



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Email / Address  
Y Grŵp Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Health and Social Services Group

Date / Dydiadd: 20 October 2020

Dear Colleagues,

**RE: COVID-19 Wales National Firebreak**

Mark Drakeford, First Minister for Wales, today announced additional restrictions to reduce the spread of Coronavirus and alleviate pressure on the health and social care system, through a national 'firebreak', to commence at 18:00 Friday 23 October 2020 and last for 2 weeks.

I am writing to confirm that as part of the detail to the announcement, patients can leave their home to access local health services, which includes eye care. All practices to remain open to provide services as part of the Amber recovery phase guidance issued on 30 July and 7 August 2020.

It is important for patients to continue to access NHS services safely, therefore, I would like to remind all optometry practices in Wales of the following information.

- Prioritisation and scheduling of appointments should continue to consider the clinical needs and presenting symptoms relative to the risk of sight loss and harm to the patient. Routine appointments to be scheduled in line with prioritisation, if there is the appropriate capacity to do so, once all urgent and essential appointments have been managed.
- Practices to offer telephone and video review to patients in the first instance to determine Covid-19 status and level of eye care needed.
- Practices should continue to follow the College of Optometrists guidance on infection control, social distancing and PPE.

Since the early part of this year, Covid-19 has unsettled every level of society with each sector facing difficulties. I would like to thank all eye care professionals, for your continued commitment to providing eye care services, and your professional support in adherence to the published guidelines to help in the protection of public health.

Yours sincerely,



**David O'Sullivan**

Chief Optometric Adviser / Prif Optometrig Ymgynghorol  
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Directorate of Primary Care and Health Science / Cyfarwyddiaeth Gofal Sylfaenol a Gwyddor  
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*Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.*

*We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.*