



Ein cyf/Our ref WQ80161 and WQ80164

Helen Mary Jones MS
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

2 November 2020

Dear Helen Mary

I am writing to respond to coronavirus-related Written Questions, which you submitted and have not yet received an answer.

Please accept my apologies for the time it has taken to respond to these questions.

Will all contacts of suspected cases who develop symptoms of coronavirus be tested as part of the Welsh Government's test and trace policy? WQ80161

Contact tracing is a tried and tested method of controlling the spread of infectious diseases. It also helps us to prevent and understand how the disease is passing from person to person.

If someone develops symptoms of coronavirus, they should take a coronavirus test within the first five days of developing symptoms – this is when the test is most effective. If they test positive they will be asked to share details of their close contacts.

This information will help the contact tracing teams to identify how quickly the virus is spreading and whether there are hotspots of infection. These contacts are asked to self-isolate for 14 days to ensure they do not have the virus. They will only be advised to take a test if they are displaying symptoms – testing while asymptomatic can generate false negatives and is not recommended for these reasons.

Not all contacts, activities, or environments have an equal risk of transmission. Contact tracing is not an end in itself. It enables individuals to take the right steps to protect their families, friends and their community by self-isolating.

What are the Welsh Government's estimates for the number of PCR tests per day that will be required (a) in care homes (b) for key workers (c) for patients in hospital (d) in the wider community, each month for the next three months? WQ80164

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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.

NHS Wales Test Trace Protect was launched on 1 June.

Our *Testing Strategy* sets out our priorities for testing at <https://gov.wales/covid-19-testing-strategy.html>:

- Controlling and preventing transmission of the virus by supporting contact tracing
- Protecting NHS services – to prevent, protect and deliver testing to support the safety of staff, patients and clients
- Protecting vulnerable groups and managing increased transmission rates – to safeguard and control infection in groups, communities or settings where there are greater risks
- Developing future delivery – to use health surveillance and new technologies to improve our understanding of the virus.

We have increased our testing capacity to respond to the priorities in our testing plan and to respond to the increased demand in testing.

Weekly statistics about testing are published at: <https://gov.wales/testing-coronavirus-weekly-updates>

Yours sincerely,

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

Vaughan Gething AS/MS

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services