



Information for adult social care providers

Covid-19 and Flu

Bulletin 122 – 7 January 2022

Dear Colleagues,

As we start 2022, we know that every one of you will take the challenges ahead in your stride, working to keep people safe and provide vital care and support services.

Sadly, last year did not provide the closure on the COVID-19 pandemic that we had all hoped for.

The situation locally remains concerning. Working with partners, we have increased the promotion of vaccine take-up and the clinics available – reminding those that have not been vaccinated, to do so and avoid what could be fatal consequences. Over the festive period most people in hospital with COVID-19 who needed intensive care were unvaccinated, highlighting the importance of getting fully vaccinated including the booster dose.

Vaccines remain the most effective way to protect yourself and others and with more and more walk-in clinics becoming available, and priority being given to those working in the care sector or providing care as an unpaid carer, getting a jab is seamless and straightforward.

With the current surge in cases and increased staff absence, we know there are more difficulties we will encounter ahead but, as a workforce, we know you and your teams are resilient, ambitious and motivated and working together, we will bridge the gaps to continue to provide essential care to Leicestershire residents.

Thank you for your continued efforts and let's keep going, together.

Confirmatory PCR tests to be temporarily suspended for positive lateral flow test results

In England, from 11 January 2022, asymptomatic people who receive positive LFD test results for COVID-19 will be required to self-isolate immediately and will not need to take a confirmatory PCR test. This is a temporary measure whilst infection rates are high. They will need to report the positive LFD and will be contacted by Test and Trace.

Anyone who develops the three main COVID-19 symptoms needs to self-isolate and take a PCR. If they receive a positive test result from PCR they must self-isolate – those rules have not changed.

There are a few exceptions:

- People who are eligible for the £500 Test and Trace Support Payment (TTSP) will still be asked to take a confirmatory PCR if they receive a positive LFD result, to enable them to access financial support.
- People participating in research or surveillance programmes may still be asked to take a follow-up PCR test, according to the research or surveillance protocol.
- Around one million people in England who are at particular risk of becoming seriously ill from COVID-19 have been identified by the NHS as being potentially eligible for new treatments. They will be receiving a PCR test kit at home by mid-January to use if they develop symptoms or if they get a positive LFD result, as they may be eligible for new treatments if they receive a positive PCR result. This group should use these priority PCR tests when they have symptoms as it will enable prioritised laboratory handling.

Anyone who tests positive will be able to leave self-isolation 7 days after the date of their initial positive test if they receive two negative LFD results, 24 hours apart, on days 6 and 7.

Please see the associated [press release](#).

Mandatory vaccination for the wider health and social care workforce

Individuals undertaking CQC regulated activities in England must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 no later than 1 April 2022 to protect patients, regardless of their employer, including social care, secondary and primary care. The regulations will apply equally across the public (NHS) and independent health sector. These regulations will sit alongside the existing regulations which require workers of all CQC registered care homes, and workers entering care homes to be vaccinated (subject to certain exemptions) which came into force on 11 November 2021.

Unvaccinated individuals will need to have had their first dose of an approved COVID-19 vaccine by 3 February 2022 in order to receive their second dose by the 31 March 2022 deadline.

Some individuals may have grounds not to have the vaccine for clinical reasons. Anyone who is unable to be vaccinated for clinical reasons will have to use the NHS COVID Pass to show their exemption status.

The regulation has now been approved by Parliament. The detailed guidance is anticipated for publication in mid-January.

Priority vaccination status for staff at walk-in clinics

Health and social care workers, including unpaid carers, can be prioritised at walk-in clinics.

In December, NHS England issued operational guidance to all vaccination centres on the delivery of boosters requesting that they consider how best to support frontline health and social care workers to get priority.

A letter was issued prior to Christmas to act as proof for those in the adult social care workforce. The letter can be shown to a member of staff at vaccination clinic to help you and your employees to be prioritised for vaccination. Please contact socialcare-vaccination-enquiry@leics.gov.uk if you have not received this letter.

[View the latest list of places](#) where you can drop-in to get a vaccination or booster.

