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Murdo Fraser MSP  
Convener  
COVID-19 Committee

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10 May 2020

Dear Murdo,

### **Covid-19: Revised Guidance on Outdoor Exercise**

I am writing to inform the committee that the Scottish Government is today publishing revised guidance on outdoor exercise. The guidance will be effective from tomorrow.

The guidance is being changed to allow people to exercise close to home, either alone or with members of their household, without any restriction in terms of duration or frequency. The guidance is available [on the Scottish Government website](#).

The change is being made following scientific advice and using the framework set out by the Scottish Government last month. That analysis indicates that the timing is right to make this change because the impact on the vital R number – the rate of reinfection of COVID-19 – would be very limited.

The revised guidance will mean people can go outside to exercise, for example to run, walk or cycle, alone or with members of their household, with no limit to duration or how many times a day. Physical distancing rules, hand hygiene and cough etiquette must be maintained.

This is the only change the Government judges that it is safe to make now, without risking a resurgence of the virus. Other guidance and restrictions remain unchanged. In particular, households with possible coronavirus infection should continue to follow the guidance on staying at home completely.

There is no change to any other physical distancing measures, and no change to the “reasonable excuses” set out in regulation for going outside. Unnecessary travel should still be avoided – so exercise should be local. The only exception will continue to be that people who have a disability or specific health condition that requires travel beyond their local area to exercise can do so.

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The fact that people will be allowed to go outdoors to exercise more frequently does not mean they can meet up in groups, or to meet people who are not part of their household. That would risk spreading the virus, and could potentially force us to reintroduce stricter guidelines.

We will continue to monitor the evidence closely and keep under review options for further relaxation of the limitations on outdoor activity.

I am copying this letter to Lewis Macdonald, convenor of the Health and Sport Committee.

**MICHAEL RUSSELL**

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