



Information

for adult social care providers

CORONAVIRUS

PROTECT
YOURSELF
& OTHERS

 Leicestershire
County Council

Issue 81 – 9 April 2021

Dear Colleagues,

Please find below some COVID-19 related updates which we hope that you will find informative.

Government care home visiting guidance update

As you may be aware, the Government guidance on care home visiting was updated on 6 April 2021. It replaces previous guidance on care home visiting for working age and for older adults, and applies from 12 April 2021.

Key elements of the guidance include the following:

- Every care home resident can nominate up to two named visitors who will be able to enter the care home for regular visits (and will be able to visit together or separately as preferred). These visitors should be tested using rapid lateral flow tests before every visit, must wear the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and follow all other infection control measures (which the care home will guide them on) during visits. Visitors and residents are advised to keep physical contact to a minimum. Visitors and residents may wish to hold hands, but should bear in mind that any physical contact increases the risk of transmission. For this reason there should not be close physical contact such as hugging
- In addition to their two named visitors, residents with higher care needs can also choose to nominate an essential care giver
- Care homes can also continue to offer visits to other friends or family members through arrangements such as outdoor visiting, rooms with substantial screens, visiting pods, or from behind windows
- Visits in exceptional circumstances including end of life should always be enabled

- In all cases it is essential that visiting happens within a wider care home environment of robust infection prevention and control (IPC) measures, including ensuring that visitors follow (and are supported to follow) good practice with social distancing, hand hygiene and PPE use

In the event of an outbreak in a care home, the home should immediately stop visiting (except in exceptional circumstances such as end of life – and for essential care givers) to protect vulnerable residents, staff and visitors.

There is a useful summary of the guidance here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/visiting-care-homes-during-coronavirus/summary-of-guidance-for-visitors--2>

The link to the full guidance document is here -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/visiting-care-homes-during-coronavirus/update-on-policies-for-visiting-arrangements-in-care-homes>

The LLR guidance will be updated and disseminated shortly to reflect the latest changes.

LLR Professional Visitors to Care Homes guidance

The LLR Good Practice Guidance for Professional Visitors has been amended to reflect NHS professionals showing care homes evidence of a negative test within the last 72 hours via their mobile phone. If this cannot be proven, then a test should be undertaken at the care home upon arrival.

<https://resources.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/resource/files/field/pdf/2021/4/6/Good-practice-guidance-for-professional-visitors-to-care-homes.pdf>

PPE guidance changes

Work undertaken by PHE and the PPE Task & Finish Stakeholder Group has resulted in an update to the existing 'How to Work Safely' guidance for care homes and domiciliary care.

Changes in 'How to work safely in Care Homes' include:

- If a resident has respiratory symptoms compatible with recent COVID-19 infection or has tested positive for COVID-19 it recommends that eye protection (visor or goggles) be worn (along with a Type IIR mask, which is already required)
- The eye protection and facemask should be removed and disposed of after completing any personal care. If the eye protection is labelled re-useable, it will need to be decontaminated before reuse

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-how-to-work-safely-in-care-homes/personal-protective-equipment-ppe-resource-for-care-workers-working-in-care-homes-during-sustained-covid-19-transmission-in-england>

Changes in 'How to work safely in Domiciliary Care' include:

- If a service user has respiratory symptoms compatible with recent COVID-19 infection or has tested positive for COVID-19 it is recommended that eye protection (visor or goggles) be worn (along with a Type IIR mask, which is already required)
- The eye protection and facemask should be removed and disposed of after completing any personal care. If the eye protection is labelled re-useable, then it will need to be decontaminated before reuse
- Sessional use of masks within home care is no longer be recommended in the updated guidance. At the end of each homecare visit, the face mask should be disposed of and fresh PPE, including a new face mask, will need to be donned before entering the next service user's home

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

Order limits on the PPE portal have been adjusted to reflect these changes and the Local Resilience Forum for Leicester Leicestershire and Rutland has sufficient stock to support services should it be required.

FAQs on the updates to the guidance can be found at

<https://resources.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/resource/files/field/pdf/2021/4/9/FAQs-on-updates-to-how-to-work-safely-guidance.pdf>

Extension to the free PPE scheme

The Department of Health and Social Care has confirmed that the provision of free COVID-19 PPE to health, social care and public sector workers will now be extended until the end of March 2022 - the expectation of clinical experts being that PPE usage will remain high throughout the financial year.

A factsheet is available here

<https://resources.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/resource/files/field/pdf/2021/4/9/Government-to-extend-free-Covid-PPE-for-health-social-care-and-wider-public-sector-services.pdf>

Lateral Flow Tests in Supported Living

New guidance has just been issued regarding visiting in supported living and extra care services meaning that additional rapid lateral flow tests will be provided to support visiting in these settings. These tests will be available for all the settings which are currently eligible for staff testing. This guidance states that testing is not a requirement for visiting in extra care and supported living settings but is encouraged to support safer visits.

Full guidance is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supported-living-services-during-coronavirus-covid-19/covid-19-guidance-for-supported-living>

Resuscitation guidelines during COVID-19 - reminder

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

Health and care workers – changes to coronavirus vaccination booking

Many of those who were vaccinated at the start of the vaccination programme are now starting to return for their second dose. The NHS has been planning meticulously to ensure people can get that second dose when it is the right time for them to do so.

Over the next few weeks, vaccination supplies are being prioritised for people who are due their second dose.

A limited number of appointments for first doses in April are still available, but they are filling up fast. As a care worker, if you haven't booked your first dose yet, the time to do so is right now.

Changes to the National Booking System have been introduced which means that from now eligible frontline health and social care workers, and carers who are unknown to the system, will need to use alternative routes. In Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland this means by contacting your GP practice or by booking an appointment at a Hospital Hub. Loughborough Hospital has the greatest availability of first dose appointments.

To book an appointment at a Hospital Hub please visit the local [Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Clinical Commissioning Group website](#).

'Dose two' visits from Primary Care Networks have begun in care homes; please make every effort to encourage staff to be available for their second dose when the vaccination team visits.

If you have any queries about vaccinations for adult social care workers in Leicestershire, please email socialcare-vaccination-enquiry@leics.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely,

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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>