



# Information

for adult social care providers



CORONAVIRUS  
PROTECT  
YOURSELF  
& OTHERS



Leicestershire  
County Council

## Bulletin 86 – 13 May 2021

Dear Colleagues,

We hope that you find the updates in this week's provider bulletin informative.

### Launch of WhatsApp updates for care homes



**Getting WhatsApp updates from us is simple.**



Thank you for your help in lowering coronavirus infection rates in Leicestershire's care settings and looking after residents throughout the pandemic. We need to continue everything we're doing to make sure the number of cases in care homes across the county remain low and keep residents and staff safe.

Throughout the pandemic we have received feedback from staff and providers that WhatsApp is a much-used channel for staff communications. As a result of this we are setting up a Leicestershire County Council Adult Social Care WhatsApp group – this will not replace official service/contractual communications you receive from the council by email but will provide additional, specific staff messages to share with your teams.

Initially these messages will focus on infection prevention and control, and vaccinations – we would be very grateful for your support in joining this group.

So that we can distribute these messages, it would be great if you could arrange for at least one member of staff from your care home to sign up to this group – it doesn't need to be a manager. To do this please follow the step-by-step instructions below.

Once you've completed Step 1 and 2, we'll be able to share our messages with you. When you receive a message, please complete Step 3 by forwarding these messages to employees via your own WhatsApp groups.



**1** Send a message to us at: **07526 928248** with the full name of your care home

**2** Add **07526 928248** to your address book as **'LCC – Care Home updates'**

**3** Share our updates with your team via your **own WhatsApp group**

**#LETSBEATCOVIDLLR**

If you have any questions, please let us know.

We hope to launch this service for home care providers next week and will include the relevant details in this bulletin.

### **COVID-19 vaccination update for those under 40 years of age**

As you will be aware, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) is carrying out a detailed review of reports of an extremely rare blood clotting problem affecting a small number of people who have had the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine.

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has previously advised that, for people under the age of 30, it is preferable to have another COVID-19 vaccine instead of the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine. On Friday, this guidance was updated to include those under the age of 40. You can read the announcement in full here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/jcvi-advises-on-covid-19-vaccine-for-people-aged-under-40>

Everybody who has already had a first dose of the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine should receive a second dose of the same jab, irrespective of age, except for the very small number of people who experienced blood clots with low platelet counts from their first vaccination.

The groups of people who are eligible for the vaccine are:

- You are aged 38 or over, or you will turn 38 before 1st July 2021
- You have a health condition which puts you at higher risk from COVID-19. For more details on which conditions this covers please visit: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/who-can-get-the-vaccine/>
- Health and care workers
- Paid and unpaid carers

To book a vaccine and to find out more about the vaccination programme visit: <https://www.leicestercityccg.nhs.uk/my-health/coronavirus-advice/coronavirus-vaccine/>

## **Second dose vaccination slots**

Adult social care staff who have been invited for their second dose of the coronavirus vaccine are being encouraged not to delay booking their vaccination slot, and to make every effort to keep their appointment.

Over 8.1 million people across the Midlands have now received a COVID-19 vaccine, including 800,000 people in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. While the first dose offers good protection, having the second dose within 77 to 84 days of the first is important, as it provides maximum protection over a longer period. While coronavirus rates continue to fall nationally, full vaccination remains the best way to minimise the risk of infection, hospitalisation, and severe illness or death from coronavirus.

Having the second dose is convenient and straightforward. Those who received their first dose at a hospital hub or through their GP will be contacted to book their second dose, while those who booked via the [national booking service](#) or by calling 119 will already have their second appointment booked in.

Anyone who has not received a second appointment within three calendar months of having their first dose should contact their GP or book via the [national booking service](#). All booking details are available on the [local NHS website](#).

## **Reminder: consultation on COVID-19 staff vaccination for care homes**

As we reported in bulletins 82 and 83, DHSC are consulting on whether staff in care homes with older adult residents in England should be required to have a COVID-19 vaccine to protect residents and staff from the virus. The closing date is 21 May 2021.

