



Information

for adult social care providers

CORONAVIRUS
**PROTECT
YOURSELF
& OTHERS**



Bulletin 104 – 3 September 2021

Dear Colleague,

Please find below the latest updates relating primarily to COVID-19 for you and your teams.

Mandatory vaccination in care homes: NHS staff

As you know, government regulations come into force on 11 November 2021, requiring care home staff to refuse entry to anybody who cannot evidence that they have had two doses of an approved COVID-19 vaccine, or that they have a specified exemption. This applies to all CQC regulated care homes providing nursing or personal care in England.

Bulletin 103 at <https://resources.leicestershire.gov.uk/adult-social-care-and-health/working-with-you-during-coronavirus/e-bulletins-for-care-providers> is a comprehensive resource for care home providers relating to mandatory vaccination. Further updates, such as on medical exemption, will be issued when they are available.

An explanatory letter and FAQs relating to NHS staff entering care homes can be viewed here, for your information:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/publication/vaccinations-for-nhs-staff-entering-care-homes/>

COVID-19 vaccination and pregnancy, breastfeeding and fertility

Some useful websites have been collated relating to COVID-19 vaccination and pregnancy, breastfeeding and fertility, which you may wish to share with relevant staff to build vaccine confidence:

- <https://www.rcog.org.uk/en/guidelines-research-services/coronavirus-covid-19-pregnancy-and-womens-health/covid-19-vaccines-and-pregnancy/covid-19-vaccines-pregnancy-and-breastfeeding/>
- <https://www.rcm.org.uk/vaccine-facts/>
- <https://www.rcm.org.uk/coronavirus-vaccines/>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/covid-19-vaccination-programme>
- <https://fullfact.org/health/Covid-vaccines-fertility/>
- <https://fullfact.org/blog/2021/aug/covid-vaccines-and-pregnancy-fact-checked/>

Capacity Tracker update

There are expected changes to the Capacity Tracker that have been active from the evening of 31 August 2021. The following information is taken from the Capacity Tracker Weekly Update.

“For care home providers, we will no longer require you to split out workforce vaccination levels by role type (nurses, care-giving staff, non-care giving staff) and instead only require you to update the total numbers of residents/patients, directly employed staff and agency/bank staff vaccinated for the following revised items:

- *Number currently known to have received the first dose*
- *Number currently known to have received the second dose*
- *Number currently known to have received a COVID vaccination booster*
- *Number currently known to have received this season's flu vaccination*

For home care providers we require you to update total numbers of staff who have face-to-face contact with people you support for the following revised vaccination items:

- *Number currently known to have received the first dose*
- *Number currently known to have received the second dose*
- *Number currently known to have received a COVID vaccination booster*
- *Number currently known to have received this season's flu vaccination*

For local authorities we require you to update your local authority COVID Weekly Submission, within the Capacity Tracker, with the following additional information:

- *Number currently known to have received a COVID vaccination booster*
- *Number currently known to have received this season's flu vaccination*

The provider types shown below will no longer be required to complete the specified information from 31 August 2021 when it will be removed from Capacity Tracker. Overall, this will offset any new data gathering request we are making from providers.

- *Care Homes, Hospices and Home Care Providers: COVID vaccination statuses “known NOT to have received” & “not yet known / undisclosed”*
- *Care Home (only): COVID Vaccination Team Visit Information”*

Testing visitors to care homes

Many visiting professionals work in a variety of different settings per day, including care homes. Given the substantial risks to care home residents if COVID-19 is introduced to the home, it is essential that professionals and all staff are tested regularly before visiting care homes to reduce the risk of transmission across different settings and to help keep residents and staff safe.

Care home managers remain responsible for the safety of their care homes, which includes infection control measures and testing.

All professionals entering a care home should be prepared to demonstrate proof of a negative test:

- For NHS staff (including community services, ambulance services and GPs), the test should be performed within 72 hours of the intended visit. Care homes must ask the NHS professional when they were last tested and see proof of the result and date of the relevant professional's test. If more than 72 hours has elapsed since the latest test, the care home should test the individual before entry.
- For CQC staff, testing should occur on the morning before a visit (which they can do at home). Evidence of a negative test must still be shown before entering the care home. As CQC inspectors by law have a right to enter a care setting as part of an inspection, they should not be denied access if they do not provide this evidence.
- Professionals not included in NHS staff or CQC inspectors should be tested at the door of the first care home they visit that day.

Proof may include:

- an email or text from NHS Test and Trace
- a screenshot of where the professional has to upload their test result
- a date-stamped photo of the test cartridge itself
- signed confirmation from their manager
- the NHS signed log included with the test kits provided to NHS staff

If the professional is unable to provide proof, they should be tested at the care home door. If the individual has not been tested (or is unable to provide proof) and it is not possible to test prior to entry, the care home will need to make a risk-based decision regarding whether to permit entry, taking into account the reason and urgency of the visit. The default position is that without proof of a recent negative test, the professional should not be admitted, unless entry is required by law.

Professionals who have recently tested positive for COVID-19 using a PCR test should not be retested within 90 days unless they develop new symptoms. This means that some professionals will not need to be tested regularly because they will still fall into this 90-day window. These professionals should use evidence of their positive PCR result to show that they are currently exempt from testing until the 90-day period is over.

In emergency visits such as a 999 response, it is not appropriate to ask for or provide proof before entry to a care home, given the potential delay this could cause and the implications for prompt management of the emergency.

Testing is only one tool used to protect residents: not every infected individual will be identified, and therefore a negative result does not prove someone is not infected with COVID-19. It is critical that relevant infection control measures (including use of PPE and hand hygiene) are followed.

Workforce Development Fund

The Workforce Development Fund (WDF) is funding from the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) disseminated by Skills for Care. It supports the provision of high-quality care and the continuing professional development (CPD) of staff across the adult social care sector by providing a contribution towards the costs of

vocational learning. The fund allows you to claim back money towards the costs of workers completing a broad range of adult social care qualifications and learning programmes.

You can claim funding towards the cost of qualifications and learning programmes completed between 1 January 2021 and the 31 March 2022. This includes money towards the cost of course fees (or employer contributions) and associated costs.

Together with Skills for Care, and Inspired to Care, LSCDG have organised workshops to support you through this process. The workshops will be a live webinar using Microsoft Teams; current dates are:

- 7 September 2021 13:00 to 14:00
- 4 October 2021 10:30 to 11:30
- 4 November 2021 14:30 to 15:30

To book a place please email lscdg@leics.gov.uk with your name, provider name and email address.

Coronavirus Life Assurance

A government scheme is operating where a sum of £60k could be payable in relation to an employee who has died as a result of coronavirus.

The details of the scheme can be found here:

https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/2020-06/NHSandSocialCareCLAS2020_SchemeRulesEngland_v2.pdf

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>