

SPECIFIC POLICY REQUIREMENT: CORONAVIRUS (Updated 29/09/20)

To be read in conjunction with the Business Contingency and Emergency Planning, Good Governance, Infection Control & Cooperating with other Providers policies.

The Coronavirus disease named COVID-19, is classed by the World Health Organisation as a Pandemic. As the virus has spread extensively, it poses a significant challenge to many organisations.

Providers must work in a collaborative and multiagency way to mitigate the spread and contain the risk of the virus.

The government, Public Health England and all Local Authorities will be responsible for the advice and guidance disseminated to their Local Providers.

The Care Quality Commission publish guidance for providers on their website <https://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-providers/all-services/updates-providers-about-coronavirus-covid-19>

Gov.uk Covid-19 supporting adults with learning disabilities and autistic adults <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-supporting-adults-with-learning-disabilities-and-autistic-adults>

As a provider there are several things that need to be in place and that are continually monitored and changed as Government advice changes.

Inform

Staff need to be aware of the responsibilities of informing Management of any symptoms of the virus in themselves, a family member or a Service user. The incubation period of COVID-19 is between 2 and 14 days.

Symptoms of coronavirus are:

- a **fever** (high temperature - 38 degrees Celsius or above)
- a cough - this can be any kind of cough, not just dry.
- shortness of breath or breathing difficulties.
- loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.

These symptoms do not necessarily mean you have the illness. The symptoms are similar to other illnesses that are much more common, such as cold and flu.

If staff exhibit any of the above symptoms, they must contact the NHS 111 service for advice. Do not go to your GP, an Outpatient Walk- In or Hospital. Follow the advice given by the NHS 111 Service. Staff must then inform the Management team as soon as practicable to inhibit the spread of the virus.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-self-isolate-and-what-to-do>

Our advice will then be given to individual staff who may have contracted the virus on what they must do next including where a sick note has been issued by the NHS 111 Service. They will be advised to self-isolate for a minimum of 10 days, or 14 days if a family member in their household has symptoms.

Testing

Any staff member or a member of their household showing symptoms can contact the Management team to be booked in for a test. Your local testing Centre is **The Churchill hospital or Thornhill park and ride**. You should not use public transport but drive to the test Centre. If you are feeling too unwell then a member of your household may drive you. If you live alone then please contact your Manager for alternative testing arrangements. Results are usually within 48 hours. Service users who require a test should do so through the .gov website or their G.P and may need our support to arrange this

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested>

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Employees returning from Annual Leave

All employees returning from certain designated areas must contact NHS 111 and inform their employer, of the advice given before they return to work. They may need to self isolate for 14 days and will be required to take annual leave. Any visitors expected from a country on the quarantine list will also need to be reported to Management and annual leave taken.

The Government regularly updates the information about COVID-19, and it is vital that everyone keeps up to date with the latest official advice on travelling to and from certain countries. This is in order to delay the spread of infection to both staff and Service users. Staff must be kept up to date through formal identified communication channels.

PPE

Employees are required to wear disposable facemasks, gloves and aprons for all visits to Service users to protect themselves and the Service user against the virus as some individuals may be asymptomatic. Full face visors are also available and will be required

to be worn for symptomatic and new Service users or where a household uses another care provider. All employees have also been advised to wear gloves and face masks on shopping calls, (whether for Service users or personal), when filling their fuel tank etc.

PHE recommends that the best way to reduce any risk of infection is good hygiene and avoiding direct or close contact (closer than 2 metres) with any potentially infected person where possible. We ask all of our Service users to ensure washing facilities are available, warm water, hand soap and paper towel. All employees have been issued with hand sanitiser.

Personal Protective Equipment distribution

The Department of Health and Social Care has begun distribution of fluid repellent facemasks from the pandemic flu stock to care providers.

Every care provider will be receiving at least 300 facemasks.

The National Supply Distribution line is working rapidly with wholesalers to ensure longer-term supply of all aspects of personal care.

If care providers have immediate concerns over their supply of PPE, there is now a dedicated line: The National Supply Disruption line Tel: 0800 915 9964 Email: supplydisruptionservice@nhsbsa.nhs.uk

How to work safely in peoples own homes

PHE recommends that the best way to reduce any risk of infection is good hygiene and avoiding direct or close contact (closer than 2 metres) with any potentially infected person.

Any member of staff who deals with members of the public from behind a full screen will be protected from airborne particles.

Communication

This is a developing situation and changes daily. The following methods will be used to update staff and Service users on any developments of new advice issued by the Government or other statutory bodies:

- Telephone
- Email
- Letter
- Text message
- Website
- Social Media

Prepare

In order to prepare for any staff shortage, the Business Contingency Plan must be robust and tested to ensure reliability.

