



ATISN 14608

Wynne Jones

December 2020

Dear Mr Jones

ATISN 14608 – Scientific Evidence

Thank you for your request to the Welsh Government for information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) received on 30 November. You requested the following information regarding a second lockdown, specifically:

- 1. The date Welsh Government was advised that the probability of false positive results from the R T - P C R test for Covid 19 infection was 97%, based on the "Amplification Cycle Threshold [C t]" value used in Wales.*
- 2. A copy of the full medical / scientific evidence presented to Welsh Government by your medical / scientific advisors to support the political decision now taken by ministers.*

Please let me respond to your second question in the first instance. Welsh Government decisions are informed by the latest available scientific evidence, which is published by the [Technical Advisory Cell](#) and [SAGE](#) on their respective webpages.

A summary of the available scientific evidence relating to the restrictions on hospitality and entertainment is available at the following links:

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-12/technical-advisory-group-statement-regarding-non-pharmaceutical-interventions-in-the-pre-christmas-period.pdf>

<https://gov.wales/technical-advisory-cell-summary-advice-27-november-2020>

Coronavirus thrives when we come together and there is always risk that as people come together to celebrate Christmas, they will catch or spread the virus. It is therefore important that we do everything we can to make sure rates are low. We also know that as the consumption of alcohol increases, social distancing and the perception of risk decreases. Wherever people mix, there's a risk of coronavirus being passed on.

As a result, the restrictions were strengthened to focus on places where we meet and where coronavirus thrives. We also drew on the recent evidence from the UK Scientific Advisory

Group on Emergencies (SAGE), which examined which interventions have had the biggest impact on the virus in this paper:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/939057/S0905_191120_O_Four_Nations_Autumn_Interventions_V1_.pdf.

It concludes the measures in Scotland's level three and England's tier three are effective, many of which are already in place in Wales, and we have adapted the other measures to a Welsh context:

- In hospitality – there will be no on-site sale of alcohol and premises will have to close at 6pm (this is in line with Scotland's level three measures; in tier three areas in England all hospitality premises are closed except for takeaway)
- Indoor entertainment and visitor attractions must close.

In relation to your first question, the Technical Advisory Cell published its advice, key information and core principles, including the impact of false positive and false negative rates, on the use of the RT-PCR for the detection of SARS-CoV-2 virus on 15 July 2020.

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-07/core-principles-for-utilisation-of-rt-pcr-tests-for-detection-of-sars-cov-2.pdf>

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit,
Welsh Government,
Cathays Park,
Cardiff,
CF10 3NQ
or Email: Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales

Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office,
Wycliffe House,
Water Lane,
Wilmslow,
Cheshire,
SK9 5AF.

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely,

JWarren

Jeanette Warren

Government Business Manager

Government and Corporate Business Team