



Launch of the General Practice Escalation Tool

Release note: 25 March 2020

Due to COVID 19 and in support of general practices and local health boards managing pressures, this new online tool streamlines reporting and introduces a pressure **Level 5**.

This tool will allow automated reports to be generated, which will provide a snapshot of the pressures in primary care at a local and national level on a daily basis (i.e. less email and phone traffic). For reporting purposes, at this time, the definition of **Level 5** closed is:

Closed - Between Monday and Friday, all premises within the practice are closed for a period of 24 hours.

The tool will be available from Wednesday 25 March 2020.

For more information, key points about the tool's functionality and where to find it within the Primary Care Portal is provided overleaf.

Moving forward, the Strategic Programme for Primary Care will continue to work with NWIS to further develop this tool. Some planned enhancements include:

- Adding data fields to record the number of staff who are not in work due to isolation, sickness etc.
- Adding new functionality so that automated alerts can be sent to the health boards, highlighting when a level 4 or 5 is reported.

The provision of this online tool is designed to be supportive and ease the current demand being placed on the practices and health boards in terms of responding to data requests. It will support operational planning at times of pressure.



Guidance on Accessing the General Practice Escalation Tool

The first step is to access the Primary Care Information Portal from the following link:
[Primary Care Information Portal](#)

This will take a user to the tiled home page where the tile '**GP Escalation**' can be found. Clicking on this tile will take a user to the '**Practice Escalation**' tile.

Clicking on the 'Practice Escalation' tile will take a user to a data entry form similar to the below:

Primary Care Escalation Levels and Triggers

New Submission:

Based upon the level outlines provided above which level do you consider the practice to be attaining:

Practice Code: Current Level:

Levels:

Level	Description	Indicator
0	No Submission	Grey
1	General Practice contacts within expected levels and sufficient to meet demand. Staffing sufficient to maintain services.	Green
2	General Practice contacts higher than expected but sufficient to meet demand. Reduced staffing but sufficient to maintain services	Yellow
3	General Practice contacts higher than expected and impact on service delivery or patient safety. Reduction in staffing numbers which is impacting on service delivery or patient safety due to: Sickness, Vacancy factor, Adverse weather. Business continuity issues affecting practice processes, including: Telephony, IT Systems, Access due to adverse weather	Orange
4	General Practice contacts higher than expected and significant impact on service delivery or patient safety. Reduction in staffing numbers causing increased pressure which is significantly impacting on service delivery or patient safety, due to: Sickness, Vacancy factor, Adverse weather, Business continuity issues significantly affecting practice processes, including: Telephony, IT Systems, Access due to adverse weather. Significant issue with access to secondary care or WAST. Excess demand / escalation level not expected to reduce within the next 7 days without external support	Red
5	Closed - Between Monday and Friday, all premises within the practice are closed for a period of 24 hours.	Black

Key Points:

- (1) A practice can only submit 1 form (level) per day. The form would typically be completed by the Practice Manager, although every registered user can undertake this task. Practice Managers have the ability to add new users within the Portal or NWIS can add users via the usual Action Point e-mail address;
- (2) A Practice Manager (or a delegated user) who is responsible for 2 or more practices will be required to enter the escalation status for each practice separately;
- (3) Practices should submit their live, daily escalation level by 13:00 each day.
- (4) If a practice does not submit an escalation level, the level recorded for the previous day will be applied and will continue to be rolled forward daily until a change is entered;
- (5) A report of all escalation levels across Wales will be extracted (after the 13:00 practice deadline) and issued to Welsh Government on a daily basis.
- (6) Any issues regarding the Practice Escalation tool should be e-mailed to:
NWISPCU.Information@wales.nhs.uk