It's important to keep up to date with Government and Public Health England advice as the situation is developing hour by hour.

There are basic but effective ways to follow to help prevent the infection's spread including:

- Making sure our workplace is clean and hygienic
- Promoting regular and thorough handwashing by everyone
- Providing all employees with an alcohol-based hand rub which is at least 60% alcohol
- Staff, visitors and Service users need to be aware of the importance of good personal and respiratory hygiene practice including used tissue appropriately disposed of immediately after use
- All staff need to be aware of the need to comply with the Infection Control Policy

The Identified Lead must be the communication channel that feeds back to Senior Management and who also has the responsibility for liaising with Local Authorities designated Leads.

It is crucial that any guidance and advice issued via our Local Authority Commissioning is followed and implemented. Several Local Authorities have issued contingency planning assessments for providers. Below are the steps to take as a self-assessment exercise in managing the risk within our own organisation.

Business Contingency Planning

As part of Regulation 17 Good Governance, every provider will have in place a Business Contingency Plan. This plan needs to be reviewed, amended and tested for its reliability. Please find attached a Self-Assessment Contingency Checklist which should be used to ascertain the robustness of the Plan ensuring that any Amber or Red areas identified in the checklist are remedied.

As the situation develops those responsible for the contingency plan will meet regularly to review the preparations and ensure they are still fit for purpose. It is important to act early, even if planned contingencies are not then needed.

This organisation has a statutory duty of care for people's health and safety. Looking after our Service users and Employees health, well-being and safety is our number one priority during this outbreak.

Workforce Planning:

Schedules will be planned based on essential calls (RED) prioritised first if there are staff shortages due to staff self-isolating/shielding.

Available staff will be asked to work overtime in accordance with working time regulations.

Asking family members to act as primary carer or the extra staff member on double up calls (subject to risk assessments being carried out)

Where possible cancel all annual leave where required but keep the wellbeing of staff in mind.

Trained office staff to assist in the community where possible.

Work with other providers to cooperate with each other and share resources where possible i.e. ppe.

Office will be closed in the mornings (the busiest part of the day) if necessary to help in the community.

Flexible Working will be implemented i.e. changing shifts to look after children during the day if childcare arrangements are compromised.

Service Users

All steps must be taken to protect and mitigate the spread of the virus to protect our Service users. It is important that staff remain calm, diligent and observation will be key to picking up any likely infection source. Close monitoring of Service users should be introduced in order that any contagion is picked up as early as possible and appropriately reported in order that the required measures are put in place. Follow specific government guidance for the community setting.

All Service users, and their wider support network will be contacted to assess their wellbeing and to inform them if there is a disruption to the service and therefore if an interruption or change to their normal service is going to be made. It is important that people are reassured during this time and anyone that is particularly alarmed or distressed should be offered some support.

Reassurance and support to Service users is paramount to prevent panic and distress. For those Service users who wish to cancel our services temporarily to shield themselves, they will receive a weekly phone call to ensure they are safe, managing and have essentials such as medication and food.

Health and wellbeing of the adult social care workforce

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-health-and-wellbeing-of-the-adult-social-care-workforce/health-and-wellbeing-of-the-adult-social-care-workforce>

SCIE published Covid-19 guide for care staff supporting adults with learning disabilities or autistic adults <https://www.scie.org.uk/care-providers/coronavirus-covid-19/learning-disabilities-autism/care-staff>

For more information please see the following weblinks:

- Gov.uk www.gov.uk/coronavirus - click onto Healthcare workers, carers and care settings
- Easy Read and Accessible Information about Coronavirus <https://www.mencap.org.uk/advice-and-support/coronavirus-covid-19>

Please see contingency Self-Assessment checklist.

We recommend that this document is reviewed daily by the Organisations lead or team

Business Contingency Actions	Fully Ready	Part Ready	Not Ready	Action Taken/ Risk Mitigation
Identify your Lead or team Manager	x			Alaina Fraser (Managing Director) is responsible for putting plans in to practice, keeping up to date with guidance and relaying to the team.
Have you tested your Plan for reliability	x			All Domestic and social calls to be cancelled if we hit staff shortages. All annual leave to be cancelled where necessary. For school closures, those with parental responsibility may change working shifts i.e. to evenings and weekends. Prioritise Service users' needs in order of red, amber, green. All Service users informed there may be a change in times of arrival, regular Support worker and duration of visit.
Identify and mitigate risks	x			From 16/03/20, All Service users encouraged to remain home where possible, allowing staff to do weekly

