



Issue 37 – 22 September 2023

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The future of adult social care

Digitisation is the power to improve care

High-quality care planning is at the heart of delivering safer, more personalised care. Moving care plans into a digital format, called a digital social care record (DSCR), makes it easier for care providers to manage care and respond to people’s needs more rapidly.

A new post on [Digitisation is the power to improve care](#) has just been published on the gov.uk social care blog, giving further information on the programme overall, including support available to providers going digital.

Guidance and good practice

COVID-19 autumn 2023 booster and seasonal flu vaccine programmes – now live!

The autumn COVID-19 and flu vaccination programme is now live for adult social care providers.

Care home vaccination started on 11 September 2023, aiming to be completed by 22 October 2023. Both residents and staff will be eligible for the vaccines and should be encouraged to take up this offer to protect themselves and their residents. GP practices will contact care homes to confirm details and dates.

The [national booking service](#) for other eligible cohorts, including social care workers, opened on 18 September.

Please start to prepare care home consent forms now:

- If a resident has capacity, they need to complete the following form: [COVID-19 vaccination consent form – Care Home Resident \(able to consent for themselves\)](#)
- If a resident does not have capacity, they need to complete one of the following forms: [COVID-19 vaccination relative's view form – For a Relative of a Care Home Resident unable to consent for themselves](#) or [COVID-19 vaccination consent form – For the Attorney of a Care Home Resident unable to consent for themselves](#)
- Consent remains in place unless the individual who gave it withdraws it. If any new, relevant information arises between the time consent was given and when the immunisation is offered, it may be necessary to inform the patient and for them to re-confirm their consent.

[Existing IPC measures remain important.](#)

For any enquiries, please contact healthprotection@leics.gov.uk

Safeguarding Matters

The [latest issue](#) of Safeguarding Matters is now available.

This, and prior issues of Safeguarding Matters, can be found on the Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Partnership Board [website](#).

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the Safeguarding Partnership Business Office via lrsdbo@leics.gov.uk.

Leicestershire County Council updates

HART short term packages

Home care packages that may be short-term are now highlighted as such on the await care list, so that providers can decide whether to take the package for a short time. An example of where this might arise includes where HART does not have capacity to start a package of reablement but does not want to delay a person's return home. HART will take the package as soon as it has capacity, which could be as early as the next day.

Reminder of home care sub-contracting arrangements

Sub-contracting home care packages is not allowed under the Home Care for Leicestershire framework, other than in exceptional circumstances and with the prior express written consent of Leicestershire County Council.

Home care framework providers are reminded of clause 30.2 of the Home Care for Leicestershire Framework Agreement 2021-2024, which states:

“The Provider may only subcontract the whole or any part of its obligations under this framework with the prior express written consent of LCC and subject always to Clauses 30.5, 30.6, 30.7. The Provider understands that such consent may only be granted in exceptional circumstances.”

Framework providers are not permitted to sub-contract any packages without the prior express written consent of Leicestershire County Council. Where sub-contracting has occurred, providers are further reminded they remain responsible for the quality and safety of the package delivery until they are reviewed and reallocated (where it is safe to do so) through the brokerage function.

If you have entered into sub-contracting arrangements since the commencement of this framework agreement without prior permission, please ensure your Quality and Contract Officer is notified immediately, or contact katie.joondan@leics.gov.uk (Lead Commissioner – Home Care).

Home care returns

Home care winter survey and weekly survey

Providers have been asked to complete the home care winter and weekly surveys for some time, and the decision has now been made to cease completion of these with immediate effect. The surveys were developed at an unprecedented time, with some of the information no longer required or now obtainable from other data sources.

We would like to thank you all for taking the time to complete these over the past few years and hope the ceasing of these will be welcomed by providers.

Home care Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

We would like to gently remind all contracted home care providers to complete the [quarterly KPIs return](#).

KPIs are due at the following intervals:

- Quarter 1 – mid February
- Quarter 2 – mid May
- Quarter 3 – mid August
- Quarter 4 – mid November

We are aware of some issues with uploading the requested case studies, therefore please can these be sent directly to sarah.miller@leics.gov.uk following completion of the KPI data.

Fair outcomes

An internal Council process has been established recently to ensure that individuals accessing adult social care support have fair access to the council's resources. A panel reviews the majority of requests for services and ensures that the outcomes are the most independent possible and appropriate to the person's needs.

All new or changed packages or placements are being taken through this process for a trial period. Workers should not commission or increase support without the agreement of the panel.

Staying up to date with highways works

You can access the latest information on highways works in Leicestershire by visiting the [road maintenance](#) pages of the Council's website.

