

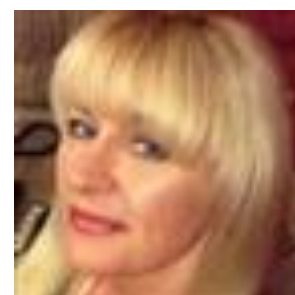
Kent Adult Social Care Provider Bulletin



Friday 24 July 2020

Introduction from Michelle Snook and Xan Brook, Senior Commissioners

Integrated commissioning and partnership working is at the heart of what we do in Strategic Commissioning. Senior Commissioners Michelle Snook and Xan Brooker would like to thank their teams and all the commissioned and community and voluntary sector partners, along with other Health and Social Care Commissioning colleagues who have pulled together and supported people with different needs during the COVID-19 Pandemic.



In response to COVID-19, the Kent Autism Collaborative temporarily expanded its membership to invite colleagues from the Kent Learning Disability Partnership Board and Medway. Weekly teleconferences and a weekly email digest were instigated at the start of the pandemic. This helped us work together to provide mutual support to our commissioned and voluntary sector partners across Kent and Medway, who are working with people with learning disabilities and/or autism in the community.

Coming together as a collaborative has enabled us to understand the specific challenges people with learning disabilities and/or autism have been facing during these unprecedented times and to respond in a collective manner, including by:

- sharing key information around services available across Kent and Medway to offer support, including remotely
- signposting to current local and national guidance
- sharing good practice and resources such as easy-read leaflets, videos and social stories, to help services support our more vulnerable citizens understand the lockdown restrictions
- sharing learning about how COVID-19 was affecting people with learning disabilities to ensure that people, allies and providers knew what we knew and could take the appropriate action to prepare and protect each other
- working with wider public sector partners such as Kent Police to enable people who were exempted from Government restrictions on leaving the house to exercise, the clarity and confidence to do so, and by producing 'key fobs' which were distributed through our voluntary sector partners

- linking together and helping to provide community leadership to organisations across Kent and Medway who have responded to the pandemic in rapid and innovative ways.

Now the lockdown restrictions have eased, we have moved to fortnightly meetings with a view to making these monthly. The feedback we have received on this initiative has been overwhelmingly positive, and we have conducted a survey for all the members of this group to gather feedback on how we should configure it going forward.

For more information on this group, or if you are working in the field of autism and/or learning disability and would like to be added to the membership, please contact Adam.Webb@kent.gov.uk, Senior Project Officer, Integrated Commissioning.



KENT INTEGRATED
CARE ALLIANCE

KICA Update

Following negotiations with the officers of 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 fees 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 have our next webinar coming up on 11th August at 1pm and this is open to ALL providers, so if you would like to attend, please contact louise.faulkner@kica.care.

Mutual Aid Portal Closure

Whilst we know PPE remains challenging, we are seeing an improvement on availability in the market for wholesalers and suppliers. We've been working intensively with providers across the sector to support them to make the switch to their own supplies. The KRF's mutual aid portal will close at 4pm on Friday 24 July.

It's critically important that providers have secure and robust supply chains in place. Providers should:-

- Ensure they have a programme of regular rolling orders with a number (min. two) suppliers and be prepared to change suppliers if need be
- Use the list of wholesalers KCC have provided (See attached Letter to Providers (11-07-20) or [KCS](#) if needed – the list isn't exhaustive and other suppliers are available too
- Report any concerns about PPE they have sourced themselves to Kent Trading Standards trading.standards@kent.gov.uk.
- Record any PPE shortfall on the NHS capacity tracker, if they are a care

home

- Ensure that if a small care setting (care homes with 24 beds or fewer and home care with 99 clients or fewer) they are registered with the DHSC Portal for emergency PPE : [PPE portal: how to order emergency personal protective equipment](#)
- Consider bulk buying either singularly or by coming together with other organisations in the area to pool the benefit and cost. KCC has made good links with PPE sources and will support providers to do this. Talk to your locality commissioner or contract manager in the first instance.

Care Home Visitors Update

The [‘Update on policies for visiting arrangements in care homes’](#) was published on 22 July 2020.

This guidance states that the decision to allow visitors in to care homes should be taken by the provider and managers of each individual setting, based on a risk assessment and taking into account the advice of the Director of Public Health. This decision should aim to minimise the risk of Covid transmission. There is currently no reason to restrict visits in Kent.

The risk assessment should consider the circumstances of the individual care home and the local circumstances e.g. is there a higher rate of Covid infection in the area?

To limit risk, where visits do go ahead, this should be limited to a single constant visitor, per resident, wherever possible. This is in order to limit the overall numbers of visitors to the care home and the consequent risk of infection. Visitors should be screened for symptoms of acute respiratory infection and no-one with symptoms should be allowed to visit.

Some things that homes might wish to consider include ensuring appropriate social distancing at all times (from staff and residents), using a well ventilated/outdoor space, visitors to avoid contact with staff/other residents, consider the need for PPE including face coverings, hand hygiene, cleaning, not allowing visitors who are self-isolating, or in a household self-isolating, or with any Covid symptoms.

Care homes should support NHS Test and Trace by keeping a temporary record (including address and phone number) of current and previous residents, staff and visitors, as well as keeping track of visitor numbers and staff.

We would recommend no visiting during an outbreak in the care home, except in exceptional circumstances such as end of life.

Guidance for supported living settings and visits out of a care home (e.g. to a family home) are being considered and there should be an update shortly.

The Care Provider Alliance has a protocol for enabling visiting and this can be found at: <https://careprovideralliance.org.uk/coronavirus-visitors-protocol>

Please contact your local health protection team for advice and organisation of

testing if there are confirmed or suspected cases of Covid within staff or residents of your home.

Public Health staff are happy to liaise with homes. Please send any queries to the Deputy Director of Public Health at: Allison.Duggal@kent.gov.uk.

PPE for Care Workers during Sustained COVID-19 Transmission in England

The guidance on the use of PPE for workers in care homes in England has been updated, and providers should take the time to familiarise themselves with these changes. The changes predominantly relate to the use of face masks/ coverings when in any work situation including work/ office premises, or with other staff members. The guidance includes an updated table to show what protective equipment should be used.

It is critical that all homes follow the guidance contained in [Personal protective equipment \(PPE\) – resource for care workers working in care homes during sustained COVID-19 transmission in England \(dated 20 July\)](#) to reduce the risk to residents from the spread of COVID-19 and avoid unnecessary staff isolation.

The guidance on the use of PPE for homecare (domiciliary) workers in England has also been updated, and providers should take the time to familiarise themselves with these changes. The document previously named “How to Work Safely in Domiciliary Care in England” has been amended and is now called [“Personal protective equipment \(PPE\) for care workers delivering homecare \(domiciliary care\) during sustained COVID-19 transmission in England”](#).

Please ensure that you and your team take the time to familiarise yourselves with these changes and undertake any actions required from the change in guidance.

Recommendation from South East IPC and Skills for Care on Testing

We do not recommend repeat testing of individuals who have previously tested positive as part of the regular testing announced by the government dated 03.07.20. Testing is most accurate within 3 days of onset of symptoms. If the individual has tested positive and completed 14 days of isolation (fever free for 48 hours with no anti-pyretics) the individual no longer needs to be isolated.

They are only infectious to others in the first 7 days. The individual does not need to be retested for a negative result as the PCR may detect parts of the virus which is not an indication that it is still viable or infectious. Prolonged viral cough and loss of smell and taste could remain for around 2 weeks. Staff do not need a negative test before they return to work.

Any further testing should be guided by clinical advice on priority and available

testing capacity as indicated in the [Department of Health and Social Care guidance](#).

The South East IPC have also produced a webinar that covers risk assessment which can be accessed [here](#). The webinar includes the manager of a care home explaining the steps she took to prepare and risk assess her service against COVID-19, an overview of care home procedures from the head of infection control from NHSI and some questions and answers.

If you would like to join the South East Infection Protection and Control 'Community of Practice' for IPC leads [please contact Pia Rathje-Burton](#). We have a WhatsApp group for IPC leads to ask questions and gain peer support; there is also a weekly webinar covering topics links to IPC.

KCC Provider Survey – Older Persons Residential and Nursing Care Homes

A reminder to all Older Persons Residential and Nursing Care Homes that the [Provider Survey](#) is open until 31 July 2020. This is for all Older Persons homes in Kent, irrespective of being on the KCC contract or not.

This survey is designed to inform Kent County Council of what a care home is able to deliver, both as a building and the staff team in terms of their skills and expertise. Responses will inform the County Placement Team (CPT) of the market, including any specialisms, enabling them to make referrals as appropriately as possible, so please do complete it. This is the third survey to be issued, the next will be in January 2021.

Resources and Tools

NHSX has produced some new guidance around access to staff COVID-19 test results. This guidance is most relevant to Information Governance Managers, DPOs, SIROs and Clinical Managers. You can read it [here](#). Separate guidance is available for staff working in Care Homes can be found [here](#).

KCC's Design and Learning Centre will be delivering a webinar called What are Digital Care Homes? on Thursday 30 July. This will provide an overview of the digital tools care homes can use to access remote support for their residents. Full details are available in the flyer attached to this email.

A number of posters have been produced to promote the usage of the Capacity Tracker. These are designed help you to embed use of the tracker into your daily processes and clarify the type of information that should be included in the tracker. The posters are attached to the provider newsletter email; please put them up around your service as needed.

Alzheimer's and Dementia Support Services have announced a new weekly Singing Back the Memories group, who will meet every Thursday at 2.30pm. For more

information, please see the attached document.

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](#).