

Impact of Shielding on Vulnerable Individuals: Integrated Impact Assessment

SECTION 1. WHAT ACTION IS THE WELSH GOVERNMENT CONSIDERING AND WHY?

In response to the global Covid-19 pandemic, the Chief Medical Officer for Wales (CMO) initially advised 85,000 extremely vulnerable citizens to shield and not leave their homes for 12 weeks, until at least 15th June. Subsequently, on 31 May 2020, shielding people were advised they could exercise out doors and meet people from one other household outdoors, subject to stringent social distancing and good hygiene. On 4 June 2020 shielded people were advised to continue shielding until 16 August. On 29 June, the number of shielding people was approx. 128,829.

People in this “Shielded Group” have an underlying health condition which means they are at high risk of serious illness, potentially requiring hospital treatment if they catch coronavirus. The conditions include:

- Solid organ transplant recipients
- People with specific cancers:
 - People with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy or radical radiotherapy for lung cancer
 - People with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment
 - People having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer
 - People having other targeted cancer treatments which can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors
- People who have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months, or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs
- People with severe respiratory conditions including all cystic fibrosis, severe asthma and severe Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
- People with severe single organ disease (e.g. Liver, Cardio, Renal, Neurological).
- People with rare diseases and inborn errors of metabolism that significantly increase the risk of infections (such as Severe Combined Immunodeficiency (SCID), homozygous sickle cell).
- People on immunosuppression therapies sufficient to significantly increase risk of infection.
- Pregnant women with significant heart disease, congenital or acquired.
- Children up to the age of 18 with significant heart disease, congenital or acquired.