

COVID-19 NEWSLETTER

NEWS, GUIDANCE & TIPS FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE PROVIDERS IN TORBAY

Whole Care Home Testing Webinars

We are hosting a webinars each weekday, in the morning and afternoon on the whole home swab testing process. The target audience is care homes. We *strongly* recommend them for care homes about to receive their test kits, but anyone from an eligible care home yet to carry out whole care home testing can attend one. More dates/times are added all the time.

Main objectives of the webinar series:

- Outline the end to end whole home testing process
- Share top tips
- Provide an opportunity to ask questions

Care Homes can register to access the webinar:
<https://event.on24.com/wcc/r/2375949/724EF6345473A192F6B9C19334699A29/1077953>

The feedback from care homes that have attended the webinars has been that they have been helpful to them as they prepare for testing.



Reaching all eligible care homes with whole care home testing

We are committed to reaching all care homes whose residents are over 65 or have dementia by the 6th June and we are making good progress against that commitment.

There are however still some care homes across England, who are eligible to register via the online portal who have not yet done so. Eligible care homes can access the portal here <https://www.gov.uk/apply-coronavirus-test-care-home>

Management of staff and exposed patients or residents in health and social care settings

This guidance provides advice on the management of staff and patients or residents in health and social care settings according to exposures, symptoms and test results. Health and social care workers are aware of the recommendation to not come to work when there is a risk that they may spread infection in their workplace.

Managers have a high level of skill in assessing whether individual staff require exclusion from work and should remain the first point of contact for a health or social care worker who is unsure whether they are fit to work.

This guidance should be considered alongside local risk assessment and local polices - these are guiding principles and there may need to be an individual risk assessment based on staff circumstances, for example for those working with individuals who are immunocompromised.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-management-of-exposed-healthcare-workers-and-patients-in-hospital-settings/covid-19-management-of-exposed-healthcare-workers-and-patients-in-hospital-settings#introduction>

Reducing workforce movement between care homes and minimising risk for care workers

Based on the latest evidence of significant asymptomatic transmission in care homes, providers should take all possible steps to minimise staff movement between care homes, to stop infection spreading between locations. Subject to maintaining safe staffing levels, providers should employ staff to work at a single location. Recognising the risks of infection in the community, providers should also support the care workers they employ in taking steps to minimise their risk of picking up COVID-19 outside of work. We expect care homes to take additional steps to reduce the spread of infection, such as but not limited to, those [set out in the annex](#).

Please see latest updates to guidance around measures to limit transmission from care and between staff in different settings:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-support-for-care-homes/coronavirus-covid-19-care-home-support-package>

and the annex: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-support-for-care-homes/coronavirus-covid-19-care-home-support-package#annex>

Update from CQC regarding Legionella and pseudomonas risks

There is the risk of legionella and pseudomonas proliferation in little used water systems, which can lead to disease transmission through aerosol from taps and showers. This may be of particular relevance if providers or services have been closed, or had rooms that have not been used for some time during the coronavirus pandemic.

It is particularly likely where rooms or buildings have remained dormant and is especially the case when ambient temperatures are above 20 degrees, as has been the case in the UK over recent months.

The Health and Safety Executive has guidance on [legionella risks during the coronavirus outbreak](#) and on [safe water management in healthcare premises](#). This guidance provides information on your duties and how to manage legionella and pseudomonas proliferation through: temperature controls; flushing outlets; and chlorination of systems. Please pay particular attention to how to bring little-used outlets back into use without causing harm to yourself or others.

Useful Resources

Providing Care to people in their own homes

This link below aims to answer frequently asked questions from registered providers, social care staff, local authorities and commissioners who support and deliver care to people in their own homes, including supported living settings, in England. Not all of this information is new, but aims to be a helpful resource that brings together all guidance related to coronavirus and home care in one place.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-providing-home-care/coronavirus-covid-19-provision-of-home-care>

Health Care Assistant Recruitment Programme



COVID-19 has created even greater challenges in all areas of care delivery within residential care homes, delivering care directly in people's own homes and within the hospitals throughout Devon leading to an increased need for Healthcare Assistants. To support this Proud to Care launched a recruitment program specifically for Health Care Assistants with a great response.

