

# Kent Adult Social Care Provider Bulletin



Friday 24 April 2020

## Welcome from Clair Bell, Cabinet Member Adult Social Care and Health

The situation we are experiencing with the COVID-19 crisis is unprecedented and challenging to us all, but none more so than for the health and social care sector.

I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to all KCC partners and providers with whom we have been working closely over the past weeks. I have joined the Leader of KCC and senior officers for online roundtable meetings with care sector provider representatives where we have had the opportunity to hear first-hand the challenges they are facing.



I'm pleased that KCC have been able to offer support to the market such as financial assistance and coordinating PPE. Our strong relationship with health colleagues on the front line has helped us to maintain the flow of discharge out of hospital and we have procured additional nursing and residential beds to free up capacity in acute hospitals. The work of our social care providers to achieve this is a critical contribution to our county-wide response to COVID-19 and I recognise the huge effort that has been made across social care to support the continued delivery of high-quality care across Kent.

In these very difficult times, I would like to thank all staff across our partner organisations for their responsiveness and continued hard work.



## Update from Richard Smith, Interim Corporate Director ASCH and Clare Maynard, Head of Commissioning Portfolio

We would like to take this opportunity to personally thank all of you for your hard work and unquestionable commitment in ensuring that together we continue to provide vital services to the vulnerable people of Kent. These are unprecedented times which are

producing incredible personal, as well as work challenges, it is therefore a huge tribute to you all that through your hard work, commitment and determination we are continuing to meet the needs of our service users.

Adult Social Care is on the frontline of the battle with Covid-19 therefore it is vital that we have in place the right communication channels to enable us to share the right information at the right time. We recognise that we haven't got that quite right and so we hope that the introduction of a regular bulletin will be a step in the right direction. We also meet weekly with KICA so we can listen and understand your needs and put in place the right measures to support you to continue to undertake the vital work you do.



Please also be reminded of your locality Commissioners to support you at this time:

Locality Commissioner	Area
Sarah Challiss Lisa Rogers Katherine Putko	DGS
Steve Butler Kate Silver David James	Ashford and Canterbury
Heather Bates Andrea Martin Laura Pearce	SKC
Troy Jones Ashleigh Cain	West Kent

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## Update from Kent Integrated Care Association

During these unprecedented times, the Kent Integrated Care Alliance (KiCA) have instigated weekly calls with Kent County Council. We are representing all areas of Adult Social Care. This involves sharing information and keeping Kent County Council updated with the current provider situation. One of the most concerning issues providers have been facing is the shortage of PPE. We are pleased to say that feedback on the Kent Commercial Services Portal has been excellent and orders are being placed successfully.

KiCA and KCC will continue to work closely over the next few months to ensure we help providers come through this difficult period. For more information or to join KiCA, contact [louise.faulkner@kica.care](mailto:louise.faulkner@kica.care).



## Personal Protective Equipment Task Force

We know that obtaining the correct Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) has been a concern for our providers in recent weeks, in relation to both scarcity and cost. To support our partners, KCC have established a PPE Task Force led by Strategic Commissioner Vincent Godfrey. This group has been working hard to obtain PPE and coordinate stocks across the county. The group will continue to work closely with our partners in the coming weeks to meet the challenges currently faced by the social care sector and support aid efforts where appropriate.

Since 3 April, KCC and its partner Kent Commercial Services have made over 500 separate deliveries of hundreds of thousands of items of critical PPE to care settings all over Kent – all free of charge. The Council has also worked with KCS to establish a [portal for ordering stock](#). We have been pleased to receive positive feedback from providers in regard to using the portal and a representative from KICA stated “it’s great and works well, with immediate email responses”.

## COVID-19 Testing for Care Home Staff

### Who is eligible for testing?

Individuals who are self-isolating, have symptoms that may be due to Covid-19 and are either;

- A staff member working within a care home with symptoms
- Symptomatic household member of staff member

### Arranging a test

Line Managers within care homes must verify that the staff member or their household member is showing symptoms and is eligible for testing, requests for testing are then submitted to the appropriate testing team.

