



# Provider Bulletin

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Any comments you have about these Bulletins (good or bad!) are welcome. Please contact: Q&MI, Room 234, Health & Adult Services, North Yorkshire County Council, County Hall Racecourse Lane Northallerton, DL7 8DD [socialservices.contractingunit@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:socialservices.contractingunit@northyorks.gov.uk)

## [Message from Richard Webb, Corporate Director, Health and Adult Services, North Yorkshire County Council](#)

Dear Colleagues

A big thank you to all partners across the independent and voluntary sectors – your contribution to responding to Covid-19 is phenomenal!

It was good that so many people turned out last night at 8pm to #clapforthecarers, with growing recognition that this is care providers, voluntary organisations and volunteers as well as the NHS and other essential services.

I just wanted to highlight a few developments:

### **New model of community health and social care**

We have established a joint command system with the main NHS bodies across North Yorkshire and York and the County and City Councils. As part of this, we are moving to mobilise changes in hospital and GP services and community health and social care. We will be sharing the proposed new service model for community health and social care teams – linked to hospitals and GPs – over the next 7 days. Providers will be integral to this work in each local area and we will be arranging briefing sessions for the independent and voluntary sectors at the end of next week or week beginning 6 April.

### **Care capacity in the community**

Many of you who run care homes and home care services will be contacted by County Council brokers in the next few days to purchase additional capacity and services over the coming months. We will work closely with you to do this, so that the NHS will have sufficient hospital beds available for people who are the most critically ill. Thank you to all the very generous offers from care providers to the NHS – can you please direct these offers to the County Council, as we are leading on care capacity for the NHS as well as ourselves?

### **Recruitment**

We have started a new recruitment campaign through the [www.makecarematter.co.uk](http://www.makecarematter.co.uk) and North Yorkshire websites and will be looking to expand this next week. Details to follow in the next bulletin, but we will be looking at the support which our recruitment hub can offer on sourcing and deploying people across the sector.

### **Wider community response**

We are working with Government and the NHS to support 1.4m households (approximately 30000 in North Yorkshire) are particularly isolated and vulnerable. National details are emerging all of the time but include issues around food, medication and essential support. Providers should continue to work with these households if known to you. Our advice to the whole community, backed up by a network of 23 community hubs, led by voluntary sector organisations can be seen by using the following link to the Council's website:

<https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19-community-support>

We have also attached a document that shows how you can find local support in your community.

## **Your concerns are our concerns**

My major concerns are about access to protective clothing, face masks and hygiene products and sanitisers. National supplies have been slow to be distributed and we are using every avenue available to source supplies across all of us who work in care. Please contact us if you are experiencing problems, before stocks run low! We are also seeking urgent clarification and revision of national guidance for care homes and home care services as to safe practice for staff and the people we serve.

## **Preparing for the long-haul**

The NHS is preparing for a surge in its activity. Please make sure you are prepared NOW, rather than waiting, as we do not know for sure when the surge of cases will happen – it could come very quickly or it could take more time. Assume that you need to prepare for sooner rather than later. Likewise, the Prime Minister stated that the current lockdown would be for 3 weeks but my view is that we should all plan until the end of June at the earliest. It will depend on how the virus spreads and when the surge of cases happens.

Thank you for all of your great work and in the meantime, keep safe and stay well.

Best wishes, *Richard*

## **Wider Community Response**

As part of Richard Webb's message he covered the wider community response to COVID-19 and we know that people will want to help their communities and we're encouraging everyone to look out for anyone in their immediate area who might need help whilst also keeping themselves safe.

If you would like to offer your time to a local charity, voluntary organisation or community group with COVID-19 support but are unsure who to talk to, please contact the Council's Customer Service Centre on 01609 780780.

Further information can be found using the following link:

<https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19-community-support>

## **Venue Based Day Activities – Non-Regulated Services**

We have now made individual contact with all Providers of Non-Regulated venue based activities (Day Activities) to discuss with you, your current contingencies and whether you are looking to make changes to service delivery to manage the current risk. Thank you to those Providers who have already started to offer services in different ways to ensure they can still meet people's individual needs.

