



Chief Executives, Health Boards/Trusts
Directors of Social Services, Local Authorities
For dissemination to health and social care staff

December 2020

Dear Colleagues

RE: Protecting yourself and those you care for

As health and social care workers in Wales, we appreciate how hard you work all year to protect the health of your patients and clients. This has never been truer than this year, where the COVID-19 pandemic has put unprecedented pressure on all those working in our health and social care sectors, and very sadly some of our colleagues have died from this disease.

We now have the first approved vaccine available in order to combat COVID-19. It will be given on a priority basis, with front line health and social care workers amongst the first to be offered the vaccine.

We strongly urge all of you to accept the two dose vaccination course when offered, in order to give you immunity and ensure you can be protected whilst you care for vulnerable patients and clients. We believe there is a professional responsibility to take up this offer, which if accepted at scale in the wider community, will create the conditions where the restrictions of COVID on all our lives can eventually improve, especially for those who are vulnerable. As health and social care workers we can set a powerful example to the other groups that have been prioritised as at highest risk.

When we are vaccinated, we protect ourselves and it is hoped to also reduce the risks of passing life-threatening COVID-19 to our patients, clients and our families.

I hope you will join us, and many other colleagues in doing the right thing and supporting the vaccination campaign when you are called. There will also be opportunities to assist with the effort locally for many.

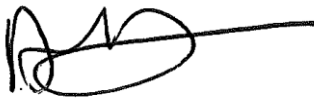
Further information on the COVID-19 vaccination can be found on the Public Health Wales website: <https://phw.nhs.wales/topics/immunisation-and-vaccines/covid-19-vaccination-information/>

As both flu and COVID-19 will be circulating this winter, we would remind you that front line health and social care workers are also entitled to a free annual flu vaccination. If you have not had your flu jab yet and would like to get vaccinated to protect you and your patients/clients you will need to have an interval of at least 7 days between the flu vaccine and the COVID 19 vaccine course.

In these days, we are so grateful to each and every one of you, for your leadership, care and service in health and social care in Wales, which is needed now more than ever.

With our best wishes to you all.

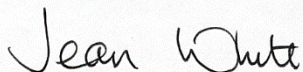
Yours sincerely



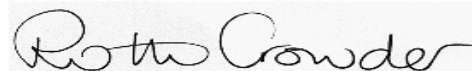
Albert Heaney
Deputy Director General
Health and Social Services



DR FRANK ATHERTON
Chief Medical Officer/Medical
Director NHS Wales



Professor Jean White CBE
Chief Nursing Officer



Ruth Crowder
Chief Allied Health Professions
Advisor



Delia Ripley
Deputy Chief Scientific Advisor