

Leicestershire Adult Social Care Provider News



Issue 25 – 31 March 2023

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Guidance and good practice

Changes to COVID-19 testing

It was announced yesterday that changes to COVID-19 testing will come into effect on 1 April 2023.

As of 1 April 2023, routine testing will end for the following groups and settings:

- Routine asymptomatic testing, including testing on admission, will now end across all health and social care settings including hospitals and care homes. The majority of this testing has already been paused since August 2022
- Routine symptomatic testing of staff and residents in care settings will end.
- All PCR testing outside NHS settings will end.

In addition, testing will continue for the following groups, using LFD tests:

- People in the community and residents in care or other high-risk settings, if they have symptoms and are eligible for COVID-19 treatment, to enable rapid access to treatment;
- Some NHS staff with symptoms working on inpatient wards with severely immunosuppressed patients;
- Staff with symptoms who work in hospices;
- All patients being discharged from hospitals into care settings;
- Outbreak testing in the NHS, care settings, hospices, including prisons and places of detention, homelessness and refuge settings and asylum settings;
- Some hospital patients with symptoms, where needed to inform decisions such as ward transfers.

PCR testing will continue to be used by the NHS for diagnosis where needed for patients before accessing COVID-19 treatment or for specific personal clinically directed care.

See a more [detailed summary of these testing changes](#).

Action required: care home spring booster consents

Residents in care homes for older adults are to be offered a booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine this spring. COVID-19 is more serious in older people and in people with certain underlying health conditions.

The following cohorts are invited for vaccinations this spring

- All residents in older aged care homes
- People aged 75 and over on 30 June 2023
- Immunocompromised individuals

The care home vaccination programme will begin from 3 April, and GP practices will contact you directly to make arrangements and confirm a date.

Consent forms

In anticipation of these upcoming visits, all care home managers are asked to ensure that all [care home resident consent forms](#) have been signed and collated. Obtaining consent is the responsibility of the care home. This must be completed prior to vaccination teams visiting your care home. The forms on this website have been designed by a team from the Midlands and the South East with regional colleagues, systems and vaccination teams to try and support best practice to increase safety.

- The Care Homes Checklist is designed for use by care home staff and vaccination teams and provides a checklist to support planning, the vaccination process and post-vaccine support.
- The Clinical Screening Form helps to accurately plan for the vaccination visit.
- The Care Home Consent form is an editable version of the existing nationally produced documents. It was designed to support systems based on questions received relating to vaccine consent processes, in particular where capacity is lacking or fluctuating.

There is no requirement from the region to use these specific forms. They are designed to provide an easily accessed 'best practice' document to support safe vaccination practices in addition to or in place of existing processes or guidance. Alternative forms can be found [here](#).

See [further information](#) on the spring booster campaign, or contact healthprotection@leics.gov.uk.

Which vaccines are being delivered?

The booster dose is an updated dose. These updated vaccines have been shown to boost protection well, particularly against the more recent strains of COVID-19 (Omicron) than the vaccines previously offered.

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) have confirmed that all of these vaccines can be used and that no one should delay vaccination to receive a different vaccine.

The NHS website has more information [about vaccine ingredients](#).

Registering to vote and photo ID required

Many care home residents, and those who receive home care, vote by post or proxy. However, if you support anyone to vote at polling stations, [please make sure they bring photo ID for the local elections on 4 May](#). The deadline to register to vote is 11:59pm, Monday 17 April 2023.

Anyone without a form of accepted photo ID can apply for a free [Voter Authority Certificate](#). They must do this by 5pm Tuesday 25 April.

[Download and print a guide for staff and volunteers](#) working with older people.

Recognising deterioration in care homes

The Providing Care website contains useful information for recognising deterioration in care homes – from the [home page](#) scroll down to the ‘Recognising the Deteriorating Patient’ section.

An [SBARD form](#) (situation, background, assessment, recommendation and decision) has been added to the website which is an easy to use, structured form of communication that enables information to be transferred accurately between individuals.

Check recruitment website pricing policies

Inspired to Care has had a couple of providers contact them about Indeed’s change in their [pricing policy](#), which at the time of preparing this article states ‘Only pay for applications that meet your deal-breakers. Deal-breakers are must-have requirements you set when posting your job. If an application doesn’t meet your needs, you can reject it within 72 hours of submission and we won’t charge you for that application.’

One provider told the team that it cost them £25 per applicant not responded to within 72 hours, resulting in a total cost of £4,000. In addition Indeed have not partnered with Google to post their jobs via the Google search engine so your job postings may not reach as wide an audience as possible.

Inspired to Care has recommended to its members that local recruitment drives and using a ‘refer a friend scheme’ appear to provide both a better quality of candidate and improved retention. [Inspired to Care](#) members can get 25% off an app called [Care Friends](#). Why not consider moving the money you would have spent on recruitment websites to a refer a friend scheme instead?