We will continue to fund your existing contracts to enable you to retain your valuable staff resource and to redeploy your teams to continue to meet the needs of individuals whilst adhering to the government guidance. We will do this initially until the end of April, at which point we will review the situation.

## **Business Continuity Plans**

Re-visit and test out your **business continuity plans**; All services will have business continuity plans covering issues such as loss of staff and premises, and dealing with disease outbreaks such as influenza. We would advise services to review and familiarise themselves with these plans in the context of the national coronavirus action plan, for example the potential scenario that up to one-fifth of employees may be absent from work during peak weeks.

There are a number of proposed actions for providers, which we would expect a robust business plan to contain including:

- Ensure people in receipt of Council-commissioned home care is up-to-date and establish levels of informal support available to individuals from family;
- Map all care and support plans commissioned by the Council with a single framework: high; medium; low

Map as above those packages that are privately funded.

## **Completion of a Risk Notification Return Document for COVID-19**

We would like to thank those providers who are keeping the Council up to date by submitting a Risk Notification Return, if you have a member of staff or a supporting an individual who is self-isolating or is a confirmed case of COVID-19. We would request that all Providers take the time to complete the form and submit to [socialservices.contractingunit@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:socialservices.contractingunit@northyorks.gov.uk) This will assist the Council in responding to COVID-19.

The Risk Notification Return must contain the first part of the post code for the person or staff member, the date they started to self-isolate or were confirmed as a case of COVID-19.

## **[Responding to COVID-19: The Ethical Framework For Adult Social Care](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-ethical-framework-for-adult-social-care/responding-to-covid-19-the-ethical-framework-for-adult-social-care)**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-ethical-framework-for-adult-social-care/responding-to-covid-19-the-ethical-framework-for-adult-social-care>

## **[COVID-19 Hospital Discharge Service Requirements - Webinar](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-hospital-discharge-service-requirements)**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-hospital-discharge-service-requirements>

This document (link above) was issued on 19<sup>th</sup> March which sets out specific requirements around the discharge requirements for health and social care. The Council is currently reviewing the guidance and formulating a response to the requirements.

We will share the Council's response to the document as soon as possible and to aid Providers this will be via a webinar, which we will be hosting on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April. The Webinar will have representation from the Council's Care & Support staff and we are also hopeful that we will have representation from CQC. There will be an allotted time for questions. The webinar is going to be recorded and made available. Any relevant links will be made available to **all** Providers who may not be able to log on live.

in the interim we are asking Care Providers to undertake the following actions as a matter of urgency:

- Adopt and use the NHS's Capacity Tracker, which the Council uses when commissioning care home placements.
- Implement NHS Mail, which the NHS has identified is safe and secure for sharing patient identifiable information. To support this, NHS England and Improvement are now able to fast track the roll out of NHSmail to the care sector, without the need to complete the Data Security and Protection Toolkit at this time. There is also opportunity for all NHSmail account holders to have access to Microsoft Teams, which offers a video conferencing facility to enable video consultations during periods of social distancing.

<https://digital.nhs.uk/services/nhsmail>

## **[County Council Webinars](#)**

The Second Webinar is due to be held on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April. Further details on the time will be sent on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March. This Webinar will be concentrating on the Council's response to the Hospital Discharge Service Requirements Document (see the specific section on this document in this bulletin). The Webinar will have representation from the Council's Care & Support staff and we are also hopeful that we will have representation from CQC, but this is yet to be confirmed. There will be an allotted time for questions and the webinar is going to be recorded and made available to those who may not be able to join live

If Providers have specific topics for future discussion, then please contact the Quality & Market Improvement Team.

