

Public Health Link

From the Chief Medical Officer for Wales

Distribution:	As Appendix 1
From:	Dr Frank Atherton, Chief Medical Officer for Wales
Date:	24 June 2020
Reference:	CEM/CMO/2020/22
Category:	Immediate (cascade within 6 hours)
Title:	Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) And Heat: Risk of heat stress
What is this about:	The use of PPE during high temperatures
Why has it been sent:	For action/information

Dear colleague

Wearing PPE in warm/hot environments increases the risk of heat stress. Heat stress occurs when the body is unable to cool itself enough to maintain a healthy temperature. Heat stress can cause heat exhaustion and lead to heat stroke if the person is unable to cool down.

Measures to control the temperature of clinical environments and enable staff to make behavioural adaptations to stay cool and well hydrated should be made. Staff may require more frequent breaks and the frequency of PPE changes may increase, with a resulting increase in demand.

The attached alert contains further information and actions.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Frank Atherton
Chief Medical Officer / Medical Director NHS Wales

To: NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership to forward to:

All General Practitioners - please ensure this message is seen by all practice nurses and non-principals working in your practice and retain a copy in your 'locum information pack'.

Community Pharmacies.

Deputising services.

HB Prescribing Advisers.

Dentists

Opticians

Independent/Private clinics and Hospitals and Hospices throughout Wales.

Cc: Health Boards and NHS Trusts:

Chief Executives
Medical Directors
Nurse Directors
Directors of Public Health

Cc: Public Health Wales:

Chief Executive
Director of Public Health Services
Consultants in Communicable Disease Control
Microbiologists
Consultant Epidemiologists
Vaccine Preventable Disease Programme

Cc: NHS Direct Wales
British Medical Association
Royal College of GPs
Royal College of Physicians
Academy of Medical Royal Colleges
Royal College of Nursing
Royal College of Midwives
Royal Pharmaceutical Society
Community Pharmacy Wales
Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health Wales