



Ein cyf/Our ref: WAQ80062

Sian Gwenllian MS  
Member of the Senedd for Arfon

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2 March 2021

Dear Sian

I am writing in response to the Written Question, which you submitted but you have not received an answer. Please accept my apologies for the time it has taken to respond to this question.

***Sian Gwenllian (Arfon):*** *Has the First Minister asked the Chief Medical Officer for formal advice on the use of face masks by the public and if so on what date was that request made? WAQ80062 (e)*

When you tabled this question, the Chief Medical Officer did not support a mandatory position on wearing face coverings.

The law in Wales requires the coronavirus regulations to be reviewed by Welsh Ministers every 21 days to ensure they remain effective, necessary and proportionate. This review is informed by public health advice from the Chief Medical Officer for Wales and the latest scientific evidence from the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies and the Welsh Government Technical Advisory Cell.

In his statement of 8 July, the CMO set out several considerations for the adoption of a mandatory position on face coverings and acknowledged the public support for this intervention.

His statement of 13 August highlighted the potential small beneficial effect on transmission and the potential negative effects in respect of the use of face coverings. In this statement, he concluded that in certain circumstances, mandating the wearing face coverings would be a proportionate and reasonable measure if viral transmission increased or in outbreak situations.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

The statements are available at the following links:

12 May statement: <https://gov.wales/statement-chief-medical-officer-wales-dr-frank-atherton-coronavirus-face-coverings>

8 July statement: <https://gov.wales/chief-medical-officer-advice-review-lockdown-arrangements-8-july-2020>

13 August statement: <https://gov.wales/cmo-advice-review-lockdown-arrangements-13-august-2020>

As a result of this review process, from 14 September, all residents in Wales over the age of 11, have been required to wear face coverings in indoor public spaces, such as shops.

There are exemptions and exceptions, which are set out in guidance:

<https://gov.wales/face-coverings-guidance-public>

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Drakeford". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

**MARK DRAKEFORD**