

By email

19 March 2020

### Covid-19 Guidance Update

Dear Provider

We would like to update you with additional information to support you in this current situation.

The following are links to:

Guidance on use of Personal Protective Equipment in Care Home Settings (quick reference for use as a poster)	 Guidance on use of PPE in care home sett
Guidance for social care settings - flow chart	 Flow chart - Supported Living Covi

Both of which are also attached as documents. We will send through to you laminated posters of the quick reference guide.

This guidance is on the use of PPE (personal protective equipment) in social care settings, in the context of the current situation. It is entirely based on national guidance and it is important to emphasise that PPE is only necessary for activities that take you closer than 2 metres to a person with suspected COVID-19 (new continuous cough or fever).

Whilst effective use of PPE is important, just as important is only using additional PPE when it is absolutely necessary. This will ensure that any risk of shortages is minimised wherever possible.

Wolverhampton's New Cross hospital has made a video which you may find informative for donning and doffing PPE, and we suggest you and your staff watch it (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HPILYW0oYzg&feature=youtu.be>).

There are other steps that your staff should be taking to minimise risk to yourselves and to your patients. These include first and foremost handwashing for 20 seconds and using the

5-step washing technique after any patient contact, but also frequently at all other times. This is evidence based to prevent infection spread, which occurs via large droplets, which can sit on surfaces.

Your staff will also be managing the location and movement of patients suspected of COVID-19 as per existing infection control guidance, which may include cohorting patients (eg. Having one floor where there are only people suspected of having COVID-19) to protect other patients who are not displaying symptoms. Cohorting care workers, ie. Allocating specific care workers to work with patients suspected of infection, again decreases the risk to non-symptomatic patients. As the video from New Cross shows, masks can be used between multiple patients suspected of infection, but hand washing, glove and apron changing must be used between each patient contact.

As this situation is constantly changing, we will do our best to kept you updated and informed.

Following the recent announcement by our Government we would expect that you have reviewed your policy and procedure in relation to visitors to care homes, supported living schemes and extra care provision and implemented restrictions to ensure that the advice given by our Government is applied to protect vulnerable people. This would include no longer accepting visitors (who are not professionals undertaking a necessary key role) unless in extreme (such as palliative) circumstances.

To help us to keep a record of the current situation could you also notify us when you have staff or residents/service users in isolation, suspected cases and confirmed cases.

I would also confirm that Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust (New Cross Hospital) has reassured us that there are protective measures in place to ensure that patients in hospital for non-COVID-19 reasons are protected from COVID-19 in other patients, while they are in hospital, and thus these patients would not require any particular isolation after discharge.

Could you also let us know if you anticipate any difficulties with maintaining staffing levels due to any cases of isolation, suspected and actual cases.

To do this please email [people.commissioning@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:people.commissioning@wolverhampton.gov.uk) or contact your nominated Quality Assurance Officer.

We have recently been in touch to confirm your supplies of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), thank you for supporting us in this.

I can confirm that we have received communication from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) about the current situation with PPE national and they have confirmed that there will be free distribution of fluid repellent facemasks from the pandemic flu stock which will start from 18<sup>th</sup> March, with every care home and home care provider receiving at least 300 facemasks. It is anticipated that the distribution will be complete by next Tuesday. This is aimed at tiding over the initial rise in demand following the change of guidance on facemasks last week. Providers are not required to take action; stock will be delivered to them.

The MHCLG is working with wholesalers to ensure a longer-term supply of all aspects of personal protective equipment, including gloves, aprons, facemasks and hand sanitiser. For future PPE requirements, care providers should order PPE from their usual suppliers.

If you have immediate concerns over their supply of PPE, there is now a dedicated line for you, the health and social care sector.

**The National Supply Disruption line**

**Tel: 0800 915 9964**

**Email: [supplydisruptionservice@nhsbsa.nhs.uk](mailto:supplydisruptionservice@nhsbsa.nhs.uk)**

In the future, you are unable to get PPE from your normal supplier, the supplier is will be asked to report this to the National Supply Disruption Response (NSDR) team (as above), who can advise on alternative suppliers.'

In the short term until you receive your PPE, we also have a very limited stock (only enough for essential use) for when (in line with the guidance) you require PPE please contact [people.commissioning@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:people.commissioning@wolverhampton.gov.uk) to raise this request.

We also asked you to confirm that you have reviewed your business continuity plans to reflect the current situation and asked further questions and for a copy of the plan. The purpose of this was to be able to have an understanding of the responses in place, I would confirm that we will not be reviewing every business continuity to plan to ensure it is robust as we expect as a provider that you have covered all appropriate areas in your plan.

Thank you for supporting us to manage the current situation to meet the needs of our residents in Wolverhampton.

Yours faithfully,

David Watts

Director of Adults Social Care