

Dear Friends

On your behalf we have been in contact with NHS England. We were surprised that people who had had a laryngectomy were not automatically included on the Shielded Patient List. This is the list of people who have pre-existing medical conditions which doctors have identified will make them extremely vulnerable. We raised this issue with NHS England.

The current situation is that it is open to anyone who has had a laryngectomy to contact their cancer team or GP so that the health provider can have them added to the shielded patient list. This is in the discretion of the health provider and we know that this system has not worked for some laryngectomees. However, we have received this wording from NHS England which is helpful.

*“Yes, someone who has had a laryngectomy is likely to be considered extremely vulnerable as the upper airway cannot be protected as well as usual. Patients should discuss directly with their cancer care team and GP, who will have discretion to add them to the vulnerable list. In the meantime, if they are concerned about their risk of infection they should follow the shielding guidance.”*

We are still working with NHS England and NALC to have the shielded patient list amended. In the meantime we hope that the wording we have set out here will be helpful to you if you are speaking to your cancer care team or GP.

If you have any relevant experience (good or bad) please let us know. It is very helpful to have details of experiences when we are talking to NHS England.