Dear Employer,

Thank you for all your hard work in supporting your employees throughout the Covid-19 lockdown. The work from home guidance introduced this winter was designed to limit the spread of the highly transmissible Omicron variant. Now that this guidance has come to an end, Scleroderma & Raynaud’s UK would like to bring your attention to the continued risk to people like your employee who have conditions impacting their immune systems.

People who are immune supressed, and/or entitled to a third primary dose of COVID-19 vaccine are still being advised to work from home.

**“Work from home if you can. If you cannot work from home, speak to your employer about what temporary arrangements they can make to reduce your risk.”** ([Source](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-people-whose-immune-system-means-they-are-at-higher-risk/covid-19-guidance-for-people-whose-immune-system-means-they-are-at-higher-risk))
SRUK would like to ensure that all employers are aware of this, and make the required accommodations to their employees. Advice can be found in the Government’s [Working Safely During COVID-19](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-covid-19) guidance.

**What is Scleroderma?**
Scleroderma, also known as systemic sclerosis, is a rare and complex autoimmune condition which affects the immune system, blood vessels and connective tissue of around 19,000 people in the UK. To learn more about scleroderma, there is a wealth of information available on the [Scleroderma & Raynaud’s UK](https://www.sruk.co.uk/scleroderma/understanding-scleroderma/) (SRUK) website.

Scleroderma has a significant impact on an individual’s health and immunity, which resulted in all UK adults with scleroderma being told to shield at the start of the COVID pandemic. The effectiveness of the Covid-19 vaccinations in immunosuppressed or immunocompromised individuals has been [shown to be reduced](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3910058) in comparison to the rest of the UK population, meaning they are less effectively protected from catching Covid – in addition to being more vulnerable to the severe effects of the virus should they catch it.

Given the very high transmissibility rates of the omicron variant individuals with compromised immune systems are at a greater risk that the general population. The advice to those who are immunosuppressed, such as people with scleroderma, is to exercise caution where possible, which includes taking measures such as continuing to work from home if able.

Kind regards,

Sue Farrington
Chief Executive
Scleroderma and Raynaud’s UK