Road works are planned between late September and early November on the A6004 Epinal Way, Loughborough, which may cause disruption to travel, so please familiarise yourself with the [phasing of the works](#) if your team may be impacted.

Learning and development opportunities

National training programme for professional nurse advocates

NHSE has offered Social Care Nurses within the Midlands a fully funded opportunity to undertake the Professional Nurse Advocates (PNA) programme.

The training will provide the participants with the skills to facilitate restorative supervision to colleagues and teams within services they work within and beyond. In

addition, the training equips nurses to lead and deliver quality improvement initiatives in response to service demands and individuals changing requirements.

The course offer will consist of a 10-day virtual programme (one day per week), which is accredited at Level 7 and therefore all potential PNA students will need to evidence prior learning at a Level 6.

Applications are welcomed, especially those currently under-represented, which includes overseas nurse recruits. It is important that trained PNAs are representative of the nursing workforce as a whole and able to provide culturally sensitive supervision to support workforce resilience and health and wellbeing.

Cohorts are available throughout 2023 and 2024. Expressions of interest from practicing social care nurses in the Midlands are currently being collated. If you or any of your staff are interested then please contact Shirley Way at Skills for Care at Shirley.Way@skillsforcare.org.uk.

Dementia Clinical Network study session – 27 September

An NHS England Midlands Dementia Clinical Network DiADeM Study Session is taking place on Wednesday 27 September 10:00 12:00 via MS Teams. [Click here to join the meeting](#)

DiADeM is a diagnostic tool that has been developed for populations of patients who are often care home residents. Over the past few years, systems have adopted this tool and piloted innovative approaches of identifying and diagnosing patients within care home settings.

The aim of the session is to share learning on the use and implementation of DiADeM within pilot sites in the Midlands and other regional sites across the country.

Stay Smiling e-learning

Good oral health is an essential to a person's general health and wellbeing. Evidence shows that poor oral health in care homes impacts an individual's ability to eat, smile and be pain free, and therefore their quality of life.

The Stay Smiling programme provides video-based mouth care training that has been codeveloped with care staff and dental experts. The e-learning package contains 8 chapters of informative videos on why mouth care is important, communication difficulties, denture cleaning, and how to brush a resident's teeth. There is also a coproduced oral health toolkit that care homes can use to assist in oral care assessment and planning for their residents.

The [e-learning](#)

- is free and easily accessible by computer, tablet, or mobile phone
- takes just 30 minutes in total that can be completed over time

Upon completion of the training, staff members will receive a certificate of achievement.

Once signed up as a free member, the programme can be found in the member section.

There are two aspects to the programme:

- co-produced e-learning for care home teams
- video files that can be embedded into care home training (available on request by emailing stay.smiling@kcl.ac.uk)

Consultations and research

The experiences of living in residential care

City, University of London want to find out about the experiences of living in residential care from the perspectives of older people and from those who care for them.

The research will be conducted until December 2023 and arrangements will be made to suit you. If you would like to take part or would like to know more details, please email the My HomeLife England team on mhl@city.ac.uk by Monday 2 October 2023.

Events

LLR Festival of Practice – 2-6 October

Following the success of the previous LLR Festival of Practice events in 2019 and 2021, the LLR Festival of Practice Team are extending an invitation to join this year's event.

This year is a 'hybrid' model, with live face to face and virtual sessions across the week commencing 2 October 2023 with this year's theme being equality, diversity and inclusion.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion are central to effective and meaningful practice, and the team are looking forward to exploring these themes and learning together across child, family and adult services in Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland.

The invitation to join the event is also being extended to local people drawing on support and carers, as well as multi-agency partners. Full details of how to book on Eventbrite are on the last page of [the programme](#).

This year, bookings are on a first come first served basis, so early [registration](#) is essential.

Making the most of international recruitment – 3 October

As a part of the International Recruitment project, an in-person event is being held, [‘Making the most of International Recruitment in Social Care’](#) on 3 October at 9.00, at the Hilton East Midlands Airport, 24 Derby Road, Derby DE74 2YZ, and lunch will be provided.

Citizens Advice and the Care Associations throughout the East Midlands, including their pastoral support, will be represented.

The day will be filled with guest speakers and Q&As to help you learn more about the international recruitment process.

Alongside this, the event is for the whole of the East Midlands, so the day will be full of networking opportunities.

Awards

Care Professional of the Year awards – last chance to nominate!

Nominations for the Care Professional of the Year awards close on 1 October. [Nominate today](#) and recognise the hard work of your team and colleagues! Further information can be seen in [Provider News 36](#).

Commemoration, celebration and awareness raising

Coronavirus Life Assurance Scheme - last chance to claim

[This scheme](#) provides financial support to families and dependents of health and care colleagues who sadly died from COVID-19 while delivering frontline care during the pandemic. The window for eligible claims closes on 30 September 2023.

