NHS
England
Midlands

To: Directors of Nursing, Chief Nurses,
Chief Operating Officers,
Medical Directors,
Chief Executives
IPC teams

NHS England - Midlands
Regional Chief Nurse
Cardinal Square – 4th Floor
10 Nottingham Road
Derby
DE1 3QT

7 July 2022

Dear Colleagues,

Re: Universal Mask Wearing

We would like to start by thanking you all for your continued hard work throughout the pandemic, we appreciate that you have all been working hard to keep our patients and each other safe.

It is apparent that we have entered the next COVID-19 wave. Across the last seven days we have had a 97% increase in our nosocomial COVID-19 cases in acute Trust settings and a 25% increase in our mental health settings, this has also included a rise in the numbers of patients who have been admitted into critical care beds. In addition, we have also observed an increase in COVID-19 related staff absence.

As a result of this, we are advising that, in line with UKHSA guidance, all providers review their mask wearing guidance with a view to moving back toward universal mask wearing for staff. This includes colleagues in primary care settings (general practice, pharmacy, optometry, and dental services).

Regionally we advise that risk assessments are undertaken with a view to encouraging patients and visitors to wear facemasks when visiting any healthcare setting, unless exempt, although we appreciate that there is no mandate for visitors to wear a facemask and they may decline to do so.

Given the significant increases that we are observing across our region, we believe that it is prudent to request that you review your current positions given the rising COVID-19 numbers to protect your patients and your staff.
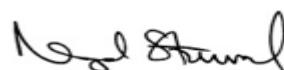
Thank you

Yours sincerely,

Karen Glover
Director of Nursing Leadership
and Quality (Interim)

Nigel Sturrock
Regional Medical Director
Chief Clinical Information Officer

cc Nina Morgan, Regional Chief Nurse, NHS Midlands
Nigel Sturrock, Regional Medical Director, NHS Midlands
Karen Glover, Director of Nursing Leadership and Quality (Interim)