

Kent Adult Social Care Provider Bulletin



Friday 9 October 2020

Introduction from Chris McKenzie, Director of Adult Social Care for North and West Kent

I joined Kent County Council as Director of Adult Social Care for North and West Kent in July and have enjoyed meeting and working with new colleagues and providers. It has been a challenging time to begin a role in a new organisation, but I bring with me the experience and lessons of my previous role as Assistant Director of Adult Social Care at Medway Council. In spite of the challenges of working remotely during the pandemic I have received a warm welcome and had plenty of opportunities to get to know my new colleagues over many Teams meetings!



In the first few months of my time at KCC I have been prioritising work with the rest of the Adult Social Care Directorate management team to support KCC's three pillars – a programme of work focussing on practice, meaningful measures and innovation in Adult Social Care. This work will ultimately ensure that the work we do is making a difference every day for Kent residents.

I am also working closely with KCC colleagues, health and social care providers, and the Kent and Medway CCG to ensure robust winter planning for 2020-21. Whilst this winter is set to be especially challenging, I am confident that by working in partnership, we will ensure that our services and discharge pathways are prepared and resilient to deliver the best possible support to Kent residents.

Update from Kent Integrated Care Association



Following negotiations with the officers at KCC, a KiCA proposal regarding additional support to the sector through our association has now been accepted by Cabinet members. Our proposal to fund current KiCA membership for a full year, and further additional funding to engage all CQC registered providers to benefit from KiCA's support and information for the coming year, will give us the opportunity to develop further our support network of independent and private providers during the coming challenging period.

We represent all areas of the sector, residential, homecare, LD/MH so if your organisation is currently not a KiCA member, don't miss this opportunity to join for free (until July 2021). For further information about KiCA, visit www.kica.care or to register your organisation as a member, contact louise.faulkner@kica.care.

We look forward to working with you and continuing to help the sector get through these unprecedented times and beyond.

PPE Supply from the DHSC Portal

Government have announced [changes to the supply of PPE detailed here](#). Eligibility is by invitation only, but residential and domiciliary care providers can now order PPE for COVID-19 requirements via the portal, not only in emergencies. If you are eligible, please make sure you are using the DHSC Portal for your PPE supplies.

There are weekly restrictions on the amount that can be supplied, and providers should assess this carefully against their need.

We continue to advise providers to retain contact with their existing suppliers, as you will still need to use them for non-COVID related items. With winter pressures, EU transition and local lockdown considerations, we also advise giving consideration to strengthening supply chains and building resilience in your stores to mitigate against these demands.

Tools and Resources

The charity Centre for Independent Living Kent (CiLK) have developed a new phone befriending service for people who have been left feeling isolated or worried as a result of COVID-19. Call the SafetyNet Team on 01233 633187, email safetynet@cilk.org.uk or see the attached flyer for more information.

Kent County Council and the NHS have produced a Crisis Support Card for Children's and Adult Mental Health services, which provides an overview of a range of services that people experiencing concerns about their or a loved one's mental health can access. Please see the attached flyer.

Sussex CCG have developed a Prepare, Prevent and Manage COVID-19 in Care Homes Webinar. The webinar will be facilitated by Vanessa Swaine Clinical nurse from Sussex CCG and is open to Kent and Medway care homes. The webinar will take place on Fridays at 14.00 – 16.00. You can [book your place here](#).

Hampshire County Council has worked in partnership with Wessex Academic Health Science Network to develop e-learning which aims to increase knowledge and confidence in assessing an older person's hydration needs. The training is aimed at any person working with older people in the community and is part of the Hydration at Home Toolkit, endorsed by the British Dietetic Association. [Find out more details about the e-learning and how to access it here](#).

Staying Up to Date with the Prevalance of COVID-19

You will be aware through the media of the recent increases in confirmed cases of Covid-19 across England, and also of the local lockdowns that are happening in some parts of the country at the moment. We thought it would be useful to share with you some Kent data on COVID-19 that our colleagues in the Public Health Observatory collect. [The website can be found here.](#)

Prevalence of Covid-19 is measured per 100,000 pf the population to give a figure relative to the population density of the area. Some of the key points from this information that we would like to share with you is the current rate per 100,000 in Kent, which is listed as 1.85 per 100,000 (as of 5 October). The equivalent rate for England overall is 8.29 per 100,000, showing that as of 5 October the Kent figure is considerably lower than that of the England average. The data on this website is updated regularly to reflect the ever-changing picture and taken from Government statistics. We would encourage you to keep up to date with this information which will give you the local as well as regional and national picture.

Updated Government Guidance for Re-testing and Antibody Testing

The Department of Health and Social Care has recently updated its [guidance for the retesting exemption period for staff](#). This has been changed from 6 weeks to 90 days if staff have not developed new COVID-19 like symptoms. Please ensure you take the time to review this guidance and ensure you are up to date with the latest position, particularly taking the time to [review Section 5 – Eligibility for PCR re-testing in staff](#).

[Guidance has also been updated for antibody testing](#). The guidance explains what antibody testing is, what an antibody test will tell you and who is eligible for testing.

NHS COVID-19 App and Using QR Codes in Care Homes

The NHS COVID-19 app is now available to download to support the NHS Test and Trace service by notifying users if they come into contact with someone who later tests positive for coronavirus. The app will help the NHS understand if the virus is spreading in a particular area and enable local authorities to respond quickly to stop it spreading further and save lives.

NHS Test and Trace have released a comprehensive guide on how you can create a QR poster to support people to use the app within your venue or place of work. This will enable visitors to scan a poster to check-in and support wide-spread use of the app.

Please see the attached flyers for further details of using the NHS app and QR codes.

Stay Well this Winter and Flu Vaccination

NHS

Get your free flu jab

Some people with a learning disability can get very ill if they get flu.

The best way to avoid flu is to get a free flu jab.

NHS
GP surgery

You can have the flu jab at your GP surgery.

Pharmacy +

Or you can have the flu jab at a pharmacy.

If you are scared of needles, tell the nurse. You may be able to have the vaccine as a nose spray instead.

HELP US HELP YOU
STAY WELL THIS WINTER

Flu immunisation
Helping to protect everyone, at every age

Cold weather and flu can make some health problems worse and even lead to serious complications. The best way to avoid getting flu is to have a flu vaccine, which is a free injection. People with Learning Disabilities should have a flu vaccination. Ask the GP to add you, or the person you support to the “Learning Disability register”, and add the “needs a flu vaccination” code.

Reasonable adjustments should be made. This means that some people with learning disabilities might need to have some cream to numb the injection site, or have the nasal spray instead. You can ask for this and it is still free.

The NHS have made some helpful easy read [resources about how to stay well this winter and protect yourself from flu](#).

A good time to talk about the flu vaccination is at the Learning Disability Annual Health Check. Ask the GP to book this in every year, near to your or the birthday of the person you support so it's easy for everyone to remember.

World Mental Health Day – Mental Health Support for Care Staff

Saturday 10 October is [World Mental Health Day 2020](#). The coronavirus pandemic has not limited its effects to the purely physical, but impacted many of us on a psychological level. This year's theme of 'mental health for all' has never been more timely.



Mental health support is not limited to just one day of course. You can download and use the [CARE Workforce app](#) for free access to wellbeing resources and apps such as Sleepio, Silvercloud and Daylight all year round. Search 'CARE workforce' on your app store.

The Samaritans, working with NHS England, continue to offer their helplines to all social care workers, giving staff a safe space to offload and get support from trained, specialist advisers. Call them on 116 123 - it's free and available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Meanwhile, [Hospice UK](#)'s bereavement line is available on 0300 303 4434 or you can text 'SHOUT' to 85258 to start a conversation with [Shout](#)'s messaging support service.

Tackling Health Inequity in East Kent

COVID-19 has exposed a huge number of things about our society in 2020. As well as demonstrating the ability of our communities to pull together at times of hardship and reminding us of the incredible work of the NHS and social care providers, the virus has also brought to the fore the inequities in our society. COVID-19 has disproportionately affected those who already have poor health, are affected by socio-economic deprivation and those who experience poor mental health.

Kent experiences particularly high levels of socio-economic deprivation in East Kent which are linked to poorer health outcomes across a range of illnesses such as COPD and respiratory disease, cancer and diabetes.

As a result of these inequities, Public Health Commissioners have been exploring a range of new services and interventions, including tackling digital exclusion through pilots taking place this autumn. The pilots will deliver solutions such as loaning iPads to Kent residents via local libraries and using them to deliver virtual classes, providing Carephone devices to older and vulnerable people so they can receive prompts and reminders throughout the day and keep in touch with loved ones, and creating physical spaces where people can access online services and support to use technology.

Our ambition is to reduce digital exclusion across Kent and Medway through collaboration and innovation, and by doing so to improve health outcomes for Kent residents. If you would like to take part in any of these conversations please get in touch with Rebecca.Eley@kent.gov.uk.

World Homeless Day

World Homeless Day takes place on 10 October every year, and tomorrow marks the 11th World Homeless Day, which draws attention to homeless people's needs and highlights opportunities for local communities to get involved in responding to homelessness.

To support vulnerable homeless people in Kent, KCC work with the charities Porchlight and Look Ahead to deliver the Kent Homeless Connect (KHC) service. KHC has been designed to support vulnerable adults, with complex needs, who are either homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

Kent Homeless Connect are committed to supporting people 24/7 through assessing and supporting housing, signposting vulnerable people to meet their social and health care needs, engaging rough sleepers and helping individuals to access and maintain safe housing and integrate within their communities. If you know anyone who could benefit from this type of support, [please make a referral to KHC](#).

If you or anyone you support would like to get involved in World Homeless Day, you could:

- educate people about homeless issues
- celebrate and support local good works
- highlight local issues in the media
- donate to local service providers [Look Ahead](#) and [Porchlight](#)
- volunteer with a local service provider to give hands-on help
- host a fundraiser within your organisation
- raise awareness by tweeting about #WorldHomelessDay @homelessday
- [sign up to Porchlight's 'One Week Without' challenge](#)

KCC Commissioners are also working with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to support the Next Steps Accommodation Programme. The programme provides funding for short term accommodation and support for the 15,000 vulnerable people in England who were supported with emergency accommodation during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. Funds will be distributed across Kent and KCC are supporting colleagues in District and Borough Councils to identify priorities for funding and make sure the money achieves the best possible outcomes for Kent's homeless and vulnerable population.

Domestic Abuse Awareness Month

October also marks Domestic Violence Awareness Month, which is designed to unify women and men all across the world who have been victims of domestic violence. Domestic violence impacts millions of people worldwide, represents a problem across every status, culture, religion, and race and does not discriminate between men and women. Domestic violence can take many different forms, which is why raising awareness continues to be so critical.

In 2016 KCC worked with partners to collaboratively commission the Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS). Three organisations were selected to form the service, Look Ahead, Oasis and Clarion. They work together to provide community services and women's refuge across the county to keep people safe and help them recover from their experiences and live lives free from abuse.

This year, KIDAS will deliver a series of virtual events from 25 November – 10 December to inform, educate and inspire action. The KIDAS providers are working hard on plans for Domestic Abuse: It's Everybody's Business conference, which also coincides with the international 16 Days of Action Against Domestic Violence campaign.

The programme of free online events will be available to health, education and social care sector professionals, businesses, cultural and faith groups, community organisations and interested members of the public. The events will provide the opportunity to further their understanding and knowledge of domestic abuse. We will be providing further information closer to the time and encourage providers to get involved.

KCC Commissioners have also worked with KIDAS providers to submit a joint bid for funding from the Home Office to provide services such as refuges and accommodation for people fleeing domestic abuse during the COVID-19 pandemic. We're pleased to say that this bid was successful and the money will be used to offer even more help, including:

- Additional bed spaces for victims of domestic abuse
- More financial support to help residents in refuge move on
- Creating more COVID-secure environments within refuges
- Delivering Trauma Counselling for victims of domestic abuse to support recovery
- Providing educational and leisure activities for children living in refuge.

[You can find out more information about all domestic abuse services in Kent.](#)

If you or your family are in immediate danger, don't be afraid to ring 999. Alternatively, you can contact the freephone 24 hour National Domestic Violence Helpline on 0808 2000 247 or the Mens' Advice Line on 0808 801 0327.

Locally, KIDAS can help you on 0808 168 9276 or Kent.DA@victimsupport.cjsm.net.

Sharing Your Excellence

We are always pleased to hear your good news stories, and to hear that the resources being put in place are useful 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](#).