

complex task requiring difficult judgements, and we ask for your help, as the GP central to the care of these patients, in achieving this.

If you choose to identify additional individuals you consider to be at highest risk of severe outcomes, that you proactively contact this group of patients to discuss your recommendation with them.

We also suggest that anybody with a terminal diagnosis who is thought to be in their last 6 months of life should be excluded from this group (unless they wish to be included), to allow them to maintain contact with their loved ones during the last phase of their illness.

### **Searches and Guidance**

To assist with identifying high risk patient's searches and guidance has been developed and is available on the [Primary Care intranet site](#) for practices to download and run for EMIS and Vision practices.

HSCB staff have been in contact with Merlok and a member of their team will be in contact with Merlok practices to assist with their searches.

If you require any assistance with importing and running these searches please contact any of our Data Analysts. Full contact details below.

Name Redacted	<a href="#">@hscni.net</a>
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The Department of Health will be writing to HSC Trusts asking them to identify the patients on red list drugs from their Trust records, which may not necessarily be recorded in the GP practices clinical system.

### **Ongoing care arrangements**

Please immediately review any ongoing care arrangements that you have with these highest risk patients.

Wherever possible, patient contact, triage and treatment should be delivered via phone, email or online. However, if you decide that the patient needs to be seen in person, please arrange for your practice to contact them to organise a visit to the surgery or their home as appropriate.

### **Support with medicine supplies:**

Patients will need to ensure that their medication can be collected or delivered to them directly. Repeatable prescriptions can be valid for a year, but each repeat should be for no longer than the patient has now. For example, if the patient has prescriptions for a 28 day supply now then the repeat dispensing should be set up as 12 x 28 days' supply.

Patients who currently have their medication delivered, by a chosen person or by a pharmacy, should continue to do so.

Patients who need regular medicine, but have not yet set up online ordering and delivery will need to be supported to do so. We ask that you arrange that suitable patients be put on electronic repeat dispensing as soon as possible.

Patients have been asked to arrange their own delivery or collection of their prescriptions through a nominated person, online delivery or delivery from a community pharmacy. If they struggle to do this, we ask that your practice helps set up an appropriate arrangement.

Patients have been told that the letter they have received can be used as evidence for their employer, to show that they cannot work outside the home.

### **Urgent medical attention**

All patients who display symptoms of COVID-19 have been asked to contact the NHS 111 online coronavirus service, or call NHS 111 if they do not have access to the internet.

However, if patients have an urgent medical question relating to their pre-existing condition, we have asked that they contact you, or their specialist consultant, directly.

### **Postage/administration**

HSCB will fund postage costs and practice administration time associated with searching and issuing letters to your high risk patients.

Practices can claim £20.00 per hour administration time (up to a maximum of 16 hours). A claim form for postage and practice administration time will be made available on the PCI site.

Please accept our sincere thanks for your help, patience and support at this challenging time and for giving this your immediate attention.

Yours sincerely,

**Personal Data**

Dr Margaret O'Brien  
Head of General Medical Services

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