A tax-free lump sum of £60,000 is paid to the deceased’s appropriate person, regardless of salary. The scheme is non-contributory. There is no cost or liability to employers or staff.

Chief Nurse for Adult Social Care, Deborah Sturdy, uses this recent blog post to explain why it is all [care providers’ duty of care](#) to help families of dearly missed colleagues make the most of this scheme before the end of September deadline.

Industrial action

Delivering safe services during industrial action in September and October

The British Medical Association (BMA) has announced new strike dates in September and October from junior doctors, including joint action with consultants from our local hospitals. There will be days in which junior doctors and consultants

coordinate their industrial action. This is in addition to other days on which just junior doctors or just consultants will be on strike.

Strike details

- Junior doctors will strike for 72 hours between 7am on Wednesday 20 September and 7am on Saturday 23 September.
- Both consultants and junior doctors will strike again between 7am on Monday 2 October and 7am on Thursday 5 October.

Impact on emergency and care services

The industrial action will affect emergency and care services, due to reduced staffing and services will be busier than normal, with Christmas day levels of cover.

We know that you are already doing everything you can during this busy time to ensure good quality services and may have concerns about the impact of the upcoming industrial action.

In addition to the arrangements that have been put in place to make sure that care homes remain supported during this time, there are things that you too can check to ensure that only clinically essential referrals are made to 999 or 111 for the duration of the industrial action and proceeding 24 hours.

Please see below updated information, resources and services which will help support care homes and social care workers during the industrial action.

How you can help

At this time of potentially high demand on services, please review your business continuity plans to ensure that they cover:

Staffing

- The ability to update staff availability on an ongoing basis
- Mutual aid relationships with other providers and other branches within your own business
- Key local authority contacts contained within your plan

People who use your service

- Risk rating ('RAG' or red-amber-green rating) according to people's support needs – if you know someone is unwell or is more susceptible to illness which may require support from an ambulance
- Informal support available to each person – such as family, friends, and neighbours – remind them their assistance is vital so other people can continue to receive support
- Using alternatives to an ambulance. This could include the falls service where someone can come and assess a person and decide if an ambulance is needed

- Up to date GP details so this is your first port of call in the event of someone being unwell.

Alongside business continuity plans, please refer to the NHS Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland's [guidance on keeping the emergency department clear](#) by using alternative support services to help facilitate health concerns during this period.

Local system plans in place to support adult social care providers

Own GP for generally unwell patients		
Urgent / Acute home visiting service	Via own GP first port of call or DHU Health Care Professional Line (HCP)	DHU HCP line 0300 323 0672
Night Nursing Service	22.00 to 08.00	DHU HCP line 0300 323 0672
Health Care Professional line	24/7 alternative to 111 to support into most appropriate local service	DHU HCP line 0300 323 0672
Crisis Response	08.00 – 20.00	DHU HCP line 0300 323 0672
Falls Response Service (Accepting referrals from all nursing and care homes in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, plus referrals from other health and care staff in Leicestershire and Rutland locations only)	08.00 – 20.00 Monday to Sunday	DHU HCP line 0300 323 0672
Two-hour Crisis Response Service- Social care, Leicester City, Leicestershire County Council & Rutland Social Care (home care)	Agreement to refer directly into 24/7	City - 01162211515 County - 01163050495 Rutland - Duty line is 01572 758341 and out of hours is: 0116 2551606
Two-hour Crisis Response Service	Nursing & Therapy 08.00 - 22.00	0300 300 1000
Mental health Central Access Point (CAP)	24/7 Mental Health Triage	0808 800 3302

Discharge of patients with COVID-19 from hospital

IPC guidance relating to the discharge of patients from hospital to a care home can be found in the [COVID-19 supplement](#).

The hospital should still perform a PCR test 48 hours before discharge or a lateral flow test if the individual has tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days.

However, care homes can accept patients who are either awaiting the PCR swab result or are confirmed positive (via PCR or LFT) and are still within their isolation period, if the home is able to isolate and safely care for the individual.

Please note if patients have tested COVID positive they are advised to isolate for a minimum of 5 days. After 5 days, the individual can return to normal activities if they no longer have a high temperature and feel well enough to do so.

COVID positive patients should avoid contact with those eligible for COVID 19 treatments for 10 days after a positive test (e.g. immunocompromised).

The isolation, PPE requirements and testing regimes when caring for COVID -19 positive individuals should be followed as per the COVID-19 supplement.

For additional IPC support, please contact infection@leics.gov.uk or 0116 305 5121

Next edition

The next edition of Provider News will be published during week commencing 9 October 2023 (in 3 weeks' time). 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.