



# Information

for adult social care providers

CORONAVIRUS  
**PROTECT  
YOURSELF  
& OTHERS**



## Issue 78 – 18 March 2021

Dear Colleagues,

The 23 March 2021 marks the anniversary of the first full UK national lockdown against COVID-19. We cannot thank you enough for all that you have done to keep people safe and adapt your services during this difficult year. At this time we also remember people who have sadly lost their lives to the virus.

Please find below the latest information on COVID-19 related matters for adult social care providers operating in Leicestershire. In particular, please note the payment available per worker who has had their first vaccine dose on or before 19 March, which is applicable to home care, care homes, supported living and community life choices services.

### **New visiting guidance**

The Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) guidance for visiting residential and nursing homes has been published in line with the new government position covered in recent bulletins, and is available [here](#).

The guidance stipulates that a single regular visitor can be nominated for each care home resident and also the nomination of an essential care giver for residents, where this is appropriate. Lateral flow testing will need to be in place prior to the visit, as well as adherence to infection prevention and control measures (IPC), use of PPE and social distancing.

### **Visiting professionals testing guidance is live**

Please find the full guidance here - [Testing for professionals visiting care homes - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

The national guidance has been revised following feedback from stakeholder agencies.

The key changes are:

- The default position is that without a negative test, the professional should not be allowed into the care home (unless in an emergency, unless overridden by the care home manager following a risk-based decision, or unless their entry is required by law such as CQC inspectors).
- For NHS professionals, care homes should see evidence from the professional of a negative rapid lateral flow test within the last 72 hours, which shows they are following the NHS staff testing regime.
- As per the previous guidance, professionals who are not part of regular testing for NHS staff or CQC inspectors (for example professionals such as podiatrists or engineers) will need to be tested at the care home in the same way as visitors.
- If they are visiting multiple care homes in one day, they will now only need to be tested at the first care home they visit that day and can use evidence of this test at the next care home they visit that day.
- CQC inspectors will now test at home using a lateral flow test on the day of a care home inspection, in addition to their weekly PCR.
- Like care home staff, visiting professionals are exempt from testing for 90 days following a positive PCR test, unless they develop new symptoms.

The guidance requests that it is implemented as soon as possible, and not later than the 22 March 2021.

It is important that professionals, including health staff, are permitted access to your home to carry out their important work, as long as the relevant testing has taken place.

### **COVID-19 vaccination second doses**

Second doses of COVID-19 vaccinations are now being given.

The first dose of the vaccine should give you good protection from coronavirus – but it is very important that you return for the second dose to give longer lasting protection when you are called.

The more people that can be vaccinated with both doses gives us the best chance of beating the current and prolonged emergency situation.

Even when you have had your vaccination it is crucial that you do your part and continue to follow the guidelines on social distancing, having regular tests and following the hands, face, space messaging at work and at home. These simple acts can help bring the level of infections down whilst protecting you and the people around you.

Public Health England have produced posters to remind people of the importance of [returning for their second dose](#) and following [hands, face, space, ventilate](#) guidance after their vaccination.

We understand that Primary Care Networks / GPs are about to contact care homes to arrange their visit to give residents and consenting workers their second dose. This is a great opportunity for any staff who have not been able to have their first

dose to receive it in a convenient location. Please work with any staff who have not had dose one to address any questions and concerns that they may have ahead of the PCN / GP visit date.

### **Pregnancy and fertility webinar – 24 March**

We know that many workers have questions about pregnancy, fertility and breastfeeding relating to the COVID-19 vaccine. On Wednesday 24 March at 14.00, experts from NHS England and NHS Improvement (Midlands) and Birmingham Women's and Children's Hospital will talk about the COVID vaccination in relation to men and women who are trying for a family or who are pregnant.

Speakers will include:

- Tim Davies, Public Health Consultant Lead for the vaccination roll out in the Midlands, talking about the importance of the vaccination programme
- Dr Justin Chu, Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist (Reproductive Medicine) Birmingham Women's Hospital, talking about fertility
- Rachel Carter, Deputy Chief Nurse and Head of Midwifery, and Tracey Johnston, Consultant Obstetrician, Specialist in Maternal and Fetal Medicine and Deputy Chief Medical Officer at Birmingham Women's Hospital, addressing questions about vaccination during pregnancy or while breastfeeding

The experts will address concerns about fertility, pregnancy and breast feeding and will also answer questions from participants.

