



Ein cyf/Our ref: VG-0343-20

Joyce Watson MS
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

19 October 2020

Dear Joyce,

I'm writing in response to the question you raised during Business Statement on the 6 October 2020.

The All Wales COVID-19 Workforce Risk Assessment Tool (the Tool) uses a self-assessment methodology as a first step, which supports and empowers our workforce to consider their own health and wellbeing and to have confidence to discuss their safety at work, and any concerns they may have, with their line manager.

The risk of the Workplace Setting will vary with the background level of escalation, and the precise exposure to Covid-19. The Tool supports individuals to discuss the risks with their employer to mitigate, manage and minimise these and promote worker safety and wellbeing. Discussions between the employee and employer are an important aspect of the Tool for both the individual; and employers in exercising their duty of care. The Tool recognises that pregnant women may be particularly vulnerable and have been included in the list of people at increased risk as a precaution. The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) clinical guidance is that social distancing is particularly important for all pregnant women who are 28 weeks and beyond, in order to lessen their risk of contracting the virus. For women with other medical conditions in addition to pregnancy, this should be considered on an individual basis.

The COVID-19 Workforce Risk Assessment emphasises the importance of the second part of the assessment, the discussions between employer and employee. It is imperative that any action is with consent and following discussion, which should include support from Occupational Health when appropriate.

You may wish to note that the [Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists \(RCOG\) recently updated their clinical guidance for pregnant women](#) which notes:

- Pregnant women of any gestation are at no more risk of contracting the virus than any other non-pregnant person who is in similar health

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

- For those women who are 28 weeks pregnant and beyond, there is an increased risk of becoming severely ill should you contract COVID-19 (this is true of any viral illness contracted, such as flu).

RCOG – Occupational health advice for employers and pregnant women

<https://www.rcog.org.uk/globalassets/documents/guidelines/2020-09-10-occupational-health-statement-rcog-rcm-fom.pdf>

RCOG Guidance – Coronavirus infection and pregnancy

<https://www.rcog.org.uk/en/guidelines-research-services/guidelines/coronavirus-pregnancy/covid-19-virus-infection-and-pregnancy/>

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vaughan Gething". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Vaughan Gething AS/MS

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services