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| **Directorate for Chief Medical Officer** Dr Gregor SmithChief Medical Officer for Scotland    |  |

 19 February 2021

Medical Directors

Nurse Directors

NHS Board Shielding Leads

Primary Care

**For immediate cascade to Primary Care and Hospital Clinicians**

**Addition to the shielding list of people with liver cirrhosis (Child-Pugh class B and C)**

Dear colleagues,

I am very grateful for all you have done to support patients who were shielding and to help maintain the Shielding List. This will enable those at highest clinical risk from COVID-19 to continue to receive targeted advice as the epidemiology continue to change.

The 4 UK CMOs considered the correspondence on behalf of the British Liver Trust (BLT) of new evidence from researchers at Oxford University <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0168827820336679> and agreed to include people with liver cirrhosis (Child-Pugh class B and C) to the shielding list.

The severity of chronic liver disease is not routinely coded for with Child-Pugh score and patients can also acutely shift between scores, thus making it difficult to identify them via diagnostic coding. In order to identify this cohort centrally we have used admission with decompensated liver cirrhosis as a surrogate marker for severe liver disease.

Based on the above, Public Health Scotland has extracted data from hospital records and identified a cohort of people that have been added to the shielding list as group 7 on 18 February 2021 and will be flagged on IT systems through the usual process.

Going forward and aware of the challenges of identifying people with this condition, I would ask that clinicians (most likely in secondary care), where able, continue to add new patients with liver cirrhosis (Child-Pugh class B and C) based on their clinical judgement and discussion with the individual.

I know that in the past months great efforts have been made to identify and support those patients who are at highest risk from Covid-19 and I want to thank you for your commitment to your patients’ best interests and your professionalism.

Yours sincerely,

**DR GREGOR SMITH**

CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER