

# Public Health Link

From the Chief Medical Officer for Wales

<b>Distribution:</b>	As Appendix 1
<b>From:</b>	Sir Frank Atherton, Chief Medical Officer
<b>Date:</b>	06 July 2022
<b>Reference:</b>	CEM/CMO/2022/18
<b>Category:</b>	Immediate (cascade within 6 hours)
<b>Title:</b>	COVID-19 Therapeutic Alert -Commencement of a Palivizumab Passive Immunisation Programme Against Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) in At-Risk Infants in Wales.
<b>What is this about:</b>	This alert updates and replaces the previous alert CEM/CMO/2022/06 issued on 31 January 2022. This follows alert 022-007 sent out by Public Health Wales on 23 June 2022.
<b>Why has it been sent:</b>	The proposal is: to extend passive immunisation against RSV with palivizumab in at risk pre-term infants in accordance with the criteria set out in this document.

Dear Colleagues,

Palivizumab is a humanised monoclonal antibody. It offers a form of passive immunisation, effectively providing short-term protection against respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and reducing the risk of serious illness, hospitalisation and death.

Noting the atypical recent seasonal presentation of RSV an expert working group, which includes representation from Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, and the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), has been carefully monitoring rates of RSV infection. In Wales surveillance on the circulation of RSV is conducted by Public Health Wales. Reports are published on weekly basis [here](#). As a sustained rise in rates of infection has now been observed, it has recommended the immediate commencement of a palivizumab passive immunisation programme.

Infants in Wales at high risk of complications from RSV infection, as defined in chapter 27a of the green book, should now be offered monthly intramuscular doses of palivizumab at a dose of 15mg/kg of body weight, for a period of up to 7 months.

## Action

NHS health boards and Trusts in Wales are asked to immediately commence provision of a palivizumab passive immunisation programme, offering monthly intramuscular doses (at a dose of 15mg/kg of body weight) for a period of up to 7 months to at risk infants falling within the cohorts recommended in chapter 27a of the [green book](#).  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/respiratory-syncytial-virus-the-green-book-chapter-27a>

Yours sincerely,



**SIR FRANK ATHERTON**

## Appendix 1

### Distribution:

To: NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership to forward to:

All General Practitioners - please ensure this message is seen by all practice nurses and non-principals working in your practice and retain a copy in your 'locum information pack'.

All Community Pharmacists

Deputising services

HB Chief Pharmacists

HB Prescribing Advisers

Independent/Private clinics and Hospitals and Hospices throughout Wales

To: Local Health Boards and NHS Trusts:

Chief Executives

Medical Directors

Nurse Directors

Directors of Public Health

Directors of Primary Care

Hospital Principals and Chief Pharmacists

Onward distribution to:

Immunisation Leads,

Infectious Disease Departments

Acute medical units

Microbiologists

To: Public Health Wales:

Chief Executive

Director of Public Health Services

Consultants in Pharmaceutical Public Health

Consultants in Communicable Disease Control

Microbiologists

Regional Epidemiologists

Vaccine Preventable Disease Programme

Cc: NHS Direct Wales

British Medical Association

Royal College of GPs

Royal College of Nursing

Royal College of Midwives

Royal Pharmaceutical Society

Community Pharmacy Wales

Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health Wales