



**Issue 51 – 24 April 2024**

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## **Guidance and good practice**

### **COVID-19 spring vaccination programme now live**

COVID-19 vaccinations began in care homes on Monday 15 April, and the [National Booking Service](#) and 119 lines opened for eligible cohorts to book a vaccination appointment from 22 April 2024.

It is important that everyone who is eligible takes up the vaccine offer this spring. The current vaccines provide good protection against severe illness and hospitalisation, particularly for the most vulnerable.

The following people are eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine:

- are aged 75 years old or over
- live in a care home for older adults
- are aged 6 months old or over and have a weakened immune system

[Read more about the spring campaign.](#)

## **Free transport to COVID-19 vaccinations**

To help people that are unable to travel to a vaccination clinic, a free patient transport service is now available. The service has been set up to provide eligible residents in Leicestershire and Rutland the opportunity to get vaccinated this spring by helping them to get to and from a vaccination clinic if they live remotely or have no other means of transportation.

To check your eligibility please call 01530 512456, Monday to Friday, 9.00-17.00.

Please note the service provider will check your eligibility and will book you into a suitable COVID-19 clinic. The service will arrange for people to be taken to and from their appointment, all at no cost.

## **Safer visiting in care homes during infectious illness outbreaks**

The UK Government [updated the guidance](#) around visiting during outbreaks on 15 April 2024:

- Guidance on visiting has been updated to reflect the new Care Quality Commission (CQC) fundamental standard on visiting and accompanying in health and care settings (Regulation 9A). It requires that care home residents must be facilitated to receive visits, and not discouraged from taking visits out of the care home.
- People staying in a care home, hospital or hospice can receive visits from people they want to see.
- People living in a care home are not discouraged from making social visits outside the home.
- People attending hospital or hospice appointments who do not require an overnight stay are accompanied by a family member, friend or advocate if they want someone with them.

The following national guidance is available which includes advice on care home visiting during outbreaks of infectious illness:

- [Infection prevention and control in adult social care settings](#)
- [Infection prevention and control in adult social care: acute respiratory infection](#)
- [Influenza-like illness \(ILI\): managing outbreaks in care homes](#)
- [Scabies: management advice for health professionals](#)
- [Norovirus: managing outbreaks in acute and community health and social care settings](#)

It may be appropriate to reduce or postpone specific visits if a visit poses a significant risk to the health, safety, or wellbeing of someone on the premises and

this cannot be mitigated through other precautions. Consider this as part of a risk assessment.

A visit should only be stopped in very exceptional circumstances. It may be necessary to consider stopping most visits (for reasons other than on the grounds of compassion or health and safety) for a limited period. Examples include:

- when there is risk of severe harm to visitors from the infection
- where an outbreak is not under control and there is current and significant risk of serious harm to visitors, residents and/or the wider population.

## **Get in the know about the latest scams and consumer fraud**

Read Leicestershire County Council's latest [Trading Standards Scams News](#).

## **Leicestershire County Council updates**

### **Inflationary uplift 2024-25**

Providers were advised in March of the Council's inflationary uplifts for 2024-25 which take effect from Monday 8 April 2024.

The implementation of the annual uplifts takes significant staff resources, and we are currently working through the tasks required. We can now advise you that the uplifts are anticipated to be applied to the payment dates in the table below.

| <b>Service area</b>   | <b>Pay period</b> |            | <b>BACS payment into bank account</b> |
|-----------------------|-------------------|------------|---------------------------------------|
| Residential / nursing | 13/05/2024        | 09/06/2024 | 27/05/2024                            |
| Home care             | 08/04/2024        | 14/04/2024 | 03/05/2024                            |
| Supported living      | 15/04/2024        | 12/05/2024 | 31/05/2024                            |
| CLC                   | 15/04/2024        | 21/04/2024 | 03/05/2024                            |

All uplifts will be backdated to 8 April 2024.

If you have any queries regarding the 2024-25 inflationary uplifts, please contact [feereview@leics.gov.uk](mailto:feereview@leics.gov.uk)

### **Draft residential contract – feedback open until 31 May**

The draft Leicestershire County Council residential contract has been sent to care home providers for their review and feedback over the next 6 weeks. The feedback period will end on 31 May 2024.

Two engagement events will be held:

- 14 May 2024 – 13.00-14.00 – Teams meeting
- 15 May 2024 – 11.00-noon – Glenfield Pavilion – in person

If you would like to attend either session or have any queries, please contact [contractreview@leics.gov.uk](mailto:contractreview@leics.gov.uk) by Wednesday 8 May 2024.

Places at the in-person event will be limited to 60 due to the size of the room.

## **Health packages of home care**

Many home care providers on the Home Care for Leicestershire (HCL) framework also applied to provide health packages - these packages of care are generally commissioned through delegation with the Framework for Integrated Personalised Care (FIPC). Where health does not have sufficient resources to deliver the support (through community or primary healthcare services), and an element of a person's care can be delegated, contracts were developed to utilise this framework rather than purchase directly with providers through joint commissioning arrangements.