The consultation document and link to the response survey can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/making-vaccination-a-condition-of-deployment-in-older-adult-care-homes>

## **Visits to care homes from 17 May**

From Monday 17 May, care home residents will be able to have more named visitors and more opportunities to make visits out with no need to self-isolate when they return: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/more-restrictions-eased-for-care-homes>.

We recognise that residents will be very keen to have physical contact with their loved ones visiting them; however please bear in mind that any physical contact, including hugging, increases the risk of COVID-19 transmission to vulnerable people.

Further guidance is awaited, and we will communicate this to you as soon as we receive it.

## **Laundry - double bagging**

Residents in isolation require their linen to be double bagged, which needs two members of staff:

- The first member of staff who enters the bedroom and handles the linen, and a second member of staff who stands outside, at the doorway to the bedroom. Both staff members should wear appropriate PPE (disposable gloves and aprons).
- The colleague inside the room sorts the linen into lights and darks if necessary. These can then be individually placed into water-soluble bags. These bags should only be 2/3 full before being tied.

This entire bag is considered 'contaminated', both inside and out. The second staff member outside the room holds a second bag (considered 'clean'). This outer bag should be a plastic bag, preferably clear in colour. The second staff member (outside the room) opens the plastic outer bag and folds the top of the clean bag down on the outside to form a collar or cuff which protects their hands.

The first staff member (inside the room) gently places their water-soluble bag inside the clean plastic bag and only touches the inside of the clean bag; the second staff member touches only the outside of the clean bag. The second staff member (standing outside the room) then folds over the top of the clean plastic bag and ties

the top closed. This double-bagged linen can now be safely transferred to the laundry room.

Thorough handwashing by all staff members should follow.

Do not:

- rinse, shake or sort linen on removal from beds/trolleys;
- place used linen on the floor or any other surfaces e.g. a locker/table top;
- re-handle used linen once bagged;
- overfill laundry receptacles; or
- place inappropriate items in the laundry receptacle e.g. used equipment/needles

### **Infection Control and Testing Fund**

Following on from ICF2 and the Rapid Testing Fund, the Infection Control and Testing Fund (ICTF) is designed to support providers with eligible COVID-19 related costs for the period 1 April to 30 June. We plan to issue payments to care homes and community providers later in May, but in the meantime, we have to report to DHSC on provider expenditure for April 2021.

As mentioned in recent provider conference calls, please use the link below to the online form to report, by Monday 17 May, all eligible expenditure for the period 1 April to 30 April 2021.

<https://surveys.leics.gov.uk/snapwebhost/s.asp?k=162029249296>

For care homes there are two pages to complete, one for infection control and one for rapid testing, for community providers there is an infection control page only to complete.

Community providers will be supported with rapid testing costs via the ICTF discretionary fund and will therefore report those costs separately.

For more information about the fund including the grant conditions, please see the DHSC information at the link below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/adult-social-care-infection-control-and-testing-fund/annex-c-grant-conditions>

By accepting payment from the Infection Control and Testing Fund, your organisation accepts the grant conditions, including the requirement to complete this and the final return in July.

Failure to meet those conditions may result in payment being withheld or payments made having to be refunded.

If you have any questions please contact Dave Pruden at [dave.pruden@leics.gov.uk](mailto:dave.pruden@leics.gov.uk)

## **DHSC COVID-19 cost pressure survey**

The Funding Team at the Department of Health and Social Care has circulated [a COVID-19 cost pressure survey for providers](#) to understand ongoing infection prevention and control costs. This is an optional exercise for providers and is intended to supplement (rather than duplicate) the information local authorities and providers are already providing through the Infection Control and Testing Fund reporting process.

DHSC is interested in collecting provider-level costs and is also talking to a handful of willing providers to dig deeper into what are driving those costs. This will help policymaking on what may be needed after the current fund expires. The survey closes on 18 May.

DHSC is grateful for all of the information provided by the sector on current costs (including the current reporting for ICF2/Rapid Testing Fund/Workforce Capacity Fund/ICF3), which helps it to understand the pressures and make the case for further support where needed.

Yours sincerely,

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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>