



# Information for adult social care providers

## Covid-19 and Flu

### Bulletin 136 – 31 March 2022

Dear Colleagues,

### Updated IPC guidance and key changes to COVID-19 policy for adult social care

A [comprehensive letter](#) was issued on 30 March 2022 by DHSC to providers outlining:

- Forthcoming updated IPC guidance for adult social care, to replace the current suite of COVID-19 guidance
- Key changes to COVID-19 policy for adult social care, including vaccines, PPE, testing, isolation for care home residents, staff movement, and discharge of COVID-positive patients into care homes

The letter includes invitations to webinars next week and at the end of April, chaired by the Chief Nurse of Adult Social Care, Deborah Sturdy OBE, to support the sector to implement the changes and to address questions and concerns. Please register in advance for the relevant webinars through the following links:

- 6 April, DHSC webinar on changes to COVID-19 measures in care homes from April 2:30-3:15pm: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/dhsc-webinar-on-changes-to-covid-19-measures-in-care-homes-from-april-tickets-308495938657>
- 7 April, DHSC webinar on changes to COVID-19 measures in non-care home services (including home care) from April 3:00-3:45pm: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/dhsc-webinar-on-changes-to-covid-19-measures-in-adult-social-care-services-tickets-309899436557>
- 29 April, DHSC webinar on supporting implementation of the Infection Prevention and Control: Resource for Adult Social Care guidance 10:15-11:15am: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/dhsc-webinar-on-the-infection-prevention-and-control-resource-for-asc-tickets-309927249747>

Please familiarise yourself with the content of the letter and attend the webinars if you are able to. Related guidance will be included in future bulletins as it is issued.

## **The future of the national capacity tracker**

The national capacity tracker has been one of the main sources of information for central government in directing the pandemic response. Local councils use the tracker to determine capacity, identify the support that care providers need, and as a source of information on vaccination uptake for a range of adult social care providers.

DHSC has sent a [letter to local authorities and care providers containing important information about the future of the capacity tracker](#) that we would like you to read. It emphasises the ongoing importance of the tracker - to reduce the burden of regular updating, the number of questions will be scaled down and it will be made more useful to providers themselves.

## **Provider data workshops – sign up**

The letter about the development of the capacity tracker mentions that the DHSC is reviewing how care provider data is collected. As they promised at the start of the pandemic, a longer-term approach is being developed and co-produced with providers and other stakeholders.

The aim is to engage closely with all stakeholders to identify and agree key data needs and look at opportunities to streamline current data collections from care providers, so that data can be captured once and shared with all those that need it. This includes providers, councils, CQC, and national government and it will add real value in gaining a full view of the challenges for the sector and reduce overall provider data demands.

Workshops will take place throughout 2022 and the first set of workshops will be held virtually via Microsoft Teams in April and May. The series aims to identify data needs, data concerns, data collected and what data can be provided to different organisations.

[Get more information and sign up to the first workshop.](#) The closing date is Tuesday 5 April 2022.

## **Revocation of vaccination as a condition of deployment: CQC update**

The CQC has shared an update on their regulatory approach in response to the regulations relating to vaccination as a condition of deployment (VCOD) being revoked for all health and social care workers, including people working in care homes:

*What will CQC be doing now that the regulation has been revoked?*

*In response to the recent consultation, from Tuesday 15 March 2022 vaccination as a condition of deployment has been revoked for all health and social care staff including staff working in or deployed to care homes. This means that there is no longer a free-*

*standing requirement to be vaccinated to work in a care setting and as such we have amended our inspection methodologies to reflect this.*

*Throughout the government consultation period we continued to regulate against the Act, checking vaccination record keeping and communications in care homes. Each location that was found in breach of regulation 12(3) will have their inspection report reviewed in respect of these changes. We will assess whether the location's rating has been affected by this removal and take necessary action to ensure our assessment of a service meets applicable regulations. We will be treating each location individually and assessing the particular circumstances.*

### **Care home visiting guidance: government update**

On Tuesday 22 March 2022, the government announced that there are no nationally set direct restrictions on visiting care homes, and they expect and encourage care providers to facilitate visits wherever possible, and to do so in a risk-managed way.

We encourage all care home providers to read the [government guidance to all residential care homes](#) in full, but the key things to know about care home visits are:

- Visitors should make arrangements with care homes in advance of the visit, so that care providers can manage the number of people attending at any one time to ensure safe visiting practices can be maintained taking into account the size and layout of the care home.
- The duration of visits should not be limited if safe visiting practices can be maintained.
- Visits should take place in a room most practical and comfortable for the resident (for example, residents with dementia may be more comfortable in their own room with familiar belongings).
- Every care home resident should be supported to have an identified essential care giver who may visit the home to offer companionship or help with care needs – essential care givers should be able to visit inside the care home even during periods of isolation and outbreak, providing the essential care giver does not have COVID-19.
- During an outbreak, care providers should also continue to offer visits outdoors, in visiting pods or from behind windows – rooms should be left to ventilate with external doors and windows open between uses wherever possible, while aiming to maintain a comfortable temperature for residents and visitors.
- Subject to a risk assessment by the health protection team (HPT), outbreak restrictions may be lifted if 10 days have passed since the onset of symptoms in the most recent case, a round of PCR recovery testing of all residents and staff is undertaken, and there are no PCR positive results.
- Physical contact should be enabled to help health and wellbeing, as long as IPC measures are in place, such as visiting in a ventilated space, using

appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for the visit, and hand washing before and after visiting – gloves are not needed for handholding and stringent adherence to hand washing is advised.

