

Public Health Link

From the Chief Medical Officer for Wales

Distribution: As Appendix 1
From: Dr Frank Atherton, Chief Medical Officer for Wales
Date: 6 April 2020
Reference: CEM/CMO/2020/13
Category: Immediate (cascade within 6 hours)
Title: Novel Coronavirus – Clinical Trials – Letter to Health Boards and Trusts

What is this about: This alert relates to the enrolment of COVID-19 patients in national priority clinical trials: clinical trials in primary care, hospital settings and ICUs.

Why has it been sent: This alert highlights a UK communication to NHS organisations relating to the enrolment of COVID-19 patients in national priority clinical trials.



Novel Coronavirus: Clinical Trials

We are writing to ask that every effort is made to enrol COVID-19 patients in the national priority clinical trials; there are trials in primary care, hospital settings and ICUs.

As yet, there are no proven treatments for COVID-19. We and the UK need to gather reliable evidence through clinical trials. Using international evidence and UK expertise the most promising potential treatments, at this stage, have been identified and the UK is running national clinical trials to gather evidence across the whole disease spectrum.

The key three national trials are:

PRINCIPLE (higher risk patients in primary care trial). www.principletrial.org

RECOVERY (in hospital trial) <https://www.recoverytrial.net/> For further information please email: recoverytrial@ndph.ox.ac.uk

REMAP-CAP (critically ill patient trial) <https://www.remapcap.org/> For further information please email: ukremap-cap@icnarc.org

Other priority studies, including observational studies, are listed here <https://www.nihr.ac.uk/covid-19/urgent-public-health-studies-covid-19.htm>

These trials are being run as simply as they can to reduce the burden on the NHS, with adaptive designs so further treatments can be added if new promising candidates are identified. The results are essential to the future treatment of UK and global patients. We and the UK will ensure important results are disseminated rapidly to improve practice.

The faster that patients are recruited, the sooner we will get reliable results.

While it is for every individual clinician to make prescribing decisions, we strongly discourage the use of off-licence treatments outside of a trial, where participation in a trial is possible. Use of treatments outside of a trial, where participation was possible, is a wasted opportunity to create information that will benefit others. The evidence will be used to inform treatment decisions and benefit patients in the immediate future.

Any treatment given for coronavirus other than general supportive care, treatment for underlying conditions, and antibiotics for secondary bacterial complications, should currently be as part of a trial where that is possible.

Kind regards



Dr Frank Atherton
Chief Medical Officer for
Wales



Dr Catherine Calderwood
Chief Medical Officer for
Scotland



Dr Michael McBride
Chief Medical Officer for
Northern Ireland



Professor Chris Whitty
Chief Medical Officer for
England

To: NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership to forward to:

All General Practitioners - please ensure this message is seen by all practice nurses and non-principals working in your practice and retain a copy in your 'locum information pack'.

Cc: Health Boards and NHS Trusts:

Chief Executives
Medical Directors
Nurse Directors
Directors of Public Health

Cc: Public Health Wales:

Chief Executive
Director of Public Health Services
Consultants in Communicable Disease Control
Microbiologists
Consultant Epidemiologists
Vaccine Preventable Disease Programme

Cc: NHS Direct Wales
British Medical Association
Royal College of GPs
Royal College of Physicians
Academy of Medical Royal Colleges
Royal College of Nursing
Royal College of Midwives
Royal Pharmaceutical Society
Community Pharmacy Wales
Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health Wales