

With thanks to Londonwide LMCs on whose guidance this is based. See the full Londonwide LMCs COVID-19 guidance document <https://www.lmc.org.uk/visageimages/Covid-19/LMCCovid19LivingGuidelatest.pdf> (please note some of this guidance will only be relevant for practices in London).

### **Isolation notes and letters for COVID-19 related absence from the workplace**

As people are returning to work there may be an increase in patients contacting practices with concerns and anxiety about their return and requesting medical certificates. Patients need to be encouraged to discuss this with their employer and not medicalise what is an understandably anxiety provoking situation. Practices should try and avoid issuing medical certificates for this reason. [ACAS](#) has produced guidance for employees on how to address these concerns.

#### **1. Those who are self-isolating because they are symptomatic or have a symptomatic household contact**

Patients who are self-isolating because they or someone in their household has COVID-19 symptoms can get their own certificate using the [online NHS 111 isolation note tool](#). We recommend that you add this link to your practice website. Patients do not need to speak to a GP unless their symptoms are worsening and they need clinical advice. If a patient does not have an email address, they can have the note sent to a trusted family member or friend, or directly to their employer. The service can also be used to generate an isolation note on behalf of someone else.

#### **2. Those in the stringent social distancing group (vulnerable but not shielded)**

Patients in this group may ask for medical evidence they are in this vulnerable group as defined by the government, roughly equating to those eligible for the annual flu jab. Please direct patients to download and use the [template letter](#) as these patients will not be eligible for a MED3, which is for certifying due to illness. If they become unwell, point 1 applies.

#### **3. Those in the shielded group (deemed extremely clinically vulnerable)**

This group should receive a letter from the government (or their GP/specialist if not identified through the central process) confirming they are in the shielded category which can be used for the purposes of certification off work. The CMO has provided [a specific list](#) of qualifying conditions that would be classified as defining a patient as extremely medically vulnerable. This means they should self-isolate within the home and only leave on clinical advice.

### **Isolation notes and letters for COVID-19 related absence from school**

There have been reports that as schools re-open, they may request medical certificates on fitness to return, and some parents may also seek advice from their GP about whether it is safe for their child to return.

Practices are unable to make judgements on individual children's suitability to return to school. We have produced a [template letter](#) to provide to parents which summarises the RCPCH guidance on guiding principles for children returning to school. The full guidance can be found on the [RCPCH website](#).

The rules regarding isolation for children who are symptomatic or who have a symptomatic household member apply as above and parents can get an isolation note from the 111 service.