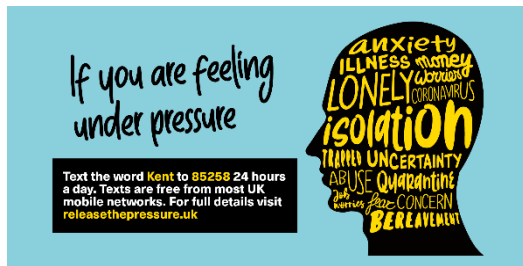
East Kent – direct booking website (details have been distributed directly to care homes)

West Kent – request via e-mail and call back to book (details have been distributed directly to care homes)

North Kent – the process is being finalised and further information will be shared shortly

If you are unclear about the process in your area, please send an e-mail to [ascproviderbc@kent.gov.uk](mailto:ascproviderbc@kent.gov.uk), detailing the testing team you would like to refer to and details of the local process will be sent to you.

We are aware that home care workers are also keen to access tests and a process for this is being worked on. More information will be available in due course.



## Mental Health and Wellbeing

We are pleased to announce a new 24hour service for anyone in Kent or Medway in need of [mental health crisis support](#). Support is now available simply by texting the word “Kent” or the word “Medway” to 85258.

This is the UK’s first free 24/7 text service for anyone in crisis anytime, anywhere. It offers help when life gets overwhelming and you need immediate support. The service is provided by the national charity Shout and every conversation is with a human being.

The NHS has also provided a number of [tips for managing anxiety](#) under its Every Mind Matters campaign.

## Care for Kent Recruitment Campaign

To support providers with recruitment through these difficult times, the Care for Kent Recruitment campaign went live on Wednesday 15 April. We have received a number of applications from people looking for permanent and temporary work, which are currently being matched to one of the vacancies submitted by providers.

The campaign will run for 4 weeks through social media and local radio. [Watch the campaign film and register your interest for prospective new workers.](#)

The Government will also be launching a national recruitment campaign for social care. Feedback from Kent’s providers on previous national campaigns have highlighted that they need any campaign to be locally focused and targeted, which we hope to achieve through our Care for Kent campaign. However, our Care for Kent campaign will be linked to the Government’s to achieve maximum impact.

## Tools and Support

KCC is supporting the care sector through our [Registered Manager network](#), which includes information on training, links to resources such as Health and Wellbeing and signposting to support services. Ensure you are signed up to the Registered Manager network by emailing: [KentRegisteredManager@kent.gov.uk](mailto:KentRegisteredManager@kent.gov.uk).

KCC is also seeking to ensure that the needs of both known and ‘hidden’ carers are understood and supported during the COVID-19 crisis. KCC are working with Healthwatch and other partners to identify hidden carers and encourage them to access support through [www.kentcarersmatter.co.uk](http://www.kentcarersmatter.co.uk).

Ashford CCG have pulled together a tool which can support you to access a range of [guidance and support for health and social care](#) professionals.

Along with family members and nurses, the British institute of Human Rights have developed a [Hospital Passport](#) for people with learning disabilities and/ or autism. This tool will help to ensure that medical professionals can get the information they need quickly if people from these vulnerable groups need to be admitted to hospital.

## Good News

Whilst we recognise what a challenging time this is for all of our partners working to care for our most vulnerable residents, we'd also like to promote some of the good news stories happening in Kent.

This week one home has reported to us that they've been grateful to receive lots of donations from the local community including food from Help for Heroes, pizzas from Dominos and fresh flowers from Sainsbury's and Tesco. The manager said it has had a huge impact on their team feeling really valued by their community.

There are lots of examples of workers and members of the community going above and beyond at the moment, and we'd love to hear yours; please get in touch at [ascproviderbc@kent.gov.uk](mailto:ascproviderbc@kent.gov.uk).