# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE** | **NHS Wales Health System Position Report** |
| **DATE** | **23 December 2020** |
| **BY** | **Vaughan Gething MS, Minister for Health and Social Services** |

In light of the new alert level four restrictions announced by the First Minister on 19 December, I am publishing a system position report to illustrate the scale of the pressures our health and social care services are currently experiencing.

Members will understand that decisions which limit the freedoms we normally take for granted are never taken lightly, but we find ourselves in a situation that requires immediate and decisive action to save lives. Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, we have sought to be transparent in our decision-making and communicate clearly with the public about the realities of the challenges we face and the action we require from them.

The report available at the link below sets out in stark terms the scale and range of challenges our health and social care services are faced with as we approach the festive period:

[https://gov.wales/nhs-wales-health-system-position-report](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fgov.wales%2Fnhs-wales-health-system-position-report&data=04%7C01%7CSarah.Jones064%40gov.wales%7C2de5292a3c3f4aba75d808d8a7597e9a%7Ca2cc36c592804ae78887d06dab89216b%7C0%7C0%7C637443350097925659%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=zKAv%2F%2FDfHXlRLNQJQIWQjVXU6LQfoMrLp1yyEfy%2F0WI%3D&reserved=0)

We are seeing demand for health and care services continuing to increase, at a time when capacity is constrained by physical distancing requirements and staff sickness absence.

Health and care staff have worked incredibly hard to keep us all safe over the past nine months, often at great cost to their own health, wellbeing and time spent with family and loved ones. I am tremendously grateful to our staff for continuing to show such commitment and compassion to keep all of us safe. There is no indication that the pressures on the system are likely to ease as we see significant increases in the incidence of Covid-19 in our hospitals and communities, which will be compounded by the same types of challenges we would expect to see over a ‘normal’ winter.

It is absolutely vital, in this context, that we all play our part in helping to slow the spread of coronavirus and protect our NHS this winter by follow the advice and reduce social mixing to a minimum. We can all make a difference and help to keep Wales safe.

This statement is being issued during recess in order to keep members informed. Should members wish me to make a further statement or to answer questions on this when the Parliament returns I would be happy to do so.