- Do you have vacancies you are struggling to fill or are you looking to grow your business?
- Are you having expensive Agency bills?

We have had success in supporting recruitment to Baycare, Aveland Court and Help @ Hand.

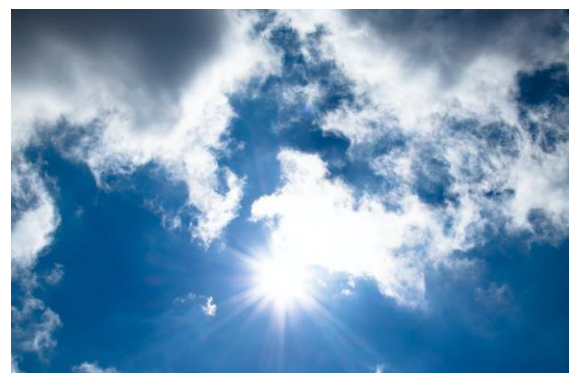
This is a free service with candidates ready and waiting, just contact Bella Patrick on either tsdft.proudtocare@nhs.net or bella.patrick@nhs.net or ring 07772091002.

Beat the Heat: Keeping care home residents safe and well

During previous heatwaves, people in residential and care settings have been at particularly high risk of illness and death. During the COVID-19 pandemic, it is especially important that you know what actions to take to keep residents safe from high temperatures.

Resources and posters are available for you in the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/heatwave-plan-for-england>



Staff Wellbeing

Resource pack for care homes during the COVID-19 pandemic: Supporting Staff & Residents

We recognise that the COVID-19 pandemic is impacting significantly on care homes and raising particular challenges for care home residents, their families and care staff.

The resource pack attached with this newsletter has been created by NHS professionals from Devon Partnership NHS who work in Older Adult Psychology and Psychological Therapies Teams, to support with staff and residents.

As a mental health service we want to offer our support to staff working in care homes to help them look after their own wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic. The pack has been adapted from the COVID resource pack that was kindly shared by Katy Lee (Clinical Psychologist) from the Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust.

Individual Psychological Support from TALKWORKS

TALKWORKS, which many of you are familiar with, is offering all NHS and social care/care home staff locally priority access to the service. Anyone referring themselves will initially have a brief number of sessions based on the psychological first aid approach from the WHO.

This is not therapy, it is for anyone that finds themselves struggling at this difficult time on the frontline, and would appreciate a conversation to help look after themselves. It is confidential and open to all. If the initial session indicates a difficulty that would benefit from a little more input, we can also offer people our usual treatment offer, anyone referring in as an NHS/social care worker will be prioritised throughout the pathway of the service.



This is easy to access by self-referral – either through the website www.talkworks.dpt.nhs.uk and click on the keyworker option, or through calling on **0300 555 33 44**.

Support for Teams from Psychology and Psychological Therapies (PPT) team

PPT is also offering support for social care and care home teams in response to the current COVID 19 situation. This is designed to help teams who are experiencing difficulties following distressing and stressful events arising from COVID 19, recognising that it is sometimes helpful to have an external, objective perspective.

Requests for support from this service can be made by emailing dpt.od@nhs.net

Further information about the support being offered along with posters for you to display for staff are included in the additional folder attached with this newsletter.

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- **The Torbay and South Devon COVID-19 Emotional Wellbeing Helpline:** listening and signposting service for relatives affected by COVID-19 and health or care colleagues seeking support in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Call 01803 217433 or use the online form which can be found at www.healthwatchtorbay.org.uk
 - **Mind:** If you're finding things hard emotionally right now, you're not alone, www.mind.org.uk can provide information and support to help you.
 - **Healthwatch:** Visit www.healthwatchtorbay.org.uk to find out more about local mental health services for issues such as anxiety, stress, depression and bereavement.
 - **CRUSE:** support for staff who work in health and care and who may be affected by the deaths of patients or clients in their care (Freephone 0808 808 1677).