

## Technical Advisory Group

### Statement regarding NPIs in the pre-Christmas period

**2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020**

The purpose of this paper is to set out the technical and scientific rationale for the introduction of non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPIs) in Wales in the pre-Christmas period.

#### **Take home messages**

- The virus spreads when an infected individual comes into contact with uninfected individual(s). The likelihood of a contact between an infected individual and uninfected individual resulting in a transmission is dependent upon the nature of the contact. Some environments and behaviours are more likely to enable the virus to transmit.
- Social distancing and quarantining remains highly effective at reducing the risk of infecting others, if observed correctly. Pre-isolating (e.g. not mixing outside of the household) for one incubation period (10 days) would be an effective way of lowering your risk of infecting others. Self-isolation remains of paramount importance for anyone with COVID-19 symptoms.
- The best way to protect older family members is not to expose them to potential infection, no matter how well intended the reason for contact.
- Survey data suggests evidence of household mixing and with those outside of the extended household. This is accompanied by a misunderstanding of the risks of transmission associated with mixing. Evidence suggests that the increased mixing of households and individuals, in indoor settings poses a substantial risk. Therefore, the fewer households and individuals mix, the lower the risk of transmission, hospitalisation and deaths.
- Policy modelling illustrates that keeping  $R_t$  lower (e.g. by the reduction of social mixing of people generally) would significantly reduce numbers of expected deaths and pressure on the NHS.
- Policy modelling suggests that introducing Tier 3 restrictions (e.g. closure of hospitality and entertainment, reduction in mixing) prior to the relaxation of restrictions before Christmas will reduce the number of hospital and ICU beds required for COVID-19 patients, and deaths.