

Weekly Care Home's Teams Bulletin for Care home managers and their staff Week Commencing 15 March 2021

Focus on Wellbeing: A Webinar Programme For Health and Social Care Staff March – May 2021: These free webinars are available to you and yours. Click here for more information [HSC Staff Wellbeing - Focus on Wellbeing Webinar Programme - March to May 2021 - V160321-F.docx](#)

Open with Care: Many of you are implementing this guidance and starting to welcome visitors through your doors comfortably and safely. Whilst this has been an emotionally happy time for the majority, based on your feedback this week you are not alone if you are feeling a bit overwhelmed by the extra workload this creates and anxiety around the safety of your residents and staff.

The guidance also alludes to further relaxations around residents leaving the grounds, going out in a visitor's car and overnight stays. Questions were raised at our meetings around timescales and methods for introducing the latter. It was noted that the guidance is not prescriptive in terms of when and how but suggested a phased approach to this ensuring homes are comfortable, ready (risk assessed different scenarios) and in line with other National guidance (currently still in tier 4) with firstly indoor and outdoor visiting in the grounds before moving to further relaxations.

New supplementary guidance issued 18th March "Open with Care: Supporting Meaningful Contact in Care Homes [Supplementary information: Answers to practical questions and concerns](#)" This gives further clarity on some of the topics you have been asking about. Meanwhile HPT have asked the Scottish Government for further clarity around the following:-requirement for outdoor visitors to be offered LFD testing, the number of outdoor visitors allowed along with the number of households, are visitors allowed to travel between level 4 and level 4 boundaries within Scotland and across the national UK borders? And can hairdressers visit?

Shared ideas around visiting:

- Consider an incremental approach working at a pace that you are comfortable and feel safe with; giving everyone time to familiarise themselves with what is expected of them and time to get used to a new routine. Both visitors and staff supporting them need to get used to a new system for LFD testing/logging, administration for pre arranged visits, where they are to take place, visitors getting used to protocols and what is expected of them – this takes time for everyone to familiarise themselves with and some of you feel more comfortable starting visits in a designated area of the home, as opposed to the residents own room or flat, where visitors can be more supported by staff with their PPE and hand hygiene in the early stages.
- **Visitor contracts** - one home using these so that prospective visitors have to read, agree and sign that they will comply with the content. It is anticipated that this approach will enhance visitor compliance with IPC protocols.
- **Visible display** at entrance with pictures of residents with the message "Please keep us safe" and with visual examples of hand washing/hygiene, keep the mask on and social distancing. Again this is thought to encourage visitor compliance.
- **Use wipe able chairs** for visitors so that these can be cleaned before and after use as opposed to fabric furniture in resident's flats/bedrooms.

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- Designated visitors, who are able to do so, were trained to test themselves and download their results on to their smart phone.
- One home had successfully employed an able group of "Visitor Volunteers" to assist with LFD tests and logging of same. This has been well received by both staff and other visitors

Delays in test results: Those present were made aware that across Scotland we have recently experienced delays in test results being reported – particularly appears to be affecting those processed by the lighthouse lab. Also some of you reported what appears to be an administrative blip with staff regional hub testing but this seems to have resolved now. For issues with the regional hub laboratories please log these with www.covidtestingportal.scot

Resident cohorting: Can we relax this now that residents have had both vaccine doses in the interests of reducing harm associated with isolation and to promote a more homely feel? NO, the vaccine does not give full immunity and people who have been vaccinated can still contract and transmit the virus. From a HPT point of view, particularly staff cohorting should continue where possible as this is known to be effective at containing any outbreaks of infectious disease such as norovirus, not just covid 19. That said if homes don't have an outbreak then communal areas should be risk assessed and protocols for physical distancing (signage, room layout, capacity of residents to comply) and cleaning protocols should be reviewed to accommodate small groups, for example, to eat together.

Face fit testing when working with AGPs: Please ensure staff are face fitted appropriate to the product they are using. If they were originally face fitted for another model to that currently in use then they must be re-tested for the model worn.