

Returning from travel to Amber list countries: guidance for health and social care staff

Sets out requirements for staff who come into direct contact with patients or service users. Describes the process for employers to follow to protect vulnerable people.

Overview

Welsh Ministers continue to advise against foreign travel unless this is absolutely necessary.

Fully vaccinated individuals no longer have to self-isolate when they return from an Amber list country:

[Rules for foreign travel to and from Wales: coronavirus \(COVID-19\) \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#)

This guidance outlines a process of risk assessment and mitigation for patient/service user facing health and social care staff.

This will provide additional safeguards and protections for people who may be more vulnerable to COVID 19.

The majority of health and social care staff will be able to continue with their usual duties.

We will keep this guidance under review to ensure additional measures:

- remain justified
- are proportionate to the current risk

Unvaccinated health and social care workers

All staff who are not fully vaccinated are required to self-isolate for 10 days when they return from an Amber list country. They must follow the [guidance](#) on foreign travel for the general population,

Meaning of fully vaccinated

The staff member has received their second vaccination (MHRA, EMA or FDA approved) at least 14 days before travel. Vaccination status should be verified via

the Welsh Immunisation System (WIS). Local judgements may be made as to use of staff evidence of vaccination where necessary

Fully vaccinated workers not in close contact with patients/service users

Where the staff member

- is not providing care, support or treatment
- does not work in the same area as patient/ service users
- is able to maintain a social distance at all times

Staff should follow the [guidance](#) on foreign travel for the general population. This means they can return to work and then undertake a PCR test at day 2, with no job specific arrangements necessary.

Fully vaccinated workers in close contact with patients/service users

Where the staff member is providing care, support or treatment which means they are unable to maintain a social distance. This may include:

- the administration of medical treatment
- provision of personal care
- supporting the individual to promote their independence
- other interventions bringing staff into close contact with the patient/ service user.

Additional safeguards are necessary as a precaution. Workers should not return to work **until** they have undertaken the PCR test at day 2 **and** received the results. Where this test is negative, the staff member can return to work and undertake daily LFD tests until day 10 from the date of return to the UK.

The worker must self-isolate if the test is positive or the worker starts to experience COVID-19 symptoms at any time.

Staff must agree to the specified testing process to continue to work with patients/service users. If they do not agree they should be redeployed or not attend work.

Fully vaccinated workers in close contact with patients/service users who are immunosuppressed and/or **clinically extremely vulnerable**

For example patients in oncology or transplant services.

Staff should be redeployed to work with patients/service users who are not immunosuppressed and/or clinically extremely vulnerable for 10 days from their date

of return. They should not return to work until they have received the results of their day 2 PCR test.

Where this test is negative, the staff member can attend work in the redeployed role. They should undertake daily LFD tests until day 10 from the date of return to the UK.

The worker must self-isolate if:

- the test is positive
- they start to experience COVID-19 symptoms at any time

Where the employer is not able to redeploy the worker, they must not attend work until day 10 from the day of their return from travel.

Testing scheme requirements

Workers must agree to take specific tests in addition to their usual testing arrangements. This provides an additional level of safety to vulnerable patients and service users,

- The staff member will take a PCR test at day 2 from their date of return from travel. The worker must not return to work until a negative result is received. If the result is positive, the person must self-isolate.
- If a staff member has had a positive COVID-19 PCR test result within the previous 90 days, a local decision/risk assessment will be needed. This will determine the management of the staff member in terms of test monitoring or continuing to work.
- Following a negative PCR test, the staff member must take a LFD test each day before work until 10 days from the return from travel. All results should be logged and reported appropriately: [Report a COVID-19 rapid lateral flow test result - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#). If a LFD test is positive they must self-isolate and arrange a PCR test within 24 hours.
- If symptoms develop during the 10 days, staff must immediately self-isolate and follow the usual procedure.