For more information please see <https://www.events.england.nhs.uk/events/covid-vaccination-answering-your-questions-on-pregnancy-and-fertility>. Please provide this information to workers who you feel would find this information useful in building vaccine confidence.

### **Resuscitation guidelines during COVID-19**

This [link](#) will take you to a very useful action card regarding resuscitation during COVID-19 and the appropriate PPE that should be in place before resuscitation commences.

### **Ordering medication using proxy access: guidance for care homes, GP practices and community pharmacies**

New guidance to support care homes to order residents' medications online. Many authorised care home staff can quickly, safely and securely order their residents' medications online. This saves the care home, pharmacy and GP practice staff time. It also makes the dispensing of individual medicines easier and creates an automatic audit trail.

To help, the Local Government Association and NHS have published a [step-by-step guide](#). It takes care homes through setting up and granting authorised care home staff proxy access to their resident's GP online services account.

### **Infection Control Fund (ICF)**

Work continues on calculating the additional payment to be made from ICF towards overspends reported by providers. In residential care we expect to use some £700k from the discretionary funds to contribute towards an anticipated total overspend by care home providers of £1.7m.

An overspend payment of about £175k to community providers will help to address their overspend.

Some care homes and more community providers are reporting an underspend and may need to make a refund to the council. A more detailed explanation of the payments made will be provided next week when the payments have been issued.

### **Workforce Capacity Fund (WCF)**

As advised in bulletin 76, a further payment of at least £20 per employee will be issued based on the number of staff that your organisation has vaccinated by or on Friday 19 March 2021, in recognition of your time, effort and cost of supporting staff to be vaccinated. The payment is applicable to home care, care homes, supported living and community life choices services and will be calculated early next week, based on a tracker snapshot of the number of employees vaccinated. **We will be using worker vaccination data from the capacity tracker (and for CLC services, the vaccination survey) taken at 19.00 on Friday (19 March)**. Please therefore ensure that your latest vaccination data is input before that time.

Providers will be required to report their use of the grant at the end of April and a template will be developed to streamline that reporting.

### **Supporting vaccine confidence amongst adult social care workers**

We advised in bulletin 77 that a tool to help engage adult social care staff in healthy conversations around vaccine confidence has been developed.

Although it was produced primarily in discussion with care home staff, as the earliest workers to have access to the vaccine, it is of equal relevance and use for all adult social care workers.

The vaccine confidence tool is available on the Healthy Conversation Skills website: <https://www.healthyconversationskills.co.uk/vaccineconfidence>

On this page, you will find bespoke resources that have been developed to support your conversations with staff to improve vaccine confidence. There is the tool, and an introductory video to familiarise yourself with ahead of your conversations. There are also links and information to help when having, or following-up, on your conversations.

## Skills for Care digital update – COVID-19

[The Data Security and Protection Toolkit \(DSPT\)](#) is a really helpful, annual self-assessment for health and care organisations. It is a pre-requisite for access to NHS systems, including NHSmail and Proxy Access to GP records.

NHSX are announcing two changes in relation to the DSPT for adult social care providers.

1. During the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic care providers are able to access [NHSmail without the need to complete the DSPT](#). The original deadline for this waiver was 31 March 2021. The waiver has now been extended to 30 June 2021.
2. A new 'Approaching Standards' status will be introduced on 5 March 2021 and Entry Level will be removed.

For more information, including actions to take please visit:

<https://www.digitalsocialcare.co.uk/data-security-and-protection-toolkit-and-nhsmail-update-for-adult-social-care-providers/>

## Accessing live music online

Live Music Now provides music sessions for thousands of older people every year, including those living with dementia, and their carers. During the COVID-19 lockdown, LMN's musicians and staff have worked quickly to produce a new online service, which is being accessed by care homes all around the UK.

To watch the pre-recorded videos please visit

<https://www.livemusicnow.org.uk/lmnonlinecare>

## Free tools and software for social care

Digital Social Care have been compiling a list of companies which are currently offering their services or software for free to support social care.

This includes e-learning software, care planning, falls prevention and more. The most recent addition is Virtual College and their online learning platform.

[Find out more about these offers here.](#)

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>*