Issue 36

Dear Colleague,

I am writing with our latest update to you. We recognise that the environment for providers remains challenging and I thank you for your continued engagement with us.

Updates to Care Home guidance

As guidance for Care Homes is being regularly updated, please find some links which you may find useful.

Care home visitors

You will recall from our last bulletin (issue 35) that DHSC has recently published their updated care home visitor guidance. Leicestershire County Council's Public Health function will be issuing further information imminently on the local application of the guidance for your use, which will be included in a future bulletin.

Access to test results

Guidance around access to staff COVID-19 test results has been produced by NHSX. The guidance is available for staff working in Care Homes.

Asymptomatic residents

Care home staff should be monitoring asymptomatic residents on an on-going basis. The use of early warning tools such as RESTORE or NEWS is recommended, and will support care staff in identifying the 'softer' signs of a deteriorating resident.

Communicating with people who are hard of hearing

Some concerns have been raised about the difficulties of communicating with some people who are hard of hearing or who rely on lipreading as a means of communication. Some organisations are now using mobile phone apps that will transcribe speech into text. An example of this can be found on the Nursing Notes Twitter account.

Staff working in care homes

PHE guidance on the [use of PPE for staff working in care homes](#) was updated on 23 July.

Skills for Care Webinars for providers

Skills for Care are running a number of webinars to support with a range of topics, of particular interest during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Wednesday 29 July 2020, 09:00 – 09:30
Human Resources during COVID-19 recovery phase
https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8969108182293618447

The impact of COVID-19 is continuing to create a challenging time for the social care workforce. The webinars will cover a number a number of HR issues that are causing confusion and complications for both employers and employees, including shielding, refusal to be tested, annual leave taken abroad and variation of contracts. This webinar is co-delivered with ACAS and covers many questions that have been raised by managers.

Thursday 06 August 2020, 11:30 – 12:00
Verification of Expected Death during COVID-19 with remote clinical support
https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3857763398203681296

The Coronavirus Act 2020 makes special arrangements for verifying an expected death with clinical remote support in a community setting, such as care homes, supported living accommodation or when a person receives care in their own home. This webinar will support non-medical people to prepare for verifying an expected death in times of the COVID-19 emergency. The supporting guidance which has been produced will enable care workers to be able to say whether or not they feel confident and comfortable to carry out this procedure and what preparation will be needed to meet current guidelines, local policy and practice in a safe and compassionate way.

If you have any questions on a topic that you'd like to see raised during the webinar, please email events@skillsforcare.org.uk.

These webinars are part of a series of recorded webinars on a variety of topics to assist managers to respond to the additional pressures of COVID-19. You can find all of Skills for Care's recorded webinars on our www.skillsforcare.org.uk/COVID-19webinars.

Consideration of exceptional COVID-19 costs

Leicestershire County Council is committed to supporting providers through COVID-19, including through financial support towards their costs. To this end the authority has given month-by-month financial support to home care, residential care, and supported living providers from its budgets, which from May to September has been

based on real costs submitted by providers operating in Leicestershire and analysed by an external organisation. The authority has also been as flexible as possible in its application of the national Infection Control Fund grants.

However, the authority recognises that in a very small number of instances, there still may be exceptional unmet costs which providers have incurred directly as a result of COVID-19, for which the authority should consider whether a payment would be reasonable. If you can evidence that this applies to your organisation, then please email Jitesh Jani on jitesh.jani@leics.gov.uk who will contact you to discuss the circumstances. You will be required to demonstrate that your organisation has taken all steps to minimise the financial support requested, that you understand what financial support your organisation has already received and that you can show that it has been insufficient, that the financial impact is solely from COVID-19, that it relates to Leicestershire County Council services only and not self-funders, that profits and lost income are not included, and that any resulting payment will be passed to employees where relevant and sub-contractors. The authority will consider those exceptional costs on an open-book basis.

Coronavirus Related Scams

As people worry about their health, families and finances during the current pandemic, unscrupulous criminals are taking full advantage of these fears and are preying on members of the public and businesses alike.

Unsolicited phone calls and e-mails could be a sign of a scam but can be difficult to spot – here are some dos and don'ts to help you protect your personal and financial information:

- Don't click on links or attachments in suspicious e-mails or text messages
- Don't respond to messages asking for personal or financial details
- Do use stronger passwords and set up two-factor authentication
- Do be suspicious of cold callers asking for information or offering technical support
- Don't install any software, or grant remote access to your computer, as the result of a cold call
- Do challenge - genuine companies would never ask for financial information, passwords or log in details when contacting you

If you would like to report a scam, you can get in touch with the following organisations:

- Action Fraud – https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/
- Citizen's Advice Consumer Helpline - 0808 223 1133
- Leicestershire Trading Standards Service Facebook page to keep up-to-date with the latest scams to look out for www.facebook.com/leicstradingstandards

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Jon Wilson
Director of Adults & Communities