

**Coronavirus COVID-19**

**Disabled People’s Frequently Asked Questions**

**Dated: 24/03/20**

**Do we have any answers from Welsh government on protections for disabled people who access social care?**

Visits from care or healthcare workers, who would normally come and help with your daily needs or social care, will be able to carry on as normal. But carers and care workers must stay away if they have any of the symptoms of coronavirus – a high temperature (above 37.8 °C) and/or new and continuous cough.

You may find this guidance on home care provision useful: [**COVID-19: guidance on home care provision**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-residential-care-supported-living-and-home-care-guidance/covid-19-guidance-on-home-care-provision) on GOV.UK

**Will the Coronavirus Bill have any impact on social care in Wales?**

Disability Wales has serious concerns about the implications of the Coronavirus Bill on human rights, especially the rights of specific groups, including disabled people.

We welcome the UK Government’s amendment to ensure the Corona Virus Bill is to be renewed every six months, given the sweeping nature of the powers. Nevertheless, we remain concerned that the Bill gives Ministers the powers to suspend the key provisions in the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 unless services are needed to protect an adult from abuse or neglect or a risk of abuse or neglect. Unlike the suspension of the Care Act (2014) duties in England, there is no express requirement to avoid breaches of the European Convention on Human Rights included.

We call on the Assembly to take action to protect the lives of many thousands of disabled people by ensuring that no services are withdrawn without undertaking an assessment to **verify whether there would be a breach of human rights.** See link to joint statement issued <http://www.disabilitywales.org/coronavirus-bill-statement/>

**Will carers/disabled people be provided with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) i.e. gloves, aprons, masks?**

Welsh Government are taking steps to enhance the arrangements in Wales for protecting our front-line health and social care staff who are caring for suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patients.

As social care has an essential role along with health care in response to COVID-19, PPE will also be released for use by social care providers.

You can contact your local Direct Payment Support provider who will be able to signpost you to where you can get hold of PPE.

**How are 'vulnerable' people in Wales being identified or can they register themselves?**

Identification of those classed as high risk will be done through GP/hospital medical records.

If you have been identified as being at high risk, you will receive a letter from the Welsh Government setting out the advice and sources of help and support in your local community. If you are employed, this is also proof that you will not be able to go to work while you are shielding and can be shared with your employer. If you are able to, you can work from home, if your job allows it. You will not need to get a fit note from your GP.

If you need help from the welfare system visit [**Universal Credit**](https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit) on GOV.UK website.

If you believe you fall into one of the categories of extremely vulnerable people listed above and you have not received a letter, you should discuss your concerns with your GP or hospital clinician.

**Will testing be made available to carers / Personal Assistants and those being supported (disabled people)?**

Welsh Government are aiming to roll out testing beyond the NHS to social care. They are increasing the capacity to do this. It won’t happen immediately but it will be introduced in the coming weeks, with significant extra testing being introduced for other key workers including social care providers.

Those providing social care will be tested if they present Corona like symptoms and they can then be returned to the workplace if the test provides the right result.

We are yet to hear whether testing will be introduced for those being supported.

**I am unable to get a food delivery slot online at any supermarket what can I do?**

There are many local shops (butchers, greengrocers etc) offering a food delivery service or pick up. You could try contacting local shops in your area to see is this is available.

If you are online and use social media you can post to local community pages on facebook for example, to find out what food delivery services are being provided in your area.

Another option is to contact your local Community Voluntary Service (CVC) they may know of volunteers or services who could help you. Here is a link to CVCs across Wales: <https://www.gvs.wales/about-us/wcva-county-voluntary-councils-cvcs-and-volunteer-centres-vcs>

Or contact our office on 029 20887325 email: info@disabilitywales.org and we will do our best to look into the options for you, if you are unable to.

**My Carers / Personal Assistants have all called in sick due to Corona like symptoms, what shall I do?**

If youreceive support through an agency then contact them straight away to inform them of the situation. They will be able to advise you.

If you do not receive support through an agency then contact your local social services to seek advice immediately.

You can find a link to your local council’s website here: <https://www.wlga.wales/welsh-local-authority-links>

**I need to order and collect my repeat prescription/s. What do I do as I’m classed as ‘vulnerable’ and I need to self-isolate?**

Many GP surgeries are restricting access to the surgery itself at this time. You may have to order your repeat prescriptions over the telephone. Please telephone your surgery to check what their procedure is during this Coronavirus pandemic.

Ask family, friends or neighbours for assistance during this time, if this is possible. In many cases prescriptions are being sent to the nearest pharmacy to people and then deliveries are being made to people’s homes where necessary. Explain that you are self-isolating and will need someone to deliver your medication to you.

Make sure you order your repeats in plenty of time. It may take a little longer than usual to obtain your medications due to the high demand. However, there is no need to stock on your medication as this can lead to medication shortages.

Contact your GP and pharmacy to check procedures during 26is time as processes may vary across Wales.

**Useful sources for information:**

Public Health Wales: guidance on social distancing for everyone in Wales including disabled people: [https://phw.nhs.wales/topics/latest-information-on-novel-coronavirus-covid-19/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults/#](https://phw.nhs.wales/topics/latest-information-on-novel-coronavirus-covid-19/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults/)

Social Care Wales: <https://socialcare.wales/news-stories/the-latest-information-on-coronavirus-covid-19>

Dewis Wales: Find local and national organisations that can help you <https://www.dewis.wales/>

All information has been taken from official sources and understood to be correct at time of publishing.