

## **Staff update, 20/03/20**

Huw George and Rhiannon Beaumont-Wood

The [video briefing is available here](#), but here's a summary of the main points covered.

### **What we know about the latest with schools guidance**

- In order to slow the spread of the pandemic, all schools in Wales will close by today.
- There is no date on when they will re-open.
- The Education Minister recognises the key role NHS staff, and others, play and has pledged for schools to stay open for their children.
- We are committing to sharing information with you as soon as we have it.

### **What we expect from affected staff**

- All Public Health Wales staff have a critical role. As an NHS Wales employee you should be considered a key worker as you need to be available to help with the response efforts.
- This means we will expect you to take up any childcare provision offered by the local authority where possible.
- If you co-parent, we ask that you discuss your children being looked after by your partner if they are not also classed as a key worker.
- Please also consider any other support networks that may be available to you, but without calling on older relatives.
- We recognise that is difficult to do if you are a single parent.

- We expect you to make as many provisions as you can to work flexibly and discuss those options with your manager to ensure that the needs of the team are still met.

## **Use of leave**

- You will not be expected to take annual leave to cover childcare. However, you must make reasonable efforts to make yourself available. This may involve working outside of your normal working pattern.
- If you have booked annual leave please check with your line manager that these arrangements still stand.
- If they do, then you can continue to take your leave and you will not be contacted regarding work.
- Please note that this arrangement has been put in place for Public Health Wales staff. Decisions elsewhere in NHS Wales will be made locally.

## **Next steps**

- We published via yesterday's daily bulletin a skills survey which we are asking staff (excluding Microbiology and Health Protection) to urgently complete.
- This help us to mobilise staff in support of our organisation wide response to COVID-19, along with maintaining our critical non COVID-19 functions.
- It also includes information for staff trained to call centre to complete in relation to new shift pattern.
- We're hoping to go live with new Covid-19 call centre rota system, based on results from skills survey, from 30 March.

- The survey can be accessed here: [SURVEY LINK](#)  
Currently it can only be accessed via staff using our IT system (including VPN). A version that staff can complete using their home devices will be available early next week.
- We are in the process of setting up a Service Point, which will provide a support function to staff, providing advice, information and will respond to practical issues, such as roster queries or other staff related queries – HR, Informatics, and facilities. We'll share those details when they are ready.
- In the meantime please continue to send your queries in via the **Your Questions Asked** facility on the homepage.
- We also need you all to update ESR contact details (mobile number and personal email), if you're happy to provide this information. We'll only use this if necessary. But it is important that we have a mechanism to keep in contact with you, other than your work email address.
- We'll be in touch again when we know more.