



Information for adult social care providers

Covid-19 and Flu

Bulletin 116 – 19 November 2021

Dear Colleague,

Working with people in their own homes - infection prevention and control measures

It is essential that good infection control is maintained on your journey to work and when supporting people in their homes.

It is often hard to be socially distant in people's homes. Many people may be clinically extremely vulnerable, or at general high risk from COVID-19. They may need help understanding restrictions.

Wear your personal protective equipment (PPE) properly, change it carefully and stay stocked up. [Follow the guidance when working with people at risk.](#)

Mandatory vaccination for the wider adult social care workforce

We reported in bulletin 115 that the Government intends to legislate to make COVID vaccination a condition of deployment in health and the wider social care sector.

No further information is yet available but we will provide detail through bulletins when we receive it.

Importance of booster vaccinations in COVID-19 protection

Like some other vaccines, levels of protection from the COVID vaccinations may begin to wane over time. COVID booster doses will help to extend the protection from the first two doses and reduce the chance of suffering from COVID-19.

You can now pre-book your booster 5 months (152 days) after you have had your second vaccination, and you will be offered an appointment from 6 months (182 days) after your last dose. Like previous doses, the vaccination will be given in your upper arm. It may take a few days for your body to build up some protection from the booster and the dose should help to extend your protection into the next year.

Like all medicines, no vaccine is completely effective – some people may still get COVID-19 despite having a vaccination, but this should be much less severe. The booster will help to reduce the risk of needing admission to hospital due to COVID-19 infection this winter.

Please see [bulletin 108](#) for detail of how workers can access their booster. Care home managers should work with staff ready for a booster to encourage them to access it at the same time as the visit of the local GP vaccination team to the care home, to maximise convenience for workers.

Sustained community transmission is occurring across the UK. All organisations should ensure reliable application of all infection prevention and control recommendations and assurance on adherence, that PPE is available and in supply, and that all staff training is up to date.

Statement from ESPO - mandatory COVID-19 vaccination

ESPO released the following statement to CQC Registered Providers on 17 November 2021.

‘ESPO is committed to ensuring the safety of its staff and customers. Following the release of Government guidance “Coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination of people working or deployed in care homes” ESPO would like to confirm arrangements in place to ensure the ongoing safety of staff and residents in affected settings and to assist CQC registered providers meet their legal obligations.

Whilst ESPO actively encourages all employees to get vaccinated there may be occasions where drivers have not yet received their double vaccination or are unable to demonstrate this. In this scenario they have been instructed to notify the registered person and deliver goods to an agreed place outside of the setting so they do not physically enter the building.

All ESPO delivery drivers who are vaccinated are asked to have available proof of vaccination status, via one of the methods listed below, that they can show to the responsible person to allow them to continue to deliver goods to your desired storage location inside the setting.

- *the NHS App*
- *the NHS website – NHS.uk*
- *the NHS COVID Pass letter*

All drivers will continue to follow existing Covid controls including strict hygiene protocol and wearing face coverings whilst making deliveries.

Please be aware that some of our deliveries, may be delivered by a 3rd party logistics partner, if they are unable to demonstrate vaccination status, these parcels will be dropped at an agreed location outside of your setting.

Yours sincerely, ESPO’

Funding update

In the coming weeks we will be issuing overspend payments to providers that reported ICTF2 expenditure in excess of the grants allocated, and issuing invoices to those providers that reported an underspend or did not report by the deadline date. We are also working on the distribution of ICTF3 and Workforce Retention and Recruitment Fund (WRRF) and will advise of payments which will be made, as soon as we can.

For more information please contact Dave Pruden at dave.pruden@leics.gov.uk

OTHER NEWS

Leicestershire County Council IT downtime 27 and 28 November

Leicestershire County Council is replacing part of its IT infrastructure on the weekend of 27 and 28 November.

This work requires all IT services to be shut down over the weekend of 27 and 28 November whilst the upgrade takes place, including email, all '305' phonelines, website forms and applications. The provider portal will be unavailable during this time.

There is a phoneline available for any emergencies relating to people at risk. If you have an urgent or safeguarding concern relating to an individual during the weekend, please follow the usual arrangement to contact the Emergency Duty Team on 0116 255 1606. All other matters will be referred to the website or please wait to contact the council until office hours on Monday 29 November.

Our website will remain up and running and will display up to date information.

Update on NHSX iPads support extension

The original year-long support package for NHSX iPads is coming to an end this November and December, depending on when the care home received the iPad. NHSX will be extending the device support package for care providers with NHSX iPads.

Extension of support

So that there's not a sudden loss of support for care homes over the winter, NHSX is extending the funding for the Mobile Device Management (MDM) and support until summer 2022. This is part of the Winter Plan to support social care, and the service will continue to be delivered by J24.

The extension is offered on an opt-out basis. This means that all iPads will be transferred to the extended MDM with no change to their set-up, unless a care home or provider chain gets in touch to opt out of the extension. Care providers and staff

who want to continue to have NHSX funded support, don't have to take any action. If you would like to opt-out of this extension, NHSX will be issuing a survey soon.

Ending the sim card package

In addition, NHSX have evaluated the sim card packages for the iPads and won't be continuing to fund the sim card package over winter. This means that care homes will need to use their own wifi (which most are already doing) or purchase a data only sim themselves. NHSX have already let care homes with iPads know about this, and if you have any questions, please email iPad.Offer@nhsx.nhs.uk.

Contact details

With the MDM extension in place care homes with NHSX iPads won't lose access to a mobile device management service (MDM) over the winter period, and will be able to access NHS Mail and other services that require a secure connection. NHSX will still be able to send notifications and software to care homes' devices, and through usage information local teams can offer targeted support.

You can also get in touch via ipad.offer@nhsx.nhs.uk

Evaluation of the iPads project

NHSX has commissioned Revealing Reality to do an independent evaluation of the iPads project. They want to use the evaluation to help them better meet people's needs with future projects. To do this, they need to hear from a range of care staff and providers in the research.

If you'd like to take part, and share your views, please register [via this link](#).

Contact emma.donnelly@nhsx.nhs.uk for more information.

Yours sincerely

Jon Wilson
Director of Adults and Communities

Mike Sandys
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>