

FM press conference – May 11, 2020

- Prynawn da
- Later this afternoon, some very modest changes to the coronavirus regulations will come into force in Wales.
- I set out these changes out on Friday – and the reasons why the Welsh Government is making them in Wales.
- Here in Wales, we will change the regulations so people can exercise more than once a day and allow garden centres to open, if they can comply with social distancing.
- These are very small changes and they do not change our overall advice to people in Wales:
 - Wherever you can you should stay at home.
 - Wherever you can you should work from home.
 - If you need to leave home for exercise you must stay local.
 - Coronavirus has not gone away
 - The way we behave over the weeks ahead will continue to have a profound impact on our NHS and our ability to save lives.
 - Social distancing and handwashing continues to be very important to prevent the spread of the virus.
- There has been a lot of focus over the weekend about the differences between the way the regulations are being updated in Wales and in other parts of the UK.
- The fundamental direction of travel is the same here as in other parts of the UK – the stay-at-home regulations remain in place. All parts of the UK are this week making very small adjustments to the current regulations.
 - The details will depend on the unique circumstances of each country.
- However, there are differences in the messaging between Wales and England and I am concerned this may confuse people.
- This morning, I received my weekly update from the four police chief constables in Wales.
- They have reported a distinct increase in activity over the bank holiday weekend, particularly after many national newspapers reported a major easing of the lockdown was on the horizon.
 - They also saw an increase in alcohol-related violence associated with VE Day celebrations and increased traffic across many areas of the road network.

- They have concerns traffic flow into Wales could continue to increase as a result of the Prime Minister's announcement that travel to exercise will be allowed in England
- I want to be clear – in Wales, Welsh rules will apply.
- Travelling to Wales to exercise is not exercising locally.
- We will use whatever means are available to convey this message, including signs on the major roads and motorways and articles in local newspapers along our borders.
- We will continue to make decisions, which are right for Wales, using information and expert advice about how coronavirus is circulating here to keep us safe.
- The health of the public is paramount. It will inform our decisions and we will continue to inform you as we plan for our future in the weeks ahead.
- We have already published a framework to help us make decisions about how and when we can ease the lockdown regulations. We will continue to develop this framework throughout the week to create a more detailed roadmap, based on the latest scientific advice.
 - I will provide further details about this work later this week.
- Thank you for all your help and support. Together we can do this.

Background information

Why have we changed the regulations?

- We have been able to make these small changes at the edge of the regulations because of the huge collective effort everyone in Wales has made to comply with the stay-at-home regulations so far.
- This effort has helped to stabilise the situation in Wales:
 - To reduce the number of people who are admitted to hospital with coronavirus
 - To reduce the number of people who are seriously ill in intensive care
 - To reduce the number of people who are dying from coronavirus.
- We are also able to make these very modest changes because we are continuing to learn more about coronavirus every day – this is a virus which first emerged at the end of last year and we have learned a huge amount in a very short space of time.
- We are changing the rules to allow people to exercise more than once a day because the evidence shows the virus is far less stable outdoors.
- I know many people have questions about whether they should be wearing a non-surgical mask and gloves when they go outside or go shopping. The Chief Medical Officer does not recommend the mandatory use of face coverings but supports people choosing to use them.