Infection prevention and control

To further mitigate the risks workers must continue to adhere to their employer's guidance on infection prevention and control measures. This includes:

- social distancing in the workplace when not delivering care or treatment
- the use of PPE in line with the current [Public Health Wales/UK COVID-19 IP&C guidance COVID-19: infection prevention and control \(IPC \(gov.uk\)\)](#).

Process governance

- Within health boards and trusts, the medical and nursing leaders, the Board lead for IP&C and/or Director of Public Health will work with each organisation on this risk assessment process and use of the checklist with staff.

- In primary care the independent contractor should make decisions about this process in line with the criteria. They must advise the health board about their approach.
- In regulated care services, the Responsible Individual is accountable for decision-making. Private sector employers may wish to liaise with health and social care commissioners.
- Managers in supported housing will make decisions and liaise with local authority commissioners as appropriate.

Annex A - Fact sheet for patient/service user facing health and social care workers on return from an Amber list country

In order for patient/service user facing staff to attend work, certain requirements which are summarised below must be met:

- The staff member is fully vaccinated at least 2 weeks prior to travelling to an Amber list country
- The staff member has a PCR test performed at day 2 and has a negative result prior to returning to work.
- The staff member performs a daily LFD test and reports the results on the on-line portal and informs manager up to day 10 from the return from travel.
- Consideration is given to the patients/service user with whom the worker has regular contact. Please consult the guidance for further information.

What staff can expect from their employer

- The employee checklist is completed in discussion with the staff member prior to staff member attending work. This should record vaccination status, PCR results, identifies that staff have no Covid-19 symptoms and records provision of LFD testing kits.
- Staff are supported to record LFD results.
- Consideration is given to the patients/service users the worker is usually in contact with.
- If appropriate, suitable redeployment is considered

What employers should expect from staff

- They should have read this fact sheet to familiarise themselves with the policy and agree to the testing regime
- They participate in completion of the employer checklist and discussion with manager prior to attending work.
- They have pre- booked the PCR test in line with the [guidance](#) and provide result to employer prior to returning to work.
- They agree to perform LFD tests, inform employer of and record results for 10 days from the date of return from travel
- They adhere to IPC procedures ensuring appropriate use of PPE at all times.

- They refrain from work, inform manager and book a PCR test if symptoms develop or if a positive LFD result is obtained.

Annex B – Checklist for employer to complete with staff member

This assessment to be used if a relevant health or social care worker has returned from travel to an Amber list country. This should be completed before the worker returns to the workplace and so should be discussed via phone or video call.

Check	Mitigation
<p>1 Does the staff member have COVID-19 symptoms?</p> <p>Symptoms:</p> <p>A high temperature A new, continuous cough A loss, or change to sense of taste or smell</p>	<p>Yes - should attend for PCR and self-isolate</p> <p>No - move to Q 2</p>
<p>2 Is the employee fully vaccinated (at least 14 days post 2nd vaccination prior to travel and evidence provided)?</p>	<p>No – staff member is required to self-isolate for 10 days.</p> <p>Yes - move to Q 3</p>
<p>3. Is the staff member working in close contact with patients/ service users?</p>	<p>No - there are no additional requirements on these workers</p> <p>Yes – move to Q4</p>

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Check	Mitigation
4 Has the employee taken a PCR test at day 2 from return from travel?	No –staff member cannot return to work until PCR test is undertaken Yes – move to Q5
5 Result of PCR test	PCR negative Are they agreeing to follow the required testing process? Yes - move to Q6 No – staff member should not return to work in a patient/ service user facing role PCR positive - They must self-isolate for 10 days.
6 Is the staff member working with immunosuppressed and/or clinically extremely vulnerable patients/ service users?	Yes – redeployment required – consult guidance. Move to Q7 as appropriate. No - move to Q7
7 Does the staff member know where to access lateral flow devices and able to use them appropriately?	No – Line manager should facilitate access to LFDs prior to return to work Staff member undertakes a LFD test each day until the date 10 days after return from travel and receive a negative result before attending work and report result to their line manager

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Check	Mitigation
	and online Report a COVID-19 rapid lateral flow test result - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
