

Dear Dorset, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole

We are seeing a significant rise in COVID-19 cases in our local communities.

Responding to COVID-19 and living with the challenges it has presented has been tough for very many people, including our NHS staff and care workers.

Your NHS cannot fight COVID-19 alone: we all have a part to play to stop the spread of the virus. By taking sensible steps and following the guidelines, together we can protect each other and save lives this Winter.

Cases across Dorset are mainly linked to household groups, so it is vital social distancing is maintained and we limit the number of groups we mix with. Stop the spread of coronavirus by remembering to wash your hands, cover your face and make space.

Following clinical advice and guidance is especially important if you have been identified by the NHS Test and Trace service.

If you are told to self-isolate, you must stay at home for 14 days even if you feel well. If you have any COVID-19 symptoms, self-isolate immediately and only leave your home to get tested.

You may catch COVID-19 and have only mild symptoms or have no symptoms at all, but you can pass it on to someone who is more vulnerable than you and for whom COVID-19 is a very serious, life-threatening illness.

Please do your bit and remember to wash your hands frequently, wear a face covering where required and give others space.

Together we can protect our families, colleagues, and others around us.

Thank you.

Signed by:

Professor Alastair Hutchison
Medical Director, Dorset County Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Nicky Lucey
Chief Nursing Officer and Director of Infection Prevention & Control, Dorset
County Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Dr Forbes Watson
GP and Chair, NHS Dorset CCG

Dr Karen Kirkham
GP and Assistant Clinical Chair, NHS Dorset CCG

Vanessa Read
Director of Nursing & Quality, NHS Dorset CCG

Paula Shobbrook
Chief Nursing Officer and Director of Infection Prevention and Control, NHS University Hospitals
Dorset NHS Foundation Trust

Dr Alyson O'Donnell
Chief Medical Officer, NHS University Hospitals Dorset NHS Foundation Trust

Dawn Dawson
Director of Nursing, Therapies and Quality, Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust

Dr Faisal Sethi
Medical Director, Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust

Sam Crowe
Director for Public Health, Dorset