



**Issue 49 – 21 March 2024**

**Contents**

Contents..... 1

The future of adult social care ..... 2

    Carer’s Leave Act approved for 6 April implementation..... 2

    LLR Adult Social Care Nursing Advisory Council ..... 3

Guidance and good practice ..... 3

    Catching up with vaccinations ..... 3

    Resources for the spring 2024 COVID-19 vaccination programme ..... 4

    Diarrhoea and vomiting in care settings..... 4

    COVID-19 testing in care homes ..... 4

    Visa reforms for care workers..... 4

    Skills for Care ‘LGBTQ+ good and best practice’ webinar ..... 5

    ‘Made with care’ national campaign..... 5

    Weighing of care home residents ..... 5

    Priority Services Register ..... 5

    Join the new LLR ICB WhatsApp channel ..... 5

Leicestershire County Council updates ..... 6

    Annual uplifts for 2024/25 ..... 6

Council support for recruitment and retention.....	6
Learning and development.....	6
Oliver McGowan tier 2 training .....	6
Financial sustainability .....	6
Increase in Funded Nursing Care rate.....	6
Opportunities.....	7
International recruitment: grant funding available .....	7
Commemoration, celebration and awareness raising.....	7
Neurodiversity Celebration Week .....	7
Trans Visibility Day .....	7
Reminders.....	7
Next edition.....	7
Useful links .....	8

## **The future of adult social care**

### **Carer’s Leave Act approved for 6 April implementation**

From 6 April 2024, employees will be entitled to unpaid leave to give or arrange care for a dependant who has:

- a physical or mental illness or injury that means they’re expected to need care for more than 3 months
- a disability (as [defined in the Equality Act 2010](#))
- care needs because of their old age

The dependant does not have to be a family member. It can be anyone who relies on them for care.

Employees are entitled to carer’s leave from their first day of work for their employer. Their [employment rights](#) (like holidays and returning to their job) are protected during carer’s leave.

## LLR Adult Social Care Nursing Advisory Council

Jackie Riddett, Chair invites adult social care nurses to the next meeting of the LLR Adult Social Care Nursing Advisory Council, which will be taking place via Teams on 22 March, 13.00-14.00. To receive the joining link please contact Judi at [judi.vernau@nhs.net](mailto:judi.vernau@nhs.net)

The agenda includes an overview of progress to date, the group's five local priorities, and exploring solutions.

Future meetings are scheduled to take place on the fourth Friday of the month from 13.00-14.00:

- 26 April
- 24 May
- 28 June
- 26 July
- 23 August
- 27 September
- 25 October
- 22 November
- 27 November

### **Guidance and good practice**

#### **Catching up with vaccinations**

Childhood infections, such as measles and whooping cough, are rising. These infections can cause serious illness, hospitalisation, and life-long disabilities.

[Uptake levels of childhood vaccines](#) offered through the [routine NHS vaccination programme](#) in England have been falling over the past decade across all vaccines, including whooping cough, measles, mumps and rubella (MMR), polio, meningitis and diphtheria. England no longer has the levels of population immunity recommended by the World Health Organization that is needed to prevent outbreaks.

If you or your child have missed a vaccine, it is never too late to check if you can catch up. See the [full immunisation timetable](#) and information on how to book. Staff can contact their GP to see if they are missing any vaccinations and to book an appointment.

Several measles pop-up vaccination clinics are available locally through March and April. [See dates and more information](#).

Watch a recent [LLR webinar on measles](#).

## Resources for the spring 2024 COVID-19 vaccination programme

[Resources](#) for the spring 2024 COVID-19 vaccination campaign are now available.

Eligible groups of people, the vaccines being used and other information can be viewed in the [programme guide](#).

Care homes can begin to seek consent using the up-to-date [consent forms](#).

The campaign is expected to start in April and continue until the end of June. Further information will be shared when available.

## Diarrhoea and vomiting in care settings

UKHSA will no longer be notifying the Local Authority Infection Prevention and Control service if they have been called about an outbreak of diarrhoea and vomiting (D&V) in care settings. This is to help prioritise their workload more efficiently.

When settings call UKHSA to report a D&V outbreak, they will receive an email response from UKHSA with all the guidance needed to manage the outbreak. However, it is still important that you inform the Infection Prevention and Control Service via [infection@leics.gov.uk](mailto:infection@leics.gov.uk) or via 0116 305 5121 so that you can be supported until the outbreak is closed.

## COVID-19 testing in care homes

The ordering portal for accessing test kits for outbreak testing has now closed. We are expecting the guidance to be updated before 1 April to reflect changes to COVID-19 testing and will communicate these in due course.

For now, continue to follow the current testing guidance highlighted in the [acute respiratory infection guidance](#). Existing stock of LFD tests should be used to facilitate outbreak testing when needed. If you require COVID-19 tests, please contact UKHSA on 0344 2254 524 (option 1), or [emhpt@ukhsa.gov.uk](mailto:emhpt@ukhsa.gov.uk). If residents eligible for COVID-19 treatments require a test, these can still be obtained from local pharmacies. COVID-19 treatments can be accessed via GP surgeries, NHS 111 or hospital specialists.

Please check expiry dates of any existing stocks and dispose of any expired test kits.

