL) with audio voice over, explaining about the [Covid Tracker App](#) and the [Personal Protective Equipment](#) (PPE) we use when responding to 999 calls are also available via the Welsh Ambulance Service YouTube channel.

Giving a voice to people living and working in care homes in Wales

The Older People's Commissioner for Wales wants to hear from older people living in care homes, their friends and family, and care home staff about their experiences during the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown, any issues and challenges they have faced, or are facing, and what needs to change to protect and support people living and working in care homes. She also wants people to share examples of any action and good practice being delivered in care homes that is making a positive difference to older people's lives.

The information shared will support the Commissioner in her ongoing work to influence the action being taken to protect people living and working in care homes, and help her to scrutinise the response of the Welsh Government and other public bodies to the Covid-19 pandemic and hold them to account for the decisions they have made. [CLICK HERE TO SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES](#)

Support for domestic abuse victims

Domestic abuse is not acceptable; anyone experiencing domestic violence and abuse is not to blame and is not alone. Help and support is available. Anyone in immediate danger should call 999 – and press 55 on a mobile if you are unable to talk. This will transfer your call to the relevant police force who will assist you without you having to speak. Or call Live Fear Free Helpline.

Alternatively call Live Fear Free Helpline on 0808 80 10 800 or go online for further information.



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Carer Strategy Survey

The Welsh Government defines carers as: “anyone of any age, who provides **unpaid care** and support to a relative, friend or neighbour who is disabled, physically or mentally ill, or affected by substance misuse”.

The Health and Social Care organisations in West Wales are developing a regional strategy for unpaid carers which will be endorsed by the West Wales Regional Partnership Board. This survey is based on the three key themes identified by the Welsh Government:

- Identification of carers
- Supporting life alongside caring
- Providing information, advice and assistance (IAA)

The survey is intended for unpaid carers and organisations that support unpaid carers. Please circulate the link to this survey through your networks. You can take part in this survey [HERE](#)

The closing date is Friday 29th May.

We are also soon to be re-launching our **Welsh Ambulance Service Carers Survey 2020** and it would be great to hear from you

Organisations’ work together to improve unpaid carers’ access to medicines across Wales during the COVID-19 pandemic

Carers Trust Wales and Carers Wales in partnership with the Royal Pharmaceutical Society, Community Pharmacy Wales and Welsh Government, has developed a suite of resources to support unpaid carers – those who provide support to a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health condition or an addiction cannot cope without their support - to be better able to access essential medicines during the COVID-19 pandemic. Find out more [HERE](#)



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Care for a Cuppa talks and information sessions for carers

Carers Wales are holding a series of online each Tuesday between 14.30 and 16.30 (unless otherwise stated). Each session will be held in English and will feature a different speaker every week between 15.00 and 16.00. There is also an opportunity for you to chat with other carers before and after each talk.

You will be able to attend these using Zoom. You do not need your own account to register, just the link and meeting ID that we send you.

For more information click this link to go to Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/care-for-a-cuppa-every-tuesday-with-carers-wales-registration-104313103300>

or to register directly click here for Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZArc-itpz8rHtGx11PvaWTQ0fCXFAFFYFEb>

Looking after your health and wellbeing

For information about how to be [staying well at home](#); staying physically well, looking after your mental health, keeping connected and helping others, visit the [Public Health Wales website](#).

A new online mental health community support site for HAFAL Wales - provides a chat room for support and MH information. Find out more [HERE](#)

The Welsh Ambulance Service Mental Health Support leaflet can also signpost you to a number of excellent helplines, you can find the leaflet Welsh version [HERE](#) English version [HERE](#)

Contact us:

Patient Experience & Community Involvement Team Telephone:

01792 311773

Email: Peci.team@wales.nhs.uk



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Visit the Get Involved page on our website www.ambulance.nhs.uk
Twitter: @WelshAmbPIH

You can spread the virus even if you don't have symptoms.