Importance of booster in protecting care home staff and residents

Encourage your workers to boost their immunity this New Year with their COVID-19 booster vaccination.

With COVID-19 cases are very high and rising, booster vaccination strongly enhances immunity in care home residents and staff, providing the best defence. This has been confirmed in a recent research study, which showed that a booster reduces the risk of severe COVID-19 infection for staff and residents in care homes.

[Find out where you can get yours either as a walk-in or by appointment.](#)

There are multiple sites operating at flexible hours.

Changed isolation periods in care homes

It has been agreed across the East and West Midlands that 'standard COVID-19 outbreak management' of 14 days restrictions after the most recent confirmed case is now recommended for the majority of care homes across the region. Standard COVID-19 management will also apply to single cases.

This is to balance risk:

- arising from infections
- to business continuity from prolonged staff absence
- to the NHS of prolonged care homes closures
- to residents' well-being of prolonged restrictions on activities and visiting.

There may be exceptions based on local risk assessment.

Please see [this letter](#) which explains the approach in addition to the [full guidance](#).

New COVID-19 treatments

New COVID-19 treatments are now being made available, and some care home residents, care recipients and some staff will be eligible for this treatment if unwell with COVID-19. Specific newsletters have been sent nationally to settings which provides more detail for [care homes](#) and [extra care and supported living](#).

The treatments can help some people manage their COVID-19 symptoms and reduce the risk of becoming seriously ill. They are a further measure in addition to vaccinations, which remain the best way to protect everyone.

There are now two routes available - with different criteria - for accessing new COVID-19 treatments for non-hospitalised individuals this winter, both of which are relevant to care homes and wider adult social care as well as the wider population:

- Participating in the [PANORAMIC national study](#) (over 50s; adults with underlying health conditions and all care home residents); or
- [Direct access](#) to treatments for those at highest risk of becoming seriously ill from COVID-19 (for individuals with specific listed conditions including Down syndrome, MS and certain types of cancer).

Care homes – are you showing the correct ‘open or closed’ status for your beds?

Care homes are asked to review their Capacity Tracker information and ensure that it accurately reflects the status of your bed types i.e., those beds that are closed to admissions are accurately showing as closed within the Costs, Vacancies and Business Continuity section of the system.

This will help prevent unnecessary calls to care home locations from discharge teams who need to know at speed if a bed is open and the home is able to accept a new resident.

Launch of Providing Care website webinar, 26 January

You are invited to the launch of a very useful new website for care home providers in LLR, taking place on 26 January, 14.00-15.00. The [ProvidingCare.net](#) website has been designed to support care home providers and carers in LLR by providing rapid access to a wide range of useful and practical information and resources. The webinar will provide a demonstration and describe how the site can support you, whatever your role in a care home.

Please use the details below to join on the day.

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Or call in (audio only): [+44 20 3321 5208,,277638079#](#) United Kingdom, London
Phone Conference ID: 277 638 079#

[Find a local number](#) | [Reset PIN](#)

ProvidingCare.net was developed as part of the LLR Better Care Together programme by the Care Home Sub Group, a committee responsible for implementing the Enhanced Health in Care Homes framework across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. It has been funded through the NHS Ageing Well programme. It is care home focussed at the moment, but the aim is for it to be developed to be relevant for all types of social care.

Guidance change roundup

A number of guidance updates were issued nationally just prior to Christmas. We have gathered the most significant together and have included them below for your convenience. For detail of what has changed since any previous version of a document, please click the 'show all updates' section on each page.

- [COVID-19: stepdown of infection control precautions and discharging patients to home settings](#)
- [COVID-19: management of staff and exposed patients and residents in health and social care settings](#)
- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) testing in adult care homes](#)
- [COVID-19 medical exemptions: proving you are unable to get vaccinated](#)
- [COVID-19 vaccination: women of childbearing age, currently pregnant or breastfeeding](#)
- [Self-isolation for COVID-19 cases reduced from 10 to 7 days following negative LFD tests](#)
- [Visiting arrangements in care homes](#)
- [COVID-19: guidance on protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable](#)
- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) testing for adult day care centre workers and service users](#)
- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) testing service for extra care and supported living settings](#)

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>