These packages are funded by the Integrated Commissioning Board (ICB) and not Leicestershire County Council, with the Council managing the payment process to you as a provider and then recharging health.

Since the commencement of HCL, we have not sourced any health packages on their behalf, and this is because they have had sufficient resource in their own commissioning arrangements to meet demand. As outlined, the Council does have the ability to commission on behalf of health as part of FIPC.

The ICB like all commissioners need to ensure services commissioned on behalf of health offer value for money, and can meet need. It is a commissioning decision on the part of the ICB to commission from other frameworks they have access to.

Occasionally, the Council may broker a social care package that is subsequently cancelled because the hospital ward has concluded the person meets the criteria for fast-track support. In this case the ICB will go to their own frameworks first.

We have asked health to make providers and social care aware through better communication that they are considering fast track so that we can set any expectations when brokering a home care package.

## **Allocated worker look-up**

The CSC receives a large number of calls where the person who is the subject of the call has a worker allocated to support them. This is obviously frustrating for callers, who are often holding for periods of time before then being redirected; it also blocks the CSC phone lines and results in longer waits for everyone on the phone.

There is a [tool available](#) on the Council's website which will allow you to check whether the person you are calling about has a current allocated worker; to use it you just need to know the LAS number for the person, which should be available on any correspondence, assessments, or support plans that you have been sent. We hope this makes contacting us easier.

## Leicestershire County Council provider portal

Leicestershire County Council will shortly be changing the login process for the provider portal, so that it will be easier for you to reset your password. We will send registered provider portal users an invitation to sign up for this process over the next few months, with instructions on how to do this. The process for requesting new access to the portal remains the same; the manager can complete [provider portal access request form](#). Once you have registered for this process, the option to call or email Leicestershire County Council to reset your passwords will no longer be available.

Unless you have registered for this new login process, please continue to request password resets through the existing form available at the above link.

If you have any questions about the provider portal or to tell us when an authorised user has left your organisation, please e-mail [ascproviderportal@leics.gov.uk](mailto:ascproviderportal@leics.gov.uk)

Please be aware that access to the provider portal will not be granted to personal email addresses such as Gmail, Hotmail, or Yahoo. This is to ensure the security of our data as these domains are at greater vulnerability of attack. We are working with our information governance colleagues to find a solution for those providers who are unable to meet the conditions of use.

## Draft Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy consultation and online event – 24 April

The consultation on the Council's [draft Equality, Diversity and Inclusion \(EDI\) Strategy](#) is open to the public until Sunday 5 May 2024. You can submit your views through an [online survey](#).

An [online event](#) will be taking place on Wednesday 24 April, 19.00-20.00, to enable you to have your say.

## Learning and development

### Free numeracy training for people with a learning difficulty

As part of a government initiative, Forever Savvy are providing [free numeracy help](#) to adults over 19 living in Leicestershire. Their trainer Angie Stokes can come to your centres and work with those adults who would like to have fun with maths.

Adults with a learning difficulty may take longer to process and learn a new skill, so Forever Savvy are offering weekly sessions for 3-4 weeks in order that the participants are given enough time to succeed.

Group activities include maths and time bingo and 'splash the cash'. These are aimed to help teach some simple arithmetic, time in both 12- and 24-hour format and understanding money. Angie is also able to do one-to-one time if needed.

Here is a list of some of the things that were achieved throughout the last year:

- learning about credit and debit and store cards and how to stay out of debt
- how to budget for yourself
- how to plan meals to a budget and work out how much per person it costs
- ordering from a menu and working out how much it costs and how much change you should have
- being able to double or halve recipes when cooking to make the end product consistent
- how to measure accurately
- working out which is the best value product to buy
- understanding the 24-hour clock to make independent bus travel easier
- being able to read a bus timetable and work out when time you have to catch the bus to get to your destination on time
- Work out the score in a game of 5s and 3s with dominoes

Forever Savvy plans to work with a different provider each month (except July) and have some slots left.

Please get in contact with Angie on [angie@foreversavvy.co.uk](mailto:angie@foreversavvy.co.uk), 07710 092412 if you would like to participate.

## **Young people, radicalisation and autism**

Young people can be radicalised online into having extreme and harmful views. Autistic young people may be especially vulnerable.

Free professional training is available from Leicestershire County Council via ParentZone about the emerging online risk. [Register now](#) for a 90-minute virtual workshop which explains radicalisation and how it can affect those with neurodivergence. Learn how to spot the warning signs in autistic young people up to 25 years of age, and how to support the families you work with.

Please note that the registration link within this article may not work from some devices depending on your settings, so please try it from an alternative device if necessary.

If you have any queries please contact Anita Chavda, Community Safety Project & Planning Officer, Leicestershire County Council at [anita.chavda@leics.gov.uk](mailto:anita.chavda@leics.gov.uk)

## **Opportunities**

### **International recruitment funding is still available**

Was your sponsor licence grated on, or after 1 April 2023? Do you have international employees that you hired on, or after 1 April 2023? Have you, or are you considering applying for a sponsor licence? Have you hired any displaced talent since October 2023?

Funding applications can still be accepted to support you with international recruitment. The deadline for applications has been extended to midnight on Tuesday 30 April 2024.

Please note:

- If you received funding in Round 1, you could still be eligible for further funding in Round 2. The project is now supporting up to 20, or 20%, of your care workforce – whichever is lower.
- You should submit an application if you are considering applying to become a sponsor or have submitted an application to UKVI and waiting to hear on the outcome (funding is available upon success of the licence being granted).
- A number of applications from Round 1 are in progress where some information is still required – if you think this could be you, please email the project and they will check your application ([info@eastmidscare.co.uk](mailto:info@eastmidscare.co.uk))

To apply, submit your expression of interest by completing the [online form](#). Please ensure you provide all information requested – this will ensure your application is processed as quickly as possible.

If you have any staff members who could be classed as displaced, please reply to this email and a member of the team will be in touch as soon as possible.

To find out more, please email [info@eastmidscare.co.uk](mailto:info@eastmidscare.co.uk)

## **Consultations and research**

### **Healthwatch calls for public input on supported living services in Leicestershire and Leicester**

As part of Healthwatch's ongoing commitment to ensuring the quality and accessibility of healthcare services, Healthwatch Leicestershire and Healthwatch Leicester invite the public to share their experiences and opinions on supported living services.

Supported living services enable adults with diverse conditions, circumstances, and support requirements to maintain independence and actively engage in their communities. Healthwatch recognises the importance of these services in promoting individual well-being and social inclusion.

Through this initiative, they will gather valuable feedback from people who use supported living services, their families and caregivers. They would also like to hear from other stakeholders to better understand the strengths and challenges of supported living services in Leicestershire and Leicester.

Harsha Kotecha, Chair of Healthwatch Leicester and Healthwatch Leicestershire, said "We want to hear the voices of those who directly engage with supported living services. By sharing your experiences and perspectives, you can help to ensure that the service meets the needs of individuals and ensures equitable access to care.



Feedback will help identify areas for improvement and inform future efforts to enhance the quality and effectiveness of these essential services."

Healthwatch encourages individuals to share their feedback through various channels, including online surveys, face-to-face conversations and written submissions.

## How to get involved

Complete a survey or share your feedback directly with the Healthwatch team:

- [The person using supported living survey](#)
- [Relative / carer survey](#)

If you would like an easy-read paper copy of the survey, please contact Healthwatch at [enquiries@healthwatchll.com](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchll.com) or call 0116 257 4999.

Call Healthwatch 0116 257 4999 if you would like to talk to their team to share your feedback. All responses will be treated confidentially, and personal information will be kept secure under data protection regulations.

Supported living providers on Leicestershire County Council's Dynamic Purchasing System will also be sent this information, including the easy-read survey, by email.

## About Healthwatch

Healthwatch is the independent champion for people who use health and social care services. They exist to ensure that people are at the heart of care. They listen to what people like about services, and what could be improved, and share their views with those with the power to make change happen. They also help people find the information they need about services in their area.

They have the power to ensure that people's voices are heard by the government and those running services. As well as seeking the public's views ourselves, they also encourage services to involve people in decisions that affect them. Their sole purpose is to help make care better for people.

[Healthwatch Leicester and Healthwatch Leicestershire](#) is provided by Voluntary Action LeicesterShire.

## Events

### **Infection Prevention Society conference - 15 May**

The Infection Prevention Society (IPS) is having its [annual one-day conference](#) 'The Darling Bugs of May' on 15 May 2024 at Trent Vineyard, Nottingham.

This conference is aimed at all colleagues who work in or have an interest in Infection Prevention and Control from all sectors of healthcare. There will be a cross-

section of sessions including a wide variety of topics within IPC practice. Contact [trent.branch.ips@gmail.com](mailto:trent.branch.ips@gmail.com) for more information.

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

### **World Immunisation Week – 24-30 April 2024**

World immunisation week is observed annually during the last week of April to promote the critical role of vaccines in safeguarding health and wellbeing across all ages.

Decades of immunisation efforts have successfully reduced the burden of infectious diseases.

From 24-30 April 2024, this global initiative underscores the essential collective action required to extend vaccine coverage and combat vaccine-preventable diseases.

Further information can be found here:

- [World Health Organisation](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

### **World Hand Hygiene Day – 5 May 2024**

The World Health Organisation (WHO) have a 'Save Lives: Clean Your Hands' campaign day on 5 May. This is part of a global movement to improve hand hygiene.

Healthcare facilities throughout the world are invited to take part in a global initiative, to continue to raise hand hygiene awareness, to move action to the point of care, and to reduce the spread of infections.

This year's theme is 'promoting knowledge and capacity building on infection prevention and control, including hand hygiene, among health and care workers'.

[Find out more and sign up to join the campaign.](#)

[Read an information pack about the campaign.](#)

An [international webinar on hand hygiene](#) will be taking place on 6 May.

## **Reminders**

### **Next edition**

The next edition of Provider News will be published during week commencing 6 May 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](#)