

1. Primary Care Leads

10 February 2022

MANAGING THE LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF COVID-19: UPDATED CLINICAL GUIDELINE AND IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT NOTE

Dear colleague,

As you may be aware, on 11 November 2021 the Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN), the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) published an update to the [clinical guideline on the long-term effects of COVID-19](#).

This provided new recommendations and updated existing recommendations on identification; planning care; multidisciplinary rehabilitation; follow up, monitoring and discharge; and service organisation. It also updated the list of common symptoms, emphasising that these may be different for children.

To support the implementation of the guideline's recommendations, the Scottish Government has produced an [updated version of our 'Implementation Support Note on Managing the long-term effects of COVID-19'](#). This provides additional targeted information for clinical teams, developed with input from key stakeholders, including Specialty Advisors to the Chief Medical Officer and senior medical advisors to the Scottish Government.

Colleagues are therefore requested to ensure that they refer to the most up-to-date versions of these documents, which are both available on the ['SIGN – Managing the long-term effects of COVID-19 web page'](#).

Recording of long-term effects of COVID-19

As you will appreciate, accurate recording of information within clinical systems is necessary in order to provide an accurate picture of activity in relation to the long-term effects of COVID-19. To support this, local codes are available for the EMIS PCS and Vision information systems as outlined on page 4 of the Implementation Support Note.

I strongly recommend that local Primary Care teams use these codes where appropriate and would be grateful if you could communicate this to them. Use of these codes will enable us

to develop a better understanding of prevalence over time, and help inform our approach to supporting people with long-term effects of COVID-19.

Additional supporting information

I would like to take this opportunity to highlight a number of additional resources which you may find helpful in supporting patients affected by long-term effects of COVID-19.

Decision Support Tool

SIGN has published a decision support toolkit which provides clinicians with a single, integrated point of access to key information from the clinical guideline on managing the long-term effects of COVID-19 and the Scottish Government's accompanying Implementation Support Note.

You can access the decision support website at <https://www.signdecisionsupport.uk/> or download the mobile version of the toolkit from the [Apple Store](#) and [Google Play Store](#).

NHS inform

A [long COVID information platform](#) is available on NHS inform, providing information for people aged 18 and over about the most common symptoms, how a patient is assessed and help with managing ongoing symptoms. The information is presented in a range of languages and accessible formats.

A [supporting toolkit](#) is available for partners including Primary Care teams, providing information materials to display and share through your channels, to encourage people to consider their symptoms and seek appropriate support.

Chest Heart and Stroke Scotland long COVID Support Service

The Scottish Government is funding Chest, Heart and Stroke Scotland to deliver a long COVID Support Service, whereby Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland's Advice Line nurses can provide confidential advice, support and information to help people living with long COVID, or their family members.

The Advice Line nurses can be contacted by:

- phoning 0808 801 0899 (free from landlines and mobiles)
- emailing adviceline@chss.org.uk
- texting NURSE to 66777

Yours sincerely,



Professor Sir Gregor Smith
Chief Medical Officer for Scotland