



PRESS RELEASE

4 September 2020

People in Caerphilly urged to social distance properly as clusters of coronavirus give cause for concern

Public Health Wales, Caerphilly County Borough Council and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board are urging people in Caerphilly to remember the vital importance of social distancing, as rising numbers of positive coronavirus (COVID-19) cases causes concern.

Dr Rhianwen Stiff, Consultant in Communicable Disease Control for Public Health Wales, said:

“There has been a significant rise in positive coronavirus cases in Caerphilly in the past week, and our investigations indicate that a lack of social distancing by a small group of people of all age groups, in a range of different locations has resulted in the spread of the virus to other parts of the population.

“It appears that as lockdown restrictions have eased, people have taken advantage of the greater possibilities for activities, but they seem to have forgotten the importance of social distancing – resulting in possible transmission in the wider community.

“It is clear that the virus spreads more easily in indoor settings, and people should take extra care to socially distance in these cases to keep themselves and their friends and families as safe as possible.

“This rise in positive cases in Caerphilly shows that Coronavirus has not gone away. It remains the responsibility of everyone to help prevent the spread of this virus – that is, by self-isolating when asked to do so, staying two metres away from others, and by washing hands regularly.

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"I am making a direct appeal to everyone to remember that even if they feel that they would not be badly affected by COVID-19 if they were to test positive for it, they can easily pass it on to vulnerable or older family members, friends or colleagues which could have serious, even fatal, consequences.

"In addition, I would remind everyone that the Welsh Government's regulations restricts social gatherings to 30 people outdoors, and social distancing should be maintained in all cases.

"I understand that these measures are not easy to adhere to, and make our work and social lives more difficult, but by everyone taking these steps we will ensure that our community is a safer place for all – including the most vulnerable.

"Additionally, if you have children that attend school, college or other child-care settings, and any member of your household has tested positive or developed symptoms you must not send your children to school. They will be considered as contacts and will need to isolate for 14 days. If you are deemed as a contact and you receive a negative test you must **still** continue to isolate for the 14 day period."

It was also confirmed that a temporary walk-in coronavirus testing centre would be set up and operational in Caerphilly Leisure Centre imminently, in order to enable residents to easily access tests and help the investigation into the cluster of new positive cases. No appointment will be necessary for residents of Caerphilly to access the walk through testing service.

Dr Stiff said: "Public Health Wales is working in a multi-agency partnership in the Gwent Test, Trace, Protect Service which includes Caerphilly County Borough Council's Environmental Health Service and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, and together we have agreed that establishing a temporary test centre is necessary in order to manage the heightened level of cases.

"I would invite any Caerphilly resident who has identified even the mildest of coronavirus symptoms, or if they have been feeling generally unwell for no apparent reason, to come and get a test. Details of how to get a test can be found on the Welsh Government website at <https://gov.wales/apply-coronavirus-covid-19-test> and the location of the temporary walk-in test centre will be released later today (Friday 4 September).

"Identifying those individuals who don't have serious symptoms but who are carrying the virus is vital to contain the spread of the virus. By getting

tested, self-isolating and maintaining social distancing measures, we will all be able to deal with this cluster of cases and to keep Caerphilly safe.”

ENDS

For press enquiries contact the Public Health Wales Communications Team on 029 2034 8755 (24 hours).

Notes to Editors

Public Health Wales is an NHS organisation providing professionally independent public health advice and services to protect and improve the health and wellbeing of the population of Wales.

Public Health Wales has four statutory functions:

- To provide and manage a range of public health, health protection, healthcare improvement, health advisory, child protection and microbiological laboratory services and services relating to the surveillance, prevention and control of communicable diseases;
- To develop and maintain arrangements for making information about matters related to the protection and improvement of health in Wales available to the public; to undertake and commission research into such matters and to contribute to the provision and development of training in such matters;
- To undertake the systematic collection, analysis and dissemination of information about the health of the people of Wales in particular including cancer incidence, mortality and survival; and prevalence of congenital anomalies; and
- To provide, manage, monitor, evaluate and conduct research into screening of health conditions and screening of health related matters.
- <https://phw.nhs.wales>