



Our ref: JW/KE/280420

Date: 1 May 2020

Dear Colleague,

On the 24th April 2020, the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (Wales) Regulations 2020 were amended. The amendments to the Regulations make a number of changes and I have attached a link at the end of my e-mail to the amended Regulations and the Guidance. This e-mail deals only with those changes which will be of particular interest to individuals with learning disabilities, autism, their families and carers who expressed three particular concerns about the “staying at home” rules:

- The need for some individuals with autism or a learning disability to be able to exercise more than once daily;
- The need for some individuals to be accompanied by more than one family member or carer/support worker; and,
- The need for some individuals to have a car ride as a form of relaxation and managing anxiety.

## Background

The regulations were put in place to restrict gatherings and movement of people in Wales as a result of the public health emergency caused by the spread of Covid 19. The purpose of these temporary restrictions is to reduce the spread of coronavirus.

## The Changes to Daily Exercise

The original purpose of the Regulations remain unchanged; people should stay at home as much as possible and no-one should be making any unnecessary and unjustifiable journeys. This is to continue to help lower the risk of the virus spreading further.

The changes to the Regulations now mean that people can go out to take exercise more than once a day if this is needed because of a particular health condition or disability. This can be alone, with other members of the person’s household such as family or any carers.

This change to the Regulations is to avoid certain mental or physical conditions, such as learning disability, autism, dementia or other mental health conditions becoming worse by staying indoors for long periods of time without being able to go outside for a walk or exercise. You should stay as close to your local area as possible, and remain at least 2 metres apart from anyone who is not a member of your household or a carer at all times.

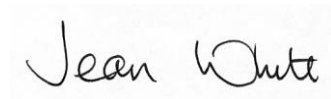
#### Car Rides for Relaxation and to Manage Anxiety

I have received concerns that not being able to go out for a car ride could worsen some conditions as this can be an important part of a routine for individuals with a learning disability, autism, dementia or other mental health condition. We have been unable to include car journeys in the changes to the Regulations because it is not possible to include a car journey in regulations that are about exercise. However, it can be a reasonable excuse to leave the house as the list of reasonable excuses set out in the changes to the Regulations is not exhaustive. But you must ensure you use car journeys sparingly and keep journeys to your local area.

The amended regulations and guidance can be viewed at the links below:

<https://gov.wales/revised-coronavirus-rules-for-wales-unveiled>  
<https://gov.wales/health-protection-coronavirus-restrictions-wales-amendment-no-2-regulations-2020>

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jean White". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Professor Jean White CBE  
Chief Nursing Officer  
Nurse Director NHS Wales