# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Shielding Update**  |
| **DATE**  | **05 May 2020** |
| **BY** | **Vaughan Gething, Minister for Health and Social Services** |

Following a refinement of the medical criteria for shielding, and in line with the other three nations, the Chief Medical Officer for Wales will this week send letters to further high risk patients advising them to shield.  The majority of these patients are within the high-risk categories already identified and have been identified as a result of updated searches of our secondary care systems. In addition to these groups the 4 UK Chief Medical Officers recently agreed that all those on kidney dialysis should be advised to shield.

As a result, approximately 21,000 patients have been added to the Welsh Shielded Patient List (taking the number advised to shield in Wales to approximately 121,000). Updated searches of our primary care system are still being conducted centrally and may identify further patients. We anticipate this process will be completed this week and any further patients identified will also receive a letter from the Chief Medical Officer.

The list of high risk conditions is under constant review and we are following the latest scientific and medical advice to ensure we have identified and contacted everyone who needs to be shielding. Given the severe nature of the measures those who are shielding must take – self-isolation for 12 weeks which includes reducing all non-essential contact with other household members – it is important only those are classed as high risk are added to it.

In line with the initial 12 week shielding advice issued in late March, the latest letters advise people to shield until at least 15 June 2020. The 4 UK Chief Medical Officers will be meeting again to consider next steps and further advice will be issued before 15 June 2020 telling those who are shielding what to do next.

GPs will be provided with an updated list of their patients who have been identified centrally and will remain able to identify and add further patients. This will include English-border GP practices with Welsh resident patients. Secondary Care Clinicians/Specialists will be provided with the updated Welsh Shielded Patient List and will also now be able to identify and add further patients.

Local authorities and the major food retailers will receive the updated Welsh Shielded Patient List at the same time so that the additional people identified can access the support being provided.