- Residents should be supported to undertake visits out of the care home as appropriate, following the reasonable precautions and testing arrangements outlined in this guidance.
- Vaccination is one of our best defences to combat infection, particularly after two or more doses. It is strongly recommended that residents and visitors receive two doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, plus their booster. The data shows that booster doses are required to provide higher levels of protection against symptomatic infection. If eligible, visitors should also get their flu jab when it is offered to them.
- Visitors should not enter the care home if they are feeling unwell, even if they have tested negative for COVID-19 and are fully vaccinated and have received their booster. Transmissible viruses such as flu, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and norovirus can be just as dangerous to care home residents as COVID-19. If visitors have any symptoms that suggest other transmissible viruses and infections, such as cough, high temperature, diarrhoea or vomiting, they should avoid the care home until at least five days after they feel better.
- Visitors are advised against visiting the care home (for 10 days) if they have been identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19, unless absolutely necessary, even if they have been fully vaccinated. Where visits do occur, visitors should have received a negative lateral flow test result earlier in the day of their visit.

### Pop-up vaccination clinics

Further pop-up vaccination clinics have been confirmed for the next few days. Sometimes, opening times may change or clinics are stood down, so please check [the website](#) for the latest information.

Location	Address	Dates running	Time	Doses offered
Greenhill Community Church, Coalville	Greenhill Community Church, 7 Charnborough Road, Coalville, LE67 4SF	01/04/2022	Friday and Saturday: 10am – 6pm  Sunday: 12noon – 6pm	Friday: 16+ 1st, 2nd, 3rd, booster  Saturday and Sunday: 12+ 1st, 2nd, 3rd, booster
Lidl, Upperton Road	Upperton Road, Leicester, LE3 0BG	02/04/2022 – 03/04/2022	10am – 6pm	Saturday and Sunday: 12+ 1st, 2nd, 3rd, booster

## **Vaccination webinars**

Below is a list of COVID-19 vaccination webinars available:

[COVID-19 vaccinations: operationalising updated JCVI advice - Spring booster and children aged 5-11 years old who are not in a clinical risk group.](#)

[Innovative practice to increase COVID-19 vaccination, as we enter the next phase, Thursday 31 March, 1.30pm – 3pm.](#)

[Webinar recording: Supporting carers to access vaccinations.](#)

[Operational Support Pack – Phase 3 – Severe Mental Illness, Learning disability and Autism.](#)

## **PPE portal: how to order COVID-19 personal protective equipment**

The DHSC in partnership with NHS supply chain have implemented a new PPE portal platform to ensure continued access to free PPE and related items for eligible users until the end of March 2023.

Eligible health and social care providers can order PPE through the portal to meet the increased need that has arisen because of the COVID-19 pandemic. All eligible users will have received or be receiving an invite over the coming weeks and months to ensure migration across to the new platform.

[Find out more and access the new PPE portal.](#)

## **Collection arrangements for free PPE for non-COVID-19 or COVID-19 purposes**

You will recall that in recent bulletins we offered adult social care providers free PPE for non-COVID-19 or COVID-19 purposes. Thanks to those who submitted their orders; the offer is now closed to new requests.

The submissions are being processed and you will be contacted directly about collection arrangements. If you have any queries, please email [A&Chubemergency&bcplanning@leics.gov.uk](mailto:A&Chubemergency&bcplanning@leics.gov.uk).

## **OTHER NEWS**

### **Annual inflationary fee uplifts**

Uplifts of fees to be paid by Leicestershire County Council for adult social care services in 2022/23 have now been determined and issued to home care, care home, supported living and community life choices providers.

If you have not received the communication relevant to your business, please email [enquirylinequality&contracts@leics.gov.uk](mailto:enquirylinequality&contracts@leics.gov.uk).

### **Work for people from Ukraine or elsewhere**

Following queries from adult social care providers to Leicestershire County Council, CQC has offered advice on employing people from Ukraine and other countries which can be found on the [Inspired to Care website](#).

### **Midlands Workforce Transformation Improvement Collaborative event**

Health Education England (HEE) has been commissioned to work with their partner organisations to review long-term strategic trends for the health and social care workforce.

The next Midlands Workforce Transformation Improvement Collaborative event is an opportunity for registered professionals working in social care to contribute towards the long-term strategic framework for health and social care workforce planning.

There will be a two-hour session led by HEE Director of Strategy Jo Lenaghan, where you can learn more about the framework. This is also a great opportunity to engage with other professionals working in social care.

Event information will be available shortly, but we can confirm that the event will take place on Wednesday 13 April between 14.30 and 16.30.

[Register for the event](#) and read about the [long term strategic framework for health and social care planning](#).

### **Care Home Special Interest event hosted by the Infection Prevention Society (IPS)**

In our last bulletin we advised of the Infection Prevention Society's care home special interest group (SIG) face-to-face meeting on Wednesday 8 June 2022 at Clay Cross in Derbyshire. The meeting is free of charge to IPS members who are part of the care home SIG. Non IPS members who work in care homes, or those who provide support to care home staff can attend for a small charge of £22.15.

When buying an IPS non-member ticket, if the website asks for an IPS member number, put NA to proceed. See [bulletin 135](#) for more details of the event including the link to book.

### **Translation flash cards**

A website has been brought to our attention [translating key words from range of languages](#) into English with a picture, which you may find useful for short term communication issues with people using services.

Yours sincerely

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Director of Adults and Communities

Mike Sandys  
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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>