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The Presiding Officer
c/o The Chamber Desk
Room G10
Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
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2 September 2020

Dear Presiding Officer

RESTRICTIONS IN GREATER GLASGOW & CLYDE HEALTH BOARD REGION

I am writing to advise you that, following a SGORR(M) meeting yesterday evening, the Scottish Government are implementing focused protective measures to address concerns with rising infection rates in the Greater Glasgow & Clyde (GG&C) Health Board region. These restrictions will be in place for 14 days and are to be reviewed at least every 7 days. They will cover East Renfrewshire, Glasgow and West Dunbartonshire Council areas.

These restrictions are being put in place to ensure public health is protected, with infection rates on the morning of 1st September near or above 20 per 100,000 people in each of the Council areas (an indicative statistic for assessing risk, not one that is definitive). A National Incident Management Team (IMT) met earlier today and based on that advice, and further conversations I have just had with each of the affected Councils, we have decided to take this focussed and immediate action to drive down the rising number of infections and ensure the situation is brought under control.

Unlike the Aberdeen outbreak there appears to be no one driver in this increase, instead there are a number of separate nodes appearing across the GG&C area. The most common factors identified in these are:

- a. Household gatherings
- b. Domestic and foreign travel
- c. Workplace clusters

Of these household gatherings were found to be the most significant, with poor compliance with existing guidance identified as a contributing factor.

The following restrictions are to be implemented:

Indoor Gatherings

People living in the City of Glasgow, East Renfrewshire and West Dunbartonshire local authority areas should not meet with people from another household inside their private home.

Members of different households can continue to meet outdoors, including in gardens, and in hospitality settings, provided all existing guidance is followed.

Those who have formed an extended household - which is where one household joins with a single person household, or the household of a single person with children under 18 – can continue to meet indoors with enhanced hygiene measures in place. Non-cohabiting partners can also continue to meet indoors where they have formed a household group.

If people are already in these areas visiting family or on holiday then they do not need to leave but are asked to follow the recommendations in this guidance and take extra care when returning home.

Self-isolation

If anyone living in these areas is identified as a close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, they and all those in their (extended) household should self-isolate for 14 days

Care homes and hospitals.

Indoor visits to hospitals and care homes should be limited to essential visits only to protect the most vulnerable. Outdoor visits to care homes are permitted by three people from a maximum of two households, in line with current guidance.

- Hospital visiting will be restricted to the lockdown visiting rules and will be limited to:
 - a birth partner during childbirth
 - for a person receiving end-of-life care
 - to support someone with a mental health issue such as dementia, a learning disability or autism where not being present would cause the patient to be distressed
 - to accompany a child in hospital

We will urgently be progressing the work required to implement these measures and will keep Parliament informed. The National IMT will meet regularly and we will provide further updates on the continuation and lifting of these measures once that becomes clear.

Initially we are addressing this through targeted guidance. However, if this is not enough to ensure people take the appropriate action we will of course consider the need for regulations.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Convenors of the COVID-19 Committee and the Health and Sport Committee.

Yours sincerely

John Swinney
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills