

# Kent Adult Social Care Provider Bulletin



Friday 19 March 2021

## Advance warning of changes to PPE guidance

The Department of Health and Social Care has recently advised about changes that are coming to the adult social care 'How to work safely' guidance for residential care and domiciliary care.

### 'How to work safely' guidance

Following a review of the UK-wide IPC Guidance (published on 21 January 2021) and a review of the current evidence base on new and emerging Covid-19 variants, PHE are working collaboratively with the PPE Task & Finish Stakeholder Group to review and update the existing 'How to work safely' guidance for care homes and domiciliary care.

The expectation is that revised guidance will enter the government's publication clearance process by Friday 19 March 2021 and will be published once the clearance process is completed.

Subject to final agreement, the changes in 'How to work safely in **Care Homes**' will include:

- If a resident has respiratory symptoms compatible with recent COVID-19 infection or has tested positive for COVID-19 it will be recommended that eye protection (visor or goggles) is worn (along with a Type IIR mask, which is already required).
- The eye protection and facemask should be removed and disposed of after completing any personal care. If the eye protection is not labelled as single use only, it will need to be decontaminated before reuse.

Subject to final agreement, the changes in 'How to work safely in **Domiciliary Care**' will include:

- If a client has respiratory symptoms compatible with recent COVID-19 infection or has tested positive for COVID-19 it will be recommended that eye protection (visor or goggles) is worn (along with a Type IIR mask, which is already required).
- The eye protection and facemask should be removed and disposed of after completing any personal care. If the eye protection is not labelled as single use only, then it will need to be decontaminated before reuse.
- Sessional use of masks within Domiciliary Care will no longer be recommended in the updated guidance. At the end of each homecare visit, the facemask should be disposed of and fresh PPE, including a new facemask, will need to be donned before entering the next client's home.

We have been advised that providers may begin to operate the standards described above now should they wish – although it is being stressed that the official guidance has not yet changed and so there is no obligation to do so. The current guidance, which has been approved through the triple lock process and agreed with stakeholders including Health and Safety Executive, is confirmed as a safe system of work for the sustained transmission of COVID-19 in England. It is a minimum standard

to comply with. The new guidance shares the same principles of infection prevention and control of COVID-19 and is in an easier format to follow.

It is understood that you will likely have concerns around the impact of these changes on stock levels of PPE. For organisations accessing PPE via the portal, we have been advised that order limits were raised on 15 March. For those who access PPE via iProc or through KCC, additional orders can be placed via your usual method. We have been assured that the government has stabilised the UK PPE supply chain and have built a four-month stockpile of all COVID-critical PPE.

If you have any difficulties or queries, please do get in touch with your commissioning lead or email [ascprovidersbc@kent.gov.uk](mailto:ascprovidersbc@kent.gov.uk).

## Shielding update for people who are clinically extremely vulnerable

The Department of Health and Social Care have announced that [clinically extremely vulnerable people in England will no longer need to shield from 1 April 2021](#).

This means that those on the shielded patient list can begin to follow the national restrictions alongside the rest of the population. However, these people are still advised to take extra precautions to keep themselves safe from COVID-19.

From 18 March and over the next two weeks, people on the shielded patient list will receive an advice letter that sets out practical steps on how to reduce their risk of catching the virus.

These include:

- continuing to maintain strict social distancing
- keeping overall social contacts at low levels
- continuing to work from home where possible.

Click the image below to read the latest guidance in full.



## Information from NHS Test and Trace: Regular testing for adult day care centres in England

The Department of Health and Social Care announced on 1 February, the roll-out of weekly routine PCR testing for staff within eligible adult day care centres. This is a follow-up to raise awareness and ensure all day care centres have signed up to receive access to regular testing and are providing support as safely as possible.

### PCR staff testing overview

Weekly routine staff PCR testing is currently available for all adult day care centres that are run by paid day care staff and deemed critical to be open during lockdown by local authorities. Services must be for adults over 18 and provided within non-residential care settings that support the health and wellbeing of adults. This includes settings such as:

- purpose-built day centres
- day centres attached to or part of a care home or supported living
- other buildings in communities specifically used for regular adult day care

Full information can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-testing-for-adult-day-care-centre-workers>

How can adult day care centres get access to testing via our self-referral portal?

- Day care centre managers that meet the eligibility criteria set out above can navigate to <https://request-onboarding.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/>
- Managers will need to enter a referral UON and provide details of their adult day care centre. Please note, this is only a referral code and cannot be used to order test kits. Centres will receive a separate UON via email once they have been accepted for them to be able to order test kits.
- Organisations which run multiple day care centres at various locations will need to register each centre separately to receive multiple UONs, even if the contact details for each of these are the same.
- Once we have received an acceptance from the Local Authority, NHS Test & Trace will email day care centre managers with their UON and instructions to place orders from the test kit ordering portal.

