



Information

for adult social care providers

CORONAVIRUS
PROTECT YOURSELF & OTHERS

 Leicestershire
County Council

Issue 64 – 21 December 2020

Dear colleague,

We write with several updates on a number of key matters for you to consider and share as appropriate with your teams.

Coronavirus vaccinations

COVID-19 vaccinations started to be rolled out across Leicestershire last weekend to reduce the chance of people contracting and suffering from the virus.

Getting a coronavirus jab is a simple step you can take to help protect yourself, your family, your colleagues, and your community, and reduce the impact on the NHS and social care.

Residents in a care home for older adults and staff working in care homes for older adults are being offered the vaccine first, as well as people over 80 years of age and some health workers.

You will be contacted by the NHS or council when it is your turn to be invited for a vaccination, which due to the scale of the vaccination programme may take some time. People should not be concerned if they are eligible but not invited immediately. You do not need to contact the hospital or your GP practice, and it is important you do not attend any NHS location in the hope of being vaccinated without an appointment.

The Pfizer vaccine has met strict standards of safety, quality and effectiveness set out by the independent Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). Other vaccines are being developed. They will only be available on the NHS once they have been thoroughly tested to make sure they are safe and effective.

So far, thousands of people have been given a COVID-19 vaccine and reports of serious side effects, such as allergic reactions, have been very rare. No long-term complications have been reported.

Please encourage and support your staff to take up their vaccination when they are offered it.

For further information about COVID-19 vaccinations visit:

www.gov.uk/government/collections/covid-19-vaccination-programme

or www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/coronavirus-vaccine/

A guide for social care staff can be found here

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-a-guide-for-social-care-staff>.

Christmas Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) orders

The DHSC PPE Portal will be operational over Christmas. Delivery partners (Royal Mail and our Pallet Carrier) will not be delivering on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day. Orders made during this time should still be delivered within 5 days. To make allowance for any potential disruptions or increased need, order limits have been increased by 25% for all providers, as of Tuesday 8th December, and until at least the 4th January.

Call the customer service team on 0800 876 6802 if you have any questions about using the PPE portal. The team is available from 7am to 7pm, 7 days a week, to help resolve your queries.

The latest guidance for the PPE Portal, including order limits for the different types and sizes of provider, is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ppe-portal-how-to-order-covid-19-personal-protective-equipment>

In a dire emergency Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland providers should use the PPE Support Email LRF.PPEsupport@leics.gov.uk - a small emergency supply will be made available for you to collect only. This email address will be reviewed once a day over the Christmas and New Year bank holiday periods, that is 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th December as well as the January 1st, 2nd and 3rd. Anyone needing this facility should leave their contact details, service type and address plus the PPE required.

Please note the person monitoring this email address will contact you to ascertain your circumstances and, if required, will authorise the release of an emergency supply of PPE for collection. We ask that it is not used for queries regarding the provision, use or future ordering - please wait to normal opening times.

Testing over the festive period

Regular testing should continue over the festive period. Collections from Royal Mail priority post boxes will be made every day except Christmas Day and New Year's Day, however, there will be a special collection timetable operating between these days. This means there will be fewer collections, and collections will be earlier than usual.

Please ask home care workers to check their nearest priority box before they test during this period, and ensure they post their test at least an hour before the last collection. You can check the collection times for post boxes at

<https://www.royalmail.com/services-near-you/#/>

Ordinarily, we have asked homecare workers to test on Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, but during the festive period, people can also test on Wednesday 23 and Wednesday 30 December.

Winter wellbeing and mental health support for people in Leicestershire and Rutland

The Mental Health Wellbeing and Recovery Service works across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland to support people and communities. They provide training on mental health support to others and direct support to people including individual and group support, information and signposting. Anyone can access the services and they can also be referred.

Winter, and Christmas in particular, can be a difficult time and even more so in 2020/21 with the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions – that is a normal response to the situation that these can have a negative impact on people's mental health.

The service has developed new resources and training which are now available online. The training is aimed at people who are looking to improve and maintain their own good mental health. We encourage people to sign up to the training at <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/winter-well-being-recovery-education-workshop-tickets-131863566477> and to access the information and support from one of the service provider organisations (see below).

We also hope that professional and community organisations will refer people to these services.

The Service is run by three voluntary sector organisations

- The Richmond Fellowship (Life Links) in Leicester, Blaby and Oadby & Wigston – who can be contacted at 0800 0234 575
- Mental Health Matters in Rutland, Charnwood, Melton, Hinckley & Bosworth and North West Leicestershire - who can be contacted at 0330 323 0189
- Voluntary Action South Leicestershire (My Mind Matters) in Harborough district - who can be contacted at 01858 411383

Social Care Data Security and Protection Toolkit (DSPT) Update

Some of you may already be aware that the Social Care DSPT was updated in November 2020 to ensure that it is relevant and easy for care providers to use. [This news article](#) explains the changes in more detail and more information about the toolkit can be found [here](#).

EU Exit preparations - transport

EU Exit preparations have included work to minimise any risk to the traffic routes around East Midlands Airport and freight rail hub in the event of a no deal.

The department has been included on an alert system to ensure that any road disruption updates or potential issues are identified as quickly as possible and providers will be alerted accordingly.

Infection Control Fund – discretionary grant application

Community providers and care homes registered in Leicestershire should use the online form to make a grant application from the discretionary element of Leicestershire's Infection Control Fund. The funding must be used to support care providers to take additional steps to tackle the risk of COVID-19 infections and is allocated at the local authority's discretion.

Funding allocated through this fund will be used to support the full range of social care providers, especially those that have not benefited from the mandatory element of the fund, regardless of whether the local authority already commissions care from them.

The closing date for applications is 12 February 2021, but providers are advised to apply as soon as possible to enable quicker distribution of the fund.

To make an application please [follow this link](#).

Thank you, as always, for your dedication to keeping people in Leicestershire safe.

Yours sincerely

Jon Wilson

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Director of Public Health

The archive of all previous COVID-19 provider bulletins released since March 2020 can be found at <https://resources.leicestershire.gov.uk/adult-social-care-and-health/working-with-you-during-coronavirus>