

Working in partnership to protect our communities

Everything that needs to be done will be done, to protect communities in west Wales in light of the coronavirus pandemic say health and social care leaders.

The Chair of Hywel Dda University Health Board and the Leaders of Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire County Councils have said they will stand 'shoulder to shoulder' to ensure a co-ordinated and pragmatic approach is taken.

This will include actively exploring all mechanisms to assist provisions of essential public services and put the needs of the most vulnerable at the forefront of decision making and joint working.

Chair of Hywel Dda University Health Board Maria Battle, Leader of Carmarthenshire County Council Emlyn Dole, Leader of Ceredigion County Council Ellen ap Gwynn and Leader of Pembrokeshire County Council David Simpson said in a joint statement: "For most people who contract COVID-19 the symptoms will be mild and likely a continuous cough, and/or high temperature. However, it is clear that the disease is more serious for people with complicated existing conditions and that this will challenge both the health sector and social care. Disruption to everyday life will also present its unique challenges to our wider services and our workforce.

"We are fortunate in west Wales to have close knit communities and we know our residents will rise to the challenge of looking after themselves and others, and for that we are so thankful.

"It will fall to us to ensure that no barriers operate between public services and we will stand shoulder to shoulder and instruct our leadership and operational teams to work together and rise above usual organisational boundaries if it is in the public interest to do so."

The agencies are already meeting regularly in their joint response to this situation and also working through the formal Dyfed Powys Local Resilience Forum. The LRF is a multi-agency partnerships made up of representatives from public services including police, other emergency services, local authorities, the NHS, Natural Resources Wales and others.

Arrangements are being made across health and social care in the three local authorities to provide extra accommodation for residents when that is deemed necessary.

Members of the public are reminded that they can get official information and advice about coronavirus from <https://phw.nhs.wales/coronavirus>

To protect yourself and other people:

- wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- always wash your hands when you get home or into work
- use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- put used tissues in the bin straight away and wash your hands afterwards
- try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell
- do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean

ENDS