

From: Mason, Toby (OFM - Communications) [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=1E3594C37993473993EBF794F7E6E1E6-MASON, TOBY]
Sent: 17/07/2020 15:09:24
To: Lalley, Liz (Project Team - C-19) [liz.lalley@gov.wales]
Subject: FW: OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE COBR readout

From: Mason, Toby (OFM - Communications)
Sent: 10 May 2020 15:12
To: Evans, Carys (Office of the First Minister) <Carys.Evans@gov.wales>
Subject: OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE COBR readout

OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE

Readout from COBR 10/5

PM introduced and stressed four nations would remain important approach. He had seen the comments from Scotland on the change of message – stay at home remains important part of the messages, changing the emphasis to say that if people can't work from home, they should be actively encouraged to go to work, but avoid public transport. He said that the changes proposed for the future were contingent on a series of conditions being made.

CMO for England said the glass half full was that the direction of travel in every area was going in the right way, for example hospital admissions were consistently falling, and the R was 0.5 to 0.9 likely in the middle of this range.

Concerns – national sampling indicates 130,000 currently have the virus – and if the R went above 1 then it would grow very quickly. International comparisons have indicated that some have had to reverse measures that they have loosened. He added we need to be careful about the rate of loosening, if we go too far, R will go up, but leaving too long to relax would mean opening up in the winter season.

SoSH said the their first proposed changes would come into force from Wednesday, because evidence has strengthened that outdoor is less risky, that people can be outdoors for leisure, not just exercise, would be positively received but a low impact on transmission. Further changes being proposed for June and July would be contingent on the epidemiological evidence, but that we were on the right track to get the numbers down.

On June 1 – the proposals would be to start to bring back primary schools reception, 1 and 6 and in smaller class sizes to allow less spread. Phased opening of non-essential retail, on a least risky basis. July would be reopen some of the hospitality industry if they implement social distancing. Far more sophisticated measures to implement social distance have been developed and used by organisations to keep R down. On face coverings, the effect is weak, but might protect others from you in confined spaces, like shops and public transport.

PM said the four nations should work on the joint biosecurity centre / COVID alert system. The CMO said it would bring together information from PHE and devolved equivalents and other

Scottish messaging. PM responded that nothing will appear in Scotland that will cut across the stay at home messages.

UK director of communications Alex Aiken – we will listen to what has been said very carefully and take on board. Communications has to be based on plan and science. We need to reflect on the fact that comms has worked, but also learn from this. We are seeing reduction in compliance, and polling and research shows weariness. So right time to change and adapt. Stay alert encourages people to change behaviour and permissions, it has polled well. Monday into Tuesday we will start national advertising to start to change behaviours, This is all about building the right behaviours and confidence, and this will shape the mo.

NS reiterated that they would not be moving to stay alert messages – like an assurance there will not be paid for ads on TV and elsewhere in Scotland– this will undermine SG messaging, PM said they will deconflict messaging as far as possible. We can move forward as four nations. Now is the moment to recalibrate messaging – all we are doing today is going back to the original advice from March 23 and getting ready for a covid-compliant world. We need to work together to make sure our businesses, schools and transport systems are ready and we work together to do this with stakeholders. The battle against covid will be intelligence and data let, we have had paucity of data until now.

PM briefly referred to the measures on the borders – we need to prevent reinfection in this country as we drive R down – and will be important we do that in a way that does not damage our ability to trade, and work together to get the package right, come in from end of the month.

ends

Toby Mason

Cyfarwyddwr Cyfathrebu / Director of Communications

Llywodraeth Cymru / Welsh Government



I&S

✉ toby.mason@gov.wales



Gwasanaeth Cyfathrebu
Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government
Communications Service