

COVID-19 NEWSLETTER

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

Swabbing at A&E

Anyone attending the Torbay Hospital A&E department who is over 70 will have a COVID-19 swab as routine, whether or not they are going to be admitted. If a resident is discharged from A&E, a pending result should not mean that a care home cannot accept a resident back. Please ensure that the resident self isolates until the result of the swab is known.

SWAB Referral Process

FOR SYMPTOMATIC RESIDENTS/CLIENTS LIVING IN CARE HOMES & SUPPORTED LIVING SERVICES

All referrals for client swabs to go directly from the provider to:

- sdhis.carehomeswabrequest@nhs.net or 01626 204950 (8am – 5pm 7 days a week) with a completed referral spreadsheet. (see swab template attached with this newsletter)

Please also ensure you notify:

- Public Health England swhpt@phe.gov.uk 0300 303 8162
- Torbay Quality Assurance & Improvement team (QAIT): tsdft.torbaycovid19careproviders@nhs.net 01803 697 390
- You can carry out the above in one email with attached swab referral template (see below) to the swab request team copying in PHE and QAIT. Make it clear within the body of the email that your email is also the notification to PHE. Ensure that you remain GDPR compliant and use your NHS email. If you do not have a secure NHS email account then please DO NOT enter the clients name on the swab request form, instead use the clients unique NHS number only.

A swab referral template has been attached with this newsletter. Requests for the swabs to be undertaken will be sent to the relevant community nursing team who will contact the provider to arrange for a swab to be taken.

The swab request line will notify the initial referrer of the result, and it is for the referrer to notify the individual of the result.

Please note this process can take up to 48 hours from referral to result but is often shorter.

FOR SYMPTOMATIC STAFF WORKING IN CARE HOMES & SUPPORTED LIVING SERVICES

- The staff member (who should already be self-isolating as they are symptomatic) will need to contact the staff swabbing hub directly on **01803 655783**.
- If they are unable to get through they can email bookings.covidswab@nhs.net with their name, contact telephone number, stating they work in a social care setting and have symptoms, they will then be called back by the swab request team.

Guidance to parents and guardians: when you should book a coronavirus test for your child

This guidance explains that you should only book a test if your child has any of these 3 coronavirus symptoms:

- a high temperature: any new high temperature where your child feels hot to touch on their chest or back (you do not need to measure the temperature)
- a new continuous cough: coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours
- a loss of, or change in, sense of smell or taste: a noticeable loss of smell or taste or things smell and taste different to normal

Your child does not need a test if they have a runny nose, are sneezing or feeling unwell but do not have a temperature, cough or loss of, or change in, sense of smell or taste. This is because these are not normally symptoms of coronavirus.

[The full guidance can be found here.](#)

Seasonal Flu 2020 Vaccination Programme

This year more than ever it is vital that all health and social care staff get their free flu jab to protect themselves, their families and the vulnerable clients they care for. This is anything but a typical year and we all want to protect ourselves and those close to us. Flu can be deadly and is easily spread. Some key facts:

- If you're a frontline worker in the NHS or social care, you're more likely to be exposed to flu.
- You can have no symptoms but unknowingly spread it to your friends, family and those you care for.
- Being healthy doesn't reduce your risk of getting flu or passing it on.
- All frontline health and social care workers have FREE access to the best protection available, the flu jab.
- As people age, they do not produce as good an immune response to vaccination, therefore it is even more important that those around them are protected from flu so they are less likely to pass it on.
- Flu immunisation can reduce the rates of illness, also reducing staff absence and pressures on the NHS and social care services over the coming months.

On average, flu kills over 11,000 people every year. Some years this number is much higher. It hospitalises many more. This year carries much more risk, due to the potential impact of flu and COVID-19 circulating at the same time. Therefore, we need to make sure that we support our staff to get their vaccinations early in the season. The target uptake this year is 100%. Staff in the residential and care home sector, as well as staff providing care to people in their own homes, are working with some of the most vulnerable in our communities, so it is absolutely vital that they help protect themselves and service users against flu.

Make sure you read and share with your staff this year's care sector flu and winter toolkits, (especially page 17), which can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

These contain a wealth of useful information about preventing and managing flu outbreaks along with other advice. They include hints and tips to promote best practice in your setting, including things like 'flu champions' and vaccine uptake monitoring, which have been shown to work in other areas.

George Coxon, from Devon Kitemark, is really keen to promote flu vaccination in his homes and across the sector:

"This year's flu vaccinations have never been more important to feature as an essential part of care home resilience plans. Staying safe and well is top priority for care homes and flu prevention is a vital part of this for us more so than ever this year "

How to get your free staff vaccination

- Staff should be signposted to their registered GP practice or any pharmacy offering flu vaccinations, to receive their free flu vaccination.
They will be required to show some evidence of eligibility such as a recent pay slip, ID badge or letter from their employer.
- You can also contract an occupation health service to arrange clinics in your care home.
- Or use your own trained and registered nursing staff to administer the vaccine where appropriate under a written instruction.
- Managers should keep a record of staff vaccinated and update as staff report they have been vaccinated. This will be needed in the event of an outbreak and for auditing numbers of staff vaccinated at the end of the season.