Norovirus

Recently, there have been a number of Norovirus outbreaks in care homes across Leicestershire County and Rutland. It is important that if you suspect an infection outbreak (i.e. 2 or more cases) you contact UKHSA in the first instance via 0344 2254524, option 1 (available 24/7).

For further advice and support, the Local Authority IPC Service can be contacted Mon-Fri, 9-5pm via 0116 305 5121 or infection@leics.gov.uk. Read [UKHSA guidance for managing norovirus outbreaks in adult social care settings](#).

Leicestershire County Council updates

Home care forums

Strategic home care forums

We have reviewed the current format and attendance of the quarterly locality home care forums and appreciate that with the pressures of care delivery, time taken to attend multiple meetings can be limited. In response, a quarterly locality home care forum will be combined with the monthly home care conference call.

Once a quarter the regular home care call will be 90 minutes in duration instead of the usual 60 minutes, and cover wider topics. This format is already in use with our care homes and is working well.

The annual face-to-face forum will remain in place in addition to the team conference calls described above, and is likely to take place in November.

We welcome input from providers therefore if there is a particular topic you would like covering please email polly.adcock@leics.gov.uk or teresa.ryan@leics.gov.uk with your suggestions.

The [provider teleconference](#) page of the website has been updated with the new details.

April home care forum

To ensure good representation from Council officers at the next home care provider conference call, it has been moved from the original date of Monday 3 April to Tuesday 11 April at 14.00-15.00. A reminder will be included in next week's Provider News, and an agenda and dial-in link will be circulated a few days ahead of the new date.

The [provider teleconference](#) page of the website has been updated with the new details.

Provider portal redesign

The Council's supplier (Oxford Computer Consultants) is in the early stages of re-designing the Provider Portal. As part of this work they would like to understand your experience of using the portal and are very keen to hear any suggestions you might have. They are starting by conducting a survey on how you are currently using the portal.

[Please complete the survey](#), which is open until 30 April 2023.

If you have any questions relating to the Provider Portal please e-mail ascproviderportal@leics.gov.uk.

Opportunities

Learning disability student nurse placements

De Montfort University prides itself in providing exciting, educational placements for its student nurses, ensuring they have the opportunity to experience a diverse range of settings.

They are looking to expand placement opportunities across all four of its fields of practice: Mental Health, Learning Disability, Adult and Child Nursing. Their current placement areas include care homes, residential homes, nurseries, community teams, and schools, and many of placement areas do not have registered nurses within their teams.

Feedback from practice partners show that students are a helpful and welcome addition to care teams, and research suggests that students who have a positive placement experience often return to that placement area once qualified, allowing for a smooth transition from student to newly qualified nurse.

They have a dedicated practice learning team that offer in-house training to get your area set up, and they provide continuous support with any questions or concerns you may have.

Student nurse placements range from anywhere between 5 to 14 weeks in length, and there is a placement tariff, payable hourly for every student nurse placement facilitated.

If you feel that you could offer any student nurse placements within you organisation, or you would simply like any further information, then please contact natalie.tyers@dmu.ac.uk

Learning and development opportunities

IPC Basics webinar: UTIs

The next IPC Basics Webinar will be on Wednesday 19 April, 14.00-14.45 and will focus on 'Reducing Urinary Tract Infections by Improving Hydration'. To register for the webinar, please see the [Learning Hub](#) or contact infection@leics.gov.uk

Health and wellbeing

New Healthy Workplaces Leicestershire programme launching

Leicestershire County Council is launching its brand-new Healthy Workplaces Leicestershire programme in April, which has been designed in collaboration with organisations like yours from across the county.

Run by dedicated staff within the Public Health Team, organisations across Leicestershire will be able to gain free access to a 'Workplace Health Needs Assessment', to establish gaps and areas where you might benefit from support in improving the health and wellbeing of your employees; the Healthy Workplaces Leicestershire Accreditation; and Self-Help Hub online directory.

The programme also offers onsite Health MOTs for staff, and training for Healthy Workplace Champions and Mental Health First Aiders, as well as support in creating a number of different health and wellbeing policies and strategies should organisations be interested.

To find out more on the [website](#) or email us at healthyworkplaces@leics.gov.uk

Industrial action

Junior doctor industrial action

Further junior doctor strike dates are planned, with the next one scheduled for Tuesday 11 April to Saturday 21 April. Information will be updated when available onto the [University Hospitals of Leicester \(UHL\) news site](#).

Next edition

The next edition of Provider News is expected to be published in three weeks' time during week commencing 17 April 2023. If you are interested in contributing by writing about a topic of your choice, perhaps something that is particularly important to you, please contact us at enquirylinequality&contracts@leics.gov.uk.