



15<sup>th</sup> July 2020

## **Covid-19 – The compulsory wearing of face coverings on Public Transport, Shops and Supermarkets**

Following the introduction of the requirement for people to wear face coverings on public transport from 15<sup>th</sup> June, the government have now announced that face coverings will be mandatory in shops and supermarkets from 24<sup>th</sup> July 2020. This change is intended to help prevent the spread of the Covid-19 virus.

The vast majority of individuals will be able to wear a face covering to help reduce the risk of transmission of this potentially fatal disease. There are, however, certain groups of people who are exempt from this requirement and they include:

- *children under the age of 11*
- *people who cannot put on, wear, or remove a face covering:*
  - *without severe distress*
  - *because of any physical or mental illness or impairment, or disability (within the meaning of [section 6 of the Equality Act 2010](#))*
- *people travelling with, or providing assistance to, another person who relies on lip reading to communicate*
- *people travelling to avoid injury, or to escape a risk of harm, and do not have a face covering with them*

These groups of people, their parents or guardians can indicate the reason, if required, as to why they are not wearing a face covering.

General practice is under considerable pressure as a direct result of the current challenges they are faced with delivering a service to patients at the same time as coping with the consequences of this virus.

**There is no requirement for general practice to issue letters for patients who are unable to wear face coverings, as the Government have clearly defined the exemptions to this requirement.**

General practice needs to focus all its time and effort managing those who need their help and not be diverted from this by unnecessary tasks.

Many thanks for your help and support in this matter.

Yours faithfully

**Dr Kath Markus  
Chief Executive  
Derby and Derbyshire Local Medical Committee**