URGENT: Guidance on shielding and protecting patients defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable from COVID-19 (Update Tues 14th April)

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On Friday evening (10th April) we informed you that we had received from NHS Digital the list of Phase 2 patients (as outlined in the CMO guidance issued 3rd April), and applied the same code that we had previously used to flag the Phase 1 patients last month: ‘High’ (Concept ID: 1672211000006100, Description ID: 1672211000006116).

This means that the EMIS Library search we provided to identify high risk and vulnerable patients (titled ‘Patients at high risk of complications from COVID-19 infection’) now includes both Phase 1 and Phase 2 patients, and also any patients that have been manually coded with ‘Risk of exposure to communicable disease’ (Concept ID: 443999008, Description ID: 2841263019), as per our advice dated 9th April.
Our corresponding popup alert will now display on both Phase 1 and Phase 2 patients, as well as patients manually coded with ‘Risk of exposure to communicable disease’. Additional information, indicating why the patient has been identified as high-risk, is now included in the Care History screen where this has been made available.

Since Friday we have released MKB 162 which includes updated SNOMED CT codes pertaining to high, moderate, and low risk of complications from COVID-19 infection:

- **High risk category for developing complication from COVID-19 infection**
  - Concept ID: 1300561000000107
  - Description ID: 2601331000000112

- **Moderate risk category for developing complication from COVID-19 infection**
  - Concept ID: 1300571000000100
  - Description ID: 2601371000000114

- **Low risk category for developing complication from COVID-19 infection**
We will automatically replace the ‘High’ code on any Phase 1 or Phase 2 patient, and also any instances of ‘Risk of exposure to communicable disease’ added in the past 7 days, with the ‘High risk category for developing complication from COVID-19 infection’ code. We will also update our ‘Patients at high risk of complications from COVID-19 infection’ search to include that code. These actions will be coordinated to ensure that the search results themselves are not affected.

**ACTION REQUIRED:**

DO NOT continue to use the ‘Risk of exposure to communicable disease’ code to identify patients locally – ONLY use ‘High risk category for developing complication from COVID-19 infection’ to add patients to the high-risk cohort.

As per the Phase 3 instructions in the CMO guidance, you now need to clinically assess the patients identified in the ‘Patients at high risk of complications from COVID-19 infection’ search and, where you do not feel a patient should be considered high risk, add either the moderate or low risk code shown above. This will remove the patient from the high-risk cohort.

**DO NOT USE SEARCHES TO IDENTIFY PATIENTS WHO MAY BE MODERATE OR LOW RISK -** all patients should be clinically assessed on an individual basis. There is no requirement to add moderate or low risk codes to patients who have not been previously flagged as high risk.

- Adding either the moderate or low risk code will remove a patient from the ‘Patients at high risk of complications from COVID-19 infection’ search and also stop the corresponding popup alert from appearing on that patient’s record.

- The moderate risk code should be added to the records of those who meet the criteria that make them eligible for the annual flu vaccination, but do not meet the CMO criteria for the high risk group for COVID-19.
• The low risk code should be used for everyone else who does not qualify as being at high or medium risk of complications from COVID-19.

• We will be providing updated popup alerts, to display the risk rating for high-risk or moderate-risk patients, based on the latest risk coding.

You can read all previous updates on this issue on EMIS Now.

We are also aware that NHS England have contacted practices providing a link to a letter which should be provided to patients (or their carers) which practices flag as high-risk and includes NHS advice on shielding. This has been provided in a PDF format and as such cannot be used as a document template within EMIS Web.

We will provide further updates as information becomes available.

Thanks,

EMIS Health