## Visa reforms for care workers

As of 11 March 2024, care workers and senior care workers are no longer able to bring dependants to the UK. Additionally, care providers in England are required to be registered with the Care Quality Commission to sponsor care workers and senior care workers.

[A toolkit](#) has been published to support care providers in ethical recruitment of staff from overseas. The publication offers guidance for organisations on new processes and how to refine international hiring procedures.

## **Skills for Care ‘LGBTQ+ good and best practice’ webinar**

You can now watch a recording of the recent Skills for Care webinar on [LGBT+ good practice](#) for your workforce and people you support. Skills for Care also include some links to useful resources such as the LGBTQ+ learning framework and the ‘culturally appropriate care’ guide.

## **‘Made with care’ national campaign**

‘Made with Care’, DHSC’s national adult social care recruitment campaign, is here to support you in filling vacancies. The campaign emphasises the rewarding nature of care work, whilst also addressing the barriers to applying which some candidates experience.

Maximise the effectiveness of your local recruitment with their [free, downloadable resources](#), which include useful tips on how to build a successful recruitment campaign.

To find out more, [visit the dedicated website](#) and subscribe to the Made with Care newsletter for the latest updates.

## **Weighing of care home residents**

Although providers may choose to monitor people’s weights monthly with the appropriate consent, this must not be a blanket policy for all. People must be treated as individuals and the monitoring of weights must be proportionate and based upon individual risk.

If there are concerns, then the appropriate monitoring tools should be used at this point to identify and support the individual.

## **Priority Services Register**

The [Priority Services Register](#) is a free service used to provide timely support to people in the event of interruption to essential amenities including electricity, gas and water. Please tell people or families you support about it, and encourage them to [join the register](#) if they are [eligible](#).

## **Join the new LLR ICB WhatsApp channel**

The Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Integrated Care Board (LLR ICB) has launched a WhatsApp channel to provide you with the latest local health news and information about local health campaigns.

The channel will provide you with local health updates straight to your phone and will be easy to share with by simply forwarding the message.

WhatsApp channels are a relatively new way of communicating with the public and are already being used by many organisations including the Government, sports clubs and national news platforms.

To join, please go to [this link](#) from a device supporting WhatsApp.

## **Leicestershire County Council updates**

### **Annual uplifts for 2024/25**

Leicestershire County Council's 2024/25 annual inflationary fee uplifts for home care, care homes, supported living, community life choices and extra care have now been issued to providers of Council managed services by emailed letter.

Please contact [enquirylinequality&contracts@leics.gov.uk](mailto:enquirylinequality&contracts@leics.gov.uk) if you think you should have received a letter but have not.

### **Council support for recruitment and retention**

As well as the new Made with Care campaign mentioned above, providers also have access to free local support from the Council's [Inspired to Care](#) team. They have a dedicated website full of resources to support your recruitment and retention. All you have to do is complete a [registration form](#) to gain access to the free resources and dedicated support of the [team](#).

## **Learning and development**

### **Oliver McGowan tier 2 training**

Leicestershire County Council receives notification of places becoming available on all-day Oliver McGowan tier 2 sessions (face to face training). These can be at short notice but are available for providers.

If you have staff who have completed tier 1 and who need to complete tier 2, please contact [enquirylinequality&contracts@leics.gov.uk](mailto:enquirylinequality&contracts@leics.gov.uk) with details of an email address and we will add you onto a mailing list so we can forward the information to you. We will only do this where you have staff who are eligible to complete the tier 2 training.

## **Financial sustainability**

### **Increase in Funded Nursing Care rate**

The rate paid to care homes for NHS-funded nursing care (FNC) will increase by 7.4% for 2024 to 2025.

The standard weekly rate per person eligible for FNC will increase from £219.71 to £235.88 from 1 April 2024.

[Read more.](#)

## **Opportunities**

### **International recruitment: grant funding available**

Are you looking to recruit, and are considering applying for a sponsor licence?

Do you already have a sponsor licence, granted after 1 April 2023?

Have you hired any international employees since 1 April 2023, or displaced talent since October 2023?

If you think any of these apply to you, get in touch now. You may be eligible for support of up to £2500. [Apply now](#) or contact the team at [info@eastmidscare.co.uk](mailto:info@eastmidscare.co.uk). Expressions of interest are required before 31 March 2024.

## **Commemoration, celebration and awareness raising**

### **Neurodiversity Celebration Week**

18-24 March is Neurodiversity Celebration Week, recognising and celebrating the neurological differences present in people.

Neurodiversity Celebration Week aims to promote and champion the strengths of being neurodiverse, raising awareness of the challenges and championing the strengths of neurodivergent people. The organisers of the week have put on free [events](#), such as webinars, for people to attend and learn about neurodiversity.

### **Trans Visibility Day**

31 March is [Trans Day of Visibility](#), organised with the aim of putting a spotlight on the trans community - the issues faced by the community and the positive narratives and stories of being trans.

The council will be flying the trans flag at County Hall to signal their ongoing and continued support for the trans community, here in Leicestershire, in the council, and more widely.

## **Reminders**

### **Next edition**

The next edition of Provider News will be published in three weeks' time, during week commencing 8 April 2024. 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](mailto:enquirylinequality&contracts@leics.gov.uk).

## Useful links

- [Current and past editions of Provider News](#)
- [Provider conference calls](#)