



# Information

for adult social care providers

CORONAVIRUS  
**PROTECT  
YOURSELF  
& OTHERS**

 Leicestershire  
County Council

## Issue 63 – 17 December 2020

Dear colleague,

Please find a number of updates below that we hope you will find useful.

### **Winter pressures and hospital discharges – home care**

Thank you for your continued support in ensuring that people being discharged from hospital are supported to return home as soon as possible. As we head towards the last week before Christmas it is important that we ensure that as many medically fit people as possible are discharged within 24 hours of being identified, and are able to be at home for Christmas.

With this in mind please can all contracted home care providers highlight people you currently support whose packages would benefit from a reduction using the spreadsheet issued to you by the Quality and Contracts team and forward the details by secure email to [enquirylinequality&contracts@leics.gov.uk](mailto:enquirylinequality&contracts@leics.gov.uk). This will mean we can review these packages with the aim of freeing up some capacity for you where appropriate, while your own resources are also under pressure. Please could we ask that you don't make any changes to care packages prior to review by the local authority, as we need to work with people who use services, their families and yourselves to ensure that any potential changes can be made safely.

Also, when reviewing the await care list which is issued to contracted providers twice a day please prioritise those packages highlighted as HART transfers in the first instance, as well as any hospital discharged packages you may receive referrals for.

Supporting the transfer of HART packages is vital to support the flow of people being discharged from hospital as it creates more availability within the system for reablement packages to start, and so supporting swifter discharges from hospital. In addition to this, capacity for bridging remains a focus to support throughput.

Our in-house Crisis Response and HART teams will continue to support the local hospitals and wider health and social care system throughout this period by prioritising hospital discharges and supporting people's recovery and reablement.

## **Guidelines for visitors to residential and nursing homes in Leicestershire, Leicester City and Rutland**

The guidelines for visitors to residential and nursing homes in Leicestershire, Leicester City and Rutland have been updated to include information on rapid (lateral flow) testing – [the latest version is available to view here](#). The guidance offers an approach that care homes can use to ensure that all the necessary and appropriate precautions are in place to protect both the health and safety of those being cared for and the staff employed in the service.

The LLR Care Home Visiting Guidelines document, with the exception of those homes with COVID-19 outbreaks, does allow visiting in line with robust implementation of the guidance and use of lateral flow testing, where appropriate.

However, we would ask you to consider carefully whether it is worth the risk at this time to allow visiting into your care home over Christmas. This is because of the national and local concern over increasing rates.

### **Capacity tracker**

There has been a recent drop in the number of providers completing their relevant capacity tracker. We appreciate that the ever-changing climate we are currently working in creates additional work for managers and staff, and thank you for the time invested in this task so far. This information is vital in supporting our understanding of how Covid-19 is impacting on care providers and assists in supporting timely discharges from hospital. The weekly completion of this is also a requirement of the Infection Control Fund.

Can we please ask that all providers complete the data on the capacity tracker as required.

Thank you for your continued support in this area.

### **End of EU Exit transition period: keeping data safe**

On 1 January 2021, the UK will become a 'third country' for data protection purposes unless an agreement is reached with the EU. If the European Commission grants an 'adequacy decision', then no action will need to be taken by social care providers.

[This joint briefing](#) by Digital Social Care and the Care Provider Alliance is relevant to all adult social care providers in England. It will help you with contingency planning and with what to do if an agreement is not reached by 31 December 2020.

### **Community coronavirus testing set to start in New Year**

Over the weekend Leicestershire County Council announced that community testing is set to get underway in hot spots early next month.

Plans are being finalised that will see lateral flow test pop-up testing deployed in communities across Leicestershire with the highest rates.

More information is available on the [county council's website](#).

## **Leicestershire Adult Social Care Winter Plan**

The Leicestershire Winter Plan closely follows the format of the Government's overarching Winter Plan which was launched in September. It sets out against the key action identified for Local Government the activities in place within Leicestershire to address this issue and identifies the lead officers responsible.

The Government's Winter Plan identifies 75 actions for local authorities under four key themes of:

- Preventing and controlling the spread of infection in care settings
- Collaboration across health and care services
- Supporting people who receive social care, the workforce, and carers
- Supporting the system

We have also worked with our partners across Leicestershire, Leicester City and Rutland to create plans that for consistency follow the same format.

A draft of the Leicestershire Winter Plan is available [online](#) for comment until 31st December 2020. We see the Winter Plan as a 'live' document which will change to reflect any relevant new initiatives and guidance.

### **Staying safe over the Christmas holidays – home care**

As we approach the festive season, and people using home care are thinking of joining family 'bubbles' over Christmas we know this may be causing some concerns to home care providers.

We have prepared [an editable letter](#) which you may find useful in adapting for your communication with people who use your home care services and families.

We hope that this information will support you with keeping your staff safe, whilst also allowing people to see their loved ones.

Thank you, as always, for your continued hard work and energies.

Yours sincerely

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Director of Adults and Communities

Mike Sandys  
Director of Public Health

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>