



Information

for adult social care providers

CORONAVIRUS
**PROTECT
YOURSELF
& OTHERS**



Issue 45

Dear colleague

Please find below an update relating to recent increases in infection rates and your role in continuing to manage people's support safely. Thank you for your ongoing support at this challenging time.

Developing a COVID-19 safe visiting policy

The last few months have been very difficult for many residents and their families as well as the staff who care for them, and visits are important for the wellbeing of those in care settings. However, it is also important to ensure that the safety of residents, staff and the wider community is maintained, and that any risk of future outbreaks are minimised.

On 22 July 2020, the Government updated its [guidance on visiting arrangements in care homes](#). Please note that this guidance only applies to visits into care homes. It does not apply to visits out of care homes (e.g. to visit a family home) or visits in supported living settings. These are being considered separately.

Since then, we have supplied additional guidance locally over a series of provider bulletins (35, 37, 38 and 42) – however please be aware that you should use this latest bulletin 45 as it reflects the most recent advice.

It is understandable that residents and families are very keen to meet, however, it is strongly advised that care home managers work through the new guidance to produce a new visiting policy before allowing visits to take place, and reviewing the policy regularly to take account of changing risk. Key points to consider include:

- **Consideration of different visiting approaches** - based on an individual's or group of people's needs and risks. For example, using an outdoor space within the care home, or using digital methods.
- **Managing flow of visitors** – this includes using a booking system rather than allowing ad hoc visits; limiting visitors to a single constant visitor per resident wherever possible (i.e. the same family member visiting each time). This will limit the overall number of visitors to the individual resident and the care home, so reducing the risk.
- **Detailed infection control precautions** – These should be implemented in line with the latest IPC guidance and communicated to relatives/visitors prior to their attendance to the care home.

- **Screening questions to ask visitors** – [the guidance](#) suggests a series of questions to ask visitors prior to arrival.
- **Mechanism to support NHS Test and Trace** – A mechanism for keeping a temporary record of visitors in the event contact tracing is required. This link provides a list of information that would be useful to collect: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/maintaining-records-of-staff-customers-and-visitors-to-support-nhs-test-and-trace>
- **A clear pathway/trigger** – for re-introducing visiting restrictions if required. Care home providers should be alert at all times to any changes which may require their risk assessment and visiting policy to be reviewed. Examples of circumstances when this will apply include:
 - An active COVID-19 outbreak in the care home. The care home needs to be COVID-19 free for 28 days i.e. 28 days since their last suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 in either staff or resident before allowing non-essential visitors into the care home.
 - When a local risk assessment identifies the need for visiting restrictions to become necessary e.g. an upward trend in COVID-19 cases in the local area. Where this situation arises, the care home will be notified in a timely manner by the local authority's Public Health function, working with Adults and Communities.

The Director of Public Health cannot review all care home risk assessments and visitor policies but does retain the right to request and review them if there are any concerns. Please review the full national guidance to help you complete your risk assessment and produce your visitor policy. If you require further assistance, please get in touch with the Council team via the Provider Communication Line enquirylinequality&contracts@leics.gov.uk.

Mike Sandys, Director of Public Health, Leicestershire County Council, message to care homes re visiting arrangements (16.9.20)

Oadby and Wigston and Blaby Districts are now experiencing a high incidence of positive cases of COVID-19, therefore we ask that care homes in these areas implement the [policy statement guidance](#) and do not accept visitors, except for essential visits, until they are notified of a change in this situation.

This statement will be regularly reviewed, at least every 28 days, to reflect changes in the local area.

If you have any queries regarding this statement or the guidance please contact enquirylinequality&contracts@leics.gov.uk

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The Director of Adult Social Care Delivery at DHSC has written an open letter (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-infection-rises-letter-to-care-providers-from-director-of-adult-social-care-delivery/covid-19-infection-rises-letter-to-care-providers-from-director-of-adult-social-care-delivery>) to care providers, alerting them to the rise in confirmed COVID-19 cases and detailing steps to continue working in partnership to prevent further spread of the disease. The letter highlights

the role of testing, PPE and other infection prevention control practices in protecting people.

Wearing PPE correctly is a key part of controlling the spread of coronavirus. Please make sure you and your staff are following the PHE guidance relating to PPE.

For all care settings: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/personal-protective-equipment-ppe-illustrated-guide-for-community-and-social-care-settings>

For care homes: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-how-to-work-safely-in-care-homes>

For home care: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-how-to-work-safely-in-domiciliary-care>

It is vital to put on and take off PPE (don and doff) correctly. A useful video can be found via the council's website Professional Resources – PPE Page: <https://resources.leicestershire.gov.uk/adult-social-care-and-health/working-with-you-during-coronavirus/personal-protective-equipment-ppe>

Process for requesting PPE

From 1 September, care homes, domiciliary care and supported living providers will have received invitations to register on the PPE Portal to order and receive critical COVID-19 PPE. You can find information about the PPE Portal [here](#).

The portal stocks:

- Type IIR and FFP3 masks
- Aprons
- Coveralls
- Eye protection
- Hand hygiene
- Clinical waste bags
- Gloves

There are weekly order limits, but these and the range of PPE stock items are being reviewed to meet all COVID-19 PPE needs.

Queries regarding the PPE Portal should be directed to the PPE Portal Customer Service team on 0800 8766802.

As always, thank you.

Yours sincerely

Jon Wilson

Director of Adults and Communities