



COVID-19: GUIDANCE ON SHIELDING AND PROTECTING PEOPLE DEFINED ON MEDICAL GROUNDS AS EXTREMELY VULNERABLE

We have received a number of queries from practices, questioning what action is to be taken by practices regarding the latest government guidance on shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable.

The government has issued new guidance, and is writing to people considered clinically extremely vulnerable, and parents of children considered clinically extremely vulnerable, to explain the changes and new advice. The guidance and letters can be accessed [here](#).

An NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE/I) [letter](#) to GPs dated 2 November 2020, explains the steps needed to ensure the Shielded Patient List (SPL) is as accurate as possible, so that patients receive the most appropriate advice and support. This includes an addition to the definition of clinically extremely vulnerable of adults with Down's syndrome and adults with stage 5 Chronic Kidney Disease, and a full review of children and young people still on the list who may need to be removed in line with Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH) [guidance](#).

The General Practitioners Committee (GPC) pushed back on suggestions that patients would need to get a Fit Note should they be unable to work from home. The letter now states that a copy of the government letter is sufficient to give to an employer as evidence for statutory sick pay purposes should that be required.

Guidance for GPs on maintaining the SPL can be found on the NHS Digital [website](#).

British Medical Association (BMA) [guidance](#) has been updated in view of the above.