Pharmacies are currently experiencing high uptake of flu vaccinations from eligible groups. Please call ahead to your local pharmacy to check stock availability. This will help avoid frustration or a wasted journey. New stock is being supplied throughout the season. It is advised that you get your flu vaccination as early as possible.

Dementia wellbeing in the COVID-19 pandemic

This resource is primarily for clinicians working with people with dementia, but can also be used by carers and people with dementia. This document takes the wellbeing pathway and sets out the adjustments and amendments needed to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. It highlights key priorities and actions for each step in the pathway. Links to further information and guidance are also included.

It spans community, in-patient and other health and social care settings and signposts to useful resources from a variety of organisations. A resource section for people with dementia and their carers is also included.

[The full resource can be found here](#)

Supporting adults with learning disabilities and autistic adults

[Please find updated guidance here for care staff who are supporting adults with learning disabilities and autistic adults during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak.](#) Updates include social distancing guidance and easy-read counterpart with updated guidance on staying alert and safe, coronavirus outbreak FAQs and guidance on meeting with others safely. Updated links to guidance on both supported living and home care provision.

Donning and Doffing Areas

As part of the infection control support within the homes, they have asked if each care home can ensure they identify a donning and doffing area they can use in case of any positive cases.

- Donning area – donning areas need to be equipped with the correct PPE and a place for staff members to store their clothes and spare uniforms that is not used for anything during COVID19.
- Doffing area – this room should contain the following: (Communal bathrooms are often utilised for this purpose)
- Alcohol hand gel
- a hand washing sink,
- a hard floor
- pedal bin large enough to accommodate all used PPE
- linen skips for staff uniforms/scrubs if uniforms are washed on the premises or double bags for staff members to take uniforms home
- Cleaning products decontaminating reusable visors/goggles.

Multiple doffing areas may be required – ideally to have one on each floor, if the home is able to cohort their staff members then each cohort would ideally have their own doffing room.

National Care Forum Infection, Prevention and Control (IPC) Compliance Assessment Tool

National Care Forum, Quality Compliance Systems and Standards Wise International have forged a unique partnership to help not-for-profit care providers enhance Infection Prevention and Control procedures. This compliance assessment is a simple tool, which has been developed to support organisations assess their own practices and prepare evidence for audit which meets CQC requirements. [Click here to find out more.](#)

NHS COVID-19 App - Create a coronavirus NHS QR Code

The NHS COVID-19 app is part of a large scale coronavirus (COVID-19) testing and contact tracing programme called the NHS Test and Trace service in England. It will be used alongside traditional contact tracing to notify users if they come into contact with someone who later tests positive for coronavirus. The app allows people to report symptoms, order a coronavirus test, check in to venues by scanning a QR code and it helps the NHS to trace individuals that may have coronavirus.

The app is to help trace and stop the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).

From Thursday 24 September, it is a legal requirement for local businesses to display the QR code poster linked to the app. You should create and display a QR code if you are: a business, place of worship or community organisation with a physical location that is open to the public or you are holding an event which is taking place in a physical location.

Visitors will need to scan the QR code when they arrive, using the NHS COVID-19 app. [Go here to create a QR code poster to display at your venue.](#)





iPads for Care Homes

NHSX is providing up to 11,000 iPads for care homes to improve access to healthcare services for care home residents. Each device will include a 12-month support package and, for care homes without full access to WiFi, a data-enabled SIM card. The iPads will be ready to use straight out of the box.

A letter containing full details of this offer is [available here](#).

Winter Planning Webinar

The Care Home & Out of Hospital Care Webinar is taking place this **Thursday 8th October 2pm – 3pm**.

The topic for this week's webinar is "Winter Planning" and will include:

- An update on local infection rates
- The local flu vaccination programme and how homes can access the vaccine for their residents and staff
- Business Continuity and winter planning – support available and a providers perspective

The panel will be joined by colleagues from the local health and social care system, the local testing lead, and a local provider to offer their own perspective on winter planning during this challenging period.

[To join the webinar, please use this following link.](#)

We hope you will be able to join us, and we would continue to ask that providers help us shape these by sharing with us topics and areas that they would like covered. We will also continue to include a provider presenter on the panel each month, and would ask that if any of you are interested in joining to share details on your own experiences then do please contact us.

Test and Trace

If you, or a member of staff, are contacted by NHS Test and Trace following a positive test for Covid-19 it is essential that you complete the forms with the **complete, correct** information as **quickly** as possible. This information is vital for onward contact tracing to prevent further spread of the virus. Your close contacts also need to be identified via the NHS Test and Trace system in order to be eligible for the [Test and Trace Support Payment and Discretionary Fund](#) whilst isolating.

Following a positive test, individual's will be contacted via email/text provided so it is **essential** that direct contact details are provided for each individual being tested.

Access to information

As there is currently a high volume of communications being circulated, a reminder that the following links can be used to access up to date information, advice and guidance at any time:

- [Caring for Care Homes Webpage](#): These resources have been produced in collaboration with GPs, pharmacists, care homes managers and social care commissioners across Devon. **Previous editions of this newsletter can also be found on this page.**
- [DCC PEN Site](#): An information and engagement tool providing up to date Covid information including PPE, Testing, Online Learning, staff support and specialist services.
- [Torbay Council Website](#): The page is to inform residents, communities, employers and businesses in Torbay about the local response to coronavirus and to signpost useful advice, guidance and resources.