

CORONAVIRUS

PUBLIC INFORMATION

SOCIAL MEDIA

We would encourage you to share the latest updates and advice from us @BetsiCadwaladr on Twitter and also @PublicHealthW. We would also welcome the sharing of our Facebook posts - search for Betsi Cadwaladr.

Key messages are:

- Members of the public can help protect themselves and others by always carrying tissues, and using them to catch coughs or sneezes. They should bin the tissue, and to kill the germs, wash their hands with soap and water, or use a sanitiser gel. This is the best way to slow the spread of most germs, including Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19).
- Anybody who is worried that they have symptoms of coronavirus should check the online NHS Direct symptom checker at www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk before contacting the NHS by dialling 111. **They should not visit any healthcare setting, including hospitals or GP practices.**
- If you are planning to travel check travel advice on GOV.UK.

USEFUL WEBSITES

www.phw.nhs.wales

www.bcuhb.nhs.wales

www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/COVID19/ (symptom checker)



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COMMUNITY TESTING SERVICE

We have set up three Community Testing Units (CTUs) in North Wales to support the response to tackling Novel Coronavirus (COVID 19). The drive-through units will help us to meet demand for testing over the coming weeks.

Only patients who have completed an initial assessment through the all-Wales 111 telephone service and who have an appointment will be tested at the units. Members of the public who visit the units without having had an assessment through 111 will not be tested. The units are not operating a walk-in service and will not provide testing without a prior appointment.

Anybody who is worried that they have symptoms of coronavirus should check the online NHS Direct symptom checker at www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk before contacting the NHS by dialling 111. They should not visit any healthcare setting, including hospitals or GP practices.

The CTUs are located at Rossett Clinic, Wrexham; Bryn y Neuadd Hospital in Llanfairfechan; and Ysbyty Alltwen in Porthmadog.

Following an initial assessment by NHS Direct Wales or 111 and Public Health Wales, patients who meet the case definition of having potentially been infected, and who are well enough and able to drive, will be asked to attend the Unit for a COVID-19 test. This is a simple throat and nasal swab.

The full press release is here:

<https://bcuhb.nhs.wales/news/health-board-news/community-testing-units-set-up-to-help-support-novel-coronavirus-diagnosis/>



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COMMUNITY TESTING SERVICE CONTINUED

To date, a large number of community tests have been undertaken, and that will continue. In line with national guidance, all swabs need to be undertaken with staff deployed in full Personal Protection Equipment (PPE).

The use of a drive-in approach allows us to deploy our staff as efficiently as possible. This also maximises safety, as staff are able to put on personal protective equipment and remove it in a controlled environment. This is an approach that is supported nationally, and Public Health experts are content that this approach is entirely safe.



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111 SERVICE

Our colleagues at WAST have developed a Covid-19 symptom checker, which is hosted on the NHS Direct Wales website – www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/COVID19/ – and is advising that anyone worried about their symptoms should use this as a first port of call. You can imagine that many people have understandable concerns, but that calls from the worried well tie up phone lines unnecessarily. Patients who use the symptom checker will be advised if they need to call. This is in line with the approach by NHS England and the digital first option is being promoted to ensure that 111 lines are protected for those who really need them.

At this stage, it would be helpful if you could help share the message with your constituents that the first port of call should be the online symptom checker, and only to dial 111 if then advised to do so.

You may be aware that Minister for Health and Social Services, Vaughan Gething, has announced that 111 is now available across Wales for the management of Covid-19 calls. The 111 service is hosted by our colleagues at the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust.

In those areas of Wales where 111 has yet to be fully rolled out, including in Betsi Cadwaladr, this means that callers will be able to access advice and information on Covid-19 without charge.

This is now operational and callers from North Wales who have been to an affected area and who are unwell will have their call triaged within Wales. Those patients who dial 111 from the Betsi Cadwaladr with a non Covid-19 related call will be asked to redial NHS Direct Wales on 0845 46 47.

Given the pace at which things are changing, colleagues at WAST and the 111 Programme Team are liaising to ensure that there is consistency of approach between England and Wales but you'll appreciate that this is a very dynamic situation.



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