### LAs receiving referrals

- NHS Test and Trace will email referrals from the self-referral portal to the nominated point of contact in each LA for day care centre testing in the form of a spreadsheet. We are asking LAs to review these within 7 working days and accept or reject the request by filling in the final column of the spreadsheet and sending it back to us.
- If you haven't already provided a nominated contact to accept / reject adult day care centre requests for testing in your local authority, please send your nominated contact to [Courtney.Adragna-Nolan@nihp.nhs.uk](mailto:Courtney.Adragna-Nolan@nihp.nhs.uk) If you have already provided a contact or are currently reviewing requests yourself, then you do not need to complete this step. Without a contact, requests will automatically be sent to DASS' for completion.
- Once accepted on our system, day care centre managers will receive a confirmation email with their Unique Organisation Number (UON) and information about how they can order test kits for their staff.

### **Sign-up to our regular adult day care centre testing webinars**

- Regular interactive testing webinars are hosted every Monday, including a live Q&A, to go through test kit ordering, conducting testing, registering, returning test kits and results. The link to sign up to attend adult day care centre webinars can be found here: [https://event.webcasts.com/starthere.jsp?ei=1427241&tp\\_key=a845a50900](https://event.webcasts.com/starthere.jsp?ei=1427241&tp_key=a845a50900)
- If centres are not able to attend the webinar, they are able to sign up and a recording of the session will be made available after the session.

### **For further support and guidance**

- You can also find guidance on the safe opening and management of day care centres during the Covid-19 pandemic on the SCIE website. This guidance has recently been updated: <https://www.scie.org.uk/care-providers/coronavirus-covid-19/day-care/safe-delivery>
- Information on the Infection Control Fund can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/adult-social-care-infection-control-fund-round-2/adult-social-care-infection-control-fund-round-2-guidance>.

### **Rapid Lateral Flow testing pilot**

A 3-week rapid lateral flow testing pilot has been completed in 13 adult day care centres across England for staff and service users. For more information about lateral flow testing, visit: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/understanding-lateral-flow-antigen-testing-for-people-without-symptoms>.

The purpose of this pilot was to understand the usability of lateral flow self-tests for day care centres and to identify any improvements to support centres and staff to follow the testing regime to support safer services. The pilot findings will be evaluated including considering improvements to the current testing experience and further updates will be provided in due course.

We are very grateful for your help with this and look forward to working with you to ensure day care centres have all the support they need to operate safely.

## **Online easy read survey**

The Learning Disability and Autism Executive Board for Kent and Medway is planning how best to support people to return to a full life after COVID-19 lockdown. Key to this is the take up of the vaccine - [adults with a learning disability in Kent and Medway have been given priority access](#) based on clinical evidence of risk to life and health. Bemix has co-produced this online [easy read survey](#) for the Board to find out how adults with learning disabilities are feeling about the future and what support they need. We would very much value you supporting people to complete the survey. If a printed version is easier to use, you can print [this version](#) or contact the Bemix admin team on 01227 374285 or at [info@bemix.org](mailto:info@bemix.org) to have a copy posted to you with a stamped addressed envelope for return.

The survey will stay open, but the sooner people complete it, the more it will improve early planning. The support needs of autistic adults who are not eligible for early vaccination are also being carefully considered – and the Board expect to communicate about this at a later date.

## KiCA: Free membership for all CQC registered Adult Social Care providers in Kent

Following recent funding received from Kent County Council, KiCA are able to offer free membership to ALL CQC registered Adult Social Care providers in Kent.



They represent all areas of the sector, residential homecare, Learning Disabilities and Mental Health. KiCA are your voice for care in Kent.

Do not miss this opportunity to join your local Care Association. For further information, please visit: [www.kica.care](http://www.kica.care) or contact: [louise.faulkner@kica.care](mailto:louise.faulkner@kica.care)

KiCA look forward to continuing to support you and your organisation through these difficult and challenging times.

## Kent Care Hub: Digital Innovation Centre and simulation training



Do you know what simulation learning is?

Have you ever used a virtual reality headset to experience what it is like to be frail or to have a diabetes hypo?

This will soon be on offer in the Kent and Medway Digital Innovation Centre with input from health and care practitioners.

Join to hear Anne Tidmarsh and Dr Robert Stewart, and to also see all about the Digital Innovation Centre on the 25 March 1pm – 1.45pm.

To book your free place please email: [ellie.reynolds@kica.care](mailto:ellie.reynolds@kica.care)