**Covid Medication Assessment Service**

Somerset ICB has worked with Somerset Foundation Trust and HUC (our NHS 111, out of hours and Clinical Assessment Service provider) to ensure that the people most at risk of serious covid infections in Somerset will have timely access to Covid medications. Those patients who are at highest risk of becoming seriously ill from covid and have a positive covid test can now access the Covid medication service by contacting 111. The service will be running seven days a week and will respond within 24 hours, providing assessment and prescription of oral antiviral covid medication, or for those who need it access to a service that can provide intravenous monoclonal antibodies.

Therefore, if your practice is contacted by a patient that identifies as being in a group that can access covid antiviral medication and is covid positive you are now able to direct the patient to 111 for assessment and prescribing of Anti-viral drugs. Please note that if a covid positive patient requires normal Primary Care assessment for immediate health needs these should still be managed by the practice as part of normal service.

The new 111 accessed CMDU service is a Covid medication service and its sole function is to prescribe antiviral medication, all other aspects of COVID care including follow up will remain with the patient’s own GP.

The 111 service will allow the patient to access a 7 day a week assessment and prescription service for covid medications. This service is provided by the Somerset Clinical Assessment Service (CAS) and stands alongside the normal daytime CAS activity of supporting daytime 111 dispositions “to General practice” that has previously been commissioned by the ICB to support General Practice. The new CMDU service will provide assessment and prescription 7 days a week for Covid medication between the hours of 08.00 and 06.00. Those patients who contact 111 out of hours will be assessed for immediate health needs and then contacted by the CMDU during opening hours.

At risk Children requiring covid medication will need to contact their own specialist/consultant via their agreed open access pathways (managed by the medical secretaries). If after contact with the child General Practice decides they require assessment for covid medication they should advise the child or carer/parent to contact their specialist/consultant, via the medical secretary. If a child contacts 111 the same advice and guidance will be given by 111. The reason there is not a specific pathway for children to access covid medication in Somerset is that this needs to be assessed and decided by a regional MDT that is only accessible by the child’s specialist or consultant.

Please also note that General Practice retains clinical freedom to assess and prescribe covid medication as per NICE Guidelines (or refer on via SPL for Sotrovimab) for their at risk patients who test positive, if they wish to do so and feel this is within their clinical competency.

Finally, the ICB would like to thank those practices who have supported this cohort of patients over the last few weeks.