				shops alone. A CWDP pop up shop has been introduced in the office for essentials such as bread, milk, tins and toilet roll to purchase to prevent the need for visits to crowded supermarkets and lack of items due to panic buying. Social calls to remain in the home/garden. Continuity of Support workers/keyworkers is essential where possible to prevent risk of spread. Testing for the community is now in progress including testing health and social care workers and their Service users.
Accessible, up to date and reliable information from government sources	x			Manager receiving daily updates via email from various organisations such as OCAP, CQC, the.gov website and the news and updating all staff and Service users regularly.
Update your communication strategy to staff, Service users and their family	x			Manager communicating updates via the website, social media, letter, information sheets, email and text messages.
Test your Plan with the staff and evaluate their reaction	x			All staff informed of the plan and advised shift changes are available on request to help with parental responsibilities. All staff advised that self-isolating/shielding without symptoms will result in annual leave being taken first.
Check supplies of all PPE, consumables and medicines	x			All staff in receipt of gloves, masks, aprons, face shields and hand gel. The Government/local authority are also issuing more PPE to organisations while they await delayed deliveries. Staff advised to keep on top of medicine orders to prevent running out due to strains on delivery. Staff will collect when necessary. Staff have been stocking the office and freezer for basic supplies of essentials for Service users who cannot obtain items due to public stockpiling or self-isolating.

Check pharmacy reliability	x			Staff advised to keep on top of medicine orders to prevent running out due to strains on delivery. Staff will collect when necessary.
Financial check on cash flow requirements.	x			Majority of Service users self-fund and private Service users are all up to date with invoices. Local authority funding is improving on making payments and small business grants/schemes are available to cover loss of business, high ppe costs, sick pay and wages.
Check and test contingency of employee absences of 10%, 20% and 50%	x			All Service users advised of plan to cancel domestic and social calls in this scenario and that visits will be prioritised in order of need.
Institute Red, Amber and Green priority for all Service users	x			Red allocated to those who cannot self-care, Amber allocated to medium risk of self-caring and green allocated to domestic and social calls.
Consider how to reduce contact between staff to staff and Service users e.g. staff meetings, visitors etc.	x			All staff meetings/forums, group training, Service user reviews, staff supervisions and team building events currently cancelled or minimal until further notice. All staff are currently completing e-learning modules at home including a Covid-19 module. Managers have been authorised by nurse trainers to train their team individually for designated health care tasks. All new Service user assessments to be done remotely where possible over the phone or via email initially. All family and friends of Service users should refrain from visiting during our calls or take over care visits.
Monitor and implement government and employment advice on sick leave, pay and return to work	x			Following government guidance, staff who are absent due to self-isolating or contraction of the virus will not be subject to the Bradford formula process. All staff will receive a back to work meeting to ensure they are in good health and if any

				further support is needed. This organisation has taken the decision not to furlough any staff members due to the nature and need of the business and its Service users.
Consider flexible and at home working for relevant staff	x			The nature of the business does not allow for home working although staff who do not want to send their children to school have the option to move to evening/weekend shifts.
Ensure adherence to all relevant policies and procedures	x			All staff informed of new policy and adhering to all other relevant policies such as infection control.
Establish quarantine procedures where applicable	x			All staff informed to self-isolate if showing symptoms or members of their household are showing symptoms for 10-14 days. All staff informed to self-isolate or social distance when not at work. Staff should self-isolate for 14 days following a trip to a country on the quarantine list.
Communicate all roles and responsibilities for triggering the Plan	x			The managing director is currently responsible for triggering the plan. The Area Manager is aware of the plan and would act appropriately in their absence.
In case of outbreak take immediate steps to reduce footfall for non-essential activities	x			All staff and Service users aware that if an outbreak occurred which impacted staff shortages then initially domestic and social calls would be temporarily cancelled.
Consider a central point of communication for Coronavirus only	x			All staff, Service users and their family can call or email the office or on call phone to discuss coronavirus concerns. In return the management team will communicate to all staff, Service users and their family via, phone, letter or email.
Support and assist staff and communicate to allay rumours and anxiety	x			Staff sent daily/weekly updates via text message regarding isolation of staff or concerns of Service users to monitor with symptoms. All managers are working within the community to support their team and answer any questions.

Develop platforms, intranet, social media, email for communicating actions to staff, Service users and visitors.	x			All actions communicated via social media, the website, text message and letter.
How effective are the communication systems	x			Action plans are understood and followed by staff and staff help Service users to understand where needed.
Establish connection with Public Health Protection Team and all Local Authority relevant departments e.g. Local Emergency Planning.	x			Connection established re obtaining emergency ppe, emergency training guidelines and funding.
Put all necessary Risk Assessments re Covid-19 in place and review regularly	x			Covid risk assessment updated 29/09/20 and distributed to all.