

# Kent Adult Social Care Provider Bulletin



Friday 15 May 2020



## Introduction from Clare Maynard, Head of Commissioning Portfolio

The last few weeks have been unlike any I have experienced before with days and weeks blending into one. I haven't driven my car since 20th March, nor left my village since then, so starting to return to "normal" will feel strange indeed. I am immensely proud to work in Social Care and I am optimistic that coming from this crisis there will be an increased positive focus on our sector. I must again thank you all for the resilience and enduring efforts you have shown to continue to deliver services to the most vulnerable groups in society when they have needed you the most. The commitment to keeping everything going has been wonderful and everyone has pulled together to enable that to happen.

As things start to plateau, we are now turning our attention to recovery and what the new normal will be. There are many lessons we have learnt and changes to processes that have been adopted that we should strive to embed into our usual ways of working. I am keen to hear your views on this and would invite anyone to [contact me if they wish to share their thoughts](#).

Thank you to those who have taken the time to let us know when the team have helped and supported you, with so much going on, having those emails has really made the team feel of value and appreciated for the work they do. This is our fourth newsletter, which I hope you find helpful. We have included the latest information on Testing including a link to the online portal. There is also a section on Good News Stories. Now more than ever it is uplifting to read these, so please do continue to share these with us.

## KICA Update

KiCA continue to meet virtually with Kent County Council and other representative bodies on a regular basis ensuring that provider concerns continue to be raised. We are ensuring our membership is updated on all the latest news regarding important issues such as PPE and testing on a daily basis.

KiCA are also pleased to announce that we will be running a series of webinars over the coming weeks covering important topics, which will be free to our membership. We hope these will prove useful and informative during these challenging times.



For more information about KiCA, please visit [www.kica.care](http://www.kica.care) or if you wish to join, please contact [louise.faulkner@kica.care](mailto:louise.faulkner@kica.care).

## COVID-19 Testing Portal for Care Homes

A [new online portal](#) that makes it easy for care homes to arrange deliveries of coronavirus test kits has been launched today.

As the national testing capacity has increased, the government is prioritising testing for care homes and other areas with the greatest need.

All symptomatic and asymptomatic care home staff and residents in England are now eligible for testing. Testing will be prioritised for care homes that look after the over 65s.

Health and Social Care Secretary, Matt Hancock, said: “The additional testing capacity we have achieved delivers many thousands of tests a day for residents and staff in care homes. This new portal allows those who book tests for staff and residents to do so even more easily, and it also offers a route for the prioritisation of care homes with the greatest need. We will continue to grow our testing capacity, as we know the certainty and confidence that high quality testing can provide.”

Minister of State for Care, Helen Whately, said: “Care homes are on the frontline in the fight against Covid-19 and we are determined that staff have everything they need to keep themselves and their residents safe. Testing is a crucial part of this. It helps prevent and control outbreaks and means steps can be taken to reduce the spread the virus and protect the most vulnerable. By prioritising thousands of tests for care home staff and residents, we can target our national testing capacity in the areas and care homes with the greatest need.”

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) is working with local authority Directors of Public Health, Directors of Adult Social Services and local NHS providers to deliver this testing programme for care homes.

Tens of thousands of care home workers and residents have already been tested, either by Public Health England, or at drive-through testing sites, mobile testing units and via satellite testing kits - packages of tests sent to care homes for staff to use on residents.

Testing asymptomatic workers helps prevent and control outbreaks. It means those who test positive can be isolated, reducing the number of people who can spread the virus and protecting the most vulnerable. It also helps to build up a strategic

understanding of the prevalence of the virus in local areas and the sector as a whole.

Test results for residents will be communicated to the care home managers. This information will also be provided to councils in order to help manage coronavirus outbreaks in local areas.

## Connectivity for Care Homes

During COVID-19 care providers are utilising digital technology to protect the health and wellbeing of vulnerable residents. Technology is enabling amongst other things, video consultations with health professionals and ordering of prescriptions as well as supporting residents to talk with loved ones.

To further support the technology, NHSX and NHS Digital have negotiated and published on the [NHSX website](#) a range of internet connection offers with telecom companies.

This is complemented by two new pieces of guidance:

- [choosing an internet connection for your care home](#)
- [how to use digital services in your care home.](#)

## Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS)

Following the government's guidance for health and social care staff who look after people who lack mental capacity, the Kent DoLS office has revised its processes, incorporating remote assessments, as far as possible. Decisions regarding suitability of remote assessments are considered on a case by case basis, risk assessed by registered practitioners against P's circumstances, safeguards and best interests.

The DoLS team continue strong engagement with our statutory partners (health and CCG colleagues), Managing Authorities and commissioned providers of Advocacy services, S12 doctors and Best Interests Assessors; with weekly catchups using the Teams platform to maintain communication, support and guidance.

## Tools and Resources

NHS Health Education England have developed a training package for care home staff which includes guidance on preventing the spread of infection and managing serious illnesses. The training package and link to guidance is attached.

Frontline19: for all frontline staff (including those self-isolating) involved with the COVID-19 crisis, [confidential emotional support](#) from qualified and trainee psychotherapists and psychotherapeutic counsellors is available, free of charge.

Elenor Hospice have developed a series of training sessions delivered via Zoom to support professionals delivering end of life care. These sessions cover a range of

different topics and there are provisions for both registered and non-registered professionals. Details of the sessions and how to book are included in the attached document.

## Good News Stories

St Anselm's Nursing Home got in touch to tell us about the donations they have received from local families and a school. "We have had hampers and chocolates and each employee received a pamper kit from one family member who lives in Canada and wanted to show support...Families and friends have contacted us via Skype, FaceTime and WhatsApp to stay in touch with their loved ones and we have even had a donation of a larger mobile phone to enable more people to enjoy this. All round fantastic support for our community. So, a little brightness in what is a very grey and worrying time."

United Response contacted told us they have received donations of face shields and uniform bags from local schools who have been making them, and shared these with local community nursing staff. They said "These have been pure acts of kindness from compassionate people who want to help. We've also been supporting some of our residents to keep in touch with families at home and abroad using FaceTime. This has really helped people to stay connected. Some families have been so kind to our staff bringing and leaving at the door cakes and chocolates. We have been truly humbled by these kind acts during such difficult times".

It is wonderful to hear that the resources being put in place are being used and making a difference to you and your staff. If you've received or delivered any little acts of kindness or have any good news stories, [please let us know](#).