## **[Where to Obtain Advice](#)**

As the situation develops and new guidance is issued we will share this with the care market. Please see the links below to trusted sources of information:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-residential-care-supported-living-and-home-care-guidance>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-people-with-confirmed-or-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2020/03/urgent-next-steps-on-nhs-response-to-covid-19-letter-simon-stevens.pdf>

Find below other useful links:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance>

<https://www.careprovideralliance.org.uk/business-continuity-infection-control-flu.html>

<https://www.scie.org.uk/care-providers/coronavirus-covid-19>

<https://www.local.gov.uk/coronavirus-information-councils/social-care-provider-resilience-during-covid-19-guidance-commissioners>

<https://www.scie.org.uk/publications/ataglance/helping-to-prevent-infection.asp>

<https://services.parliament.uk/bills/2019-21/coronavirus.html>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-bill-what-it-will-do/what-the-coronavirus-bill-will-do>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-advice/>

## Recovery College Online

There is also some useful guidance available from Recovery College On-line, they offer a range of online educational courses and resources to people with experience of mental illness, from people in receipt of services to their family, friends and staff. They have created an on-line course for people who may be struggling to cope with the Pandemic. They also have some easy read version of important documents in relation to COVID-19. Link is below:

[https://www.recoverycollegeonline.co.uk/your-mental-health/coronavirus/Top of the Document](https://www.recoverycollegeonline.co.uk/your-mental-health/coronavirus/Top%20of%20the%20Document)

Previous NYCC Provider Bulletins set out this and other advice:

<http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/providerbulletin>

## Who Can You Contact for Help?

The Quality and Market Improvement Team at County Hall is your first point of contact for all help, advice and support in relation to COVID-19. They will bring in additional help from Public Health and Communications experts, as well as the County Council's social care and provider services.

You can contact us via e-mail at [socialservices.contractingunit@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:socialservices.contractingunit@northyorks.gov.uk) or telephone on 01609 797042 (Monday to Thursday 08:30 - 17:00, Friday 08:30 - 16:30)

For out of office enquiries contact the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on 01609 780780

## How The County Council Is Organising Its Response

Our priority is the safety and well-being of the population and to ensure continuity of essential public services, whether we provide them directly or whether partner organisations provide them on our behalf.

Across the Council, we are working to support schools, voluntary sector organisations and to maintain essential road and transport services, as well as our public health and social care responsibilities.

We are working as part of the statutory North Yorkshire and York Local Resilience Forum to take this work forward, alongside the Police, NHS, Fire Service and other government agencies.

Within adult social care, we are organising our response through 5 key aspects and have people seconded full-time to support this work these work streams are:

- Communication
- Move between business as usual to business contingency
- Business Impact
- Supply Chain
- Policy & Protocols Briefing Changes

## Fire Safety Guidance

Please find attached fires safety guidance from the North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service, in light of the ongoing COVID-19 situation.

## CQC

CQC have a dedicated [section](#) on their website, detailing changes to the way they are working during this outbreak.

## Contact Details

We are asking all Care Providers to ensure that the Quality & Market Improvement Team have up to date contact details including phone number and email addresses, we are also asking care providers to provide the Quality & Market Improvement Team with an out of hours contact number that the Council can use in emergencies only. Please contact us with this information at your earliest convenience and for any Provider that does not contact us we will look to make individual contact with you next week.

## Personal Protective Equipment

We have issued a specific Provider Bulletin in relation to the ongoing concerns regarding the current stocks of Personal Protective Equipment. However, to reiterate the Quality & Market Improvement Team were previously able to offer a small supply of Face Masks whilst organisations were waiting for their delivery of free fluid repellent facemasks. Unfortunately, we are no longer able to offer a supply of face masks as this supply has ended.

As a result, we are only able to direct providers to the national supply disruption response unit and we are making a request that providers do not attend the Council's in-house services requesting face masks as our services no longer have any additional supplies available.

We would request that providers continue to order their own PPE as necessary and seek advice from us where you need it.

From Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April the Quality & Market Improvement Team will be contacting care providers to discuss their current stock levels of PPE.

## Mutual Aid Programme

North Yorkshire County Council are finalising their Mutual Aid programme for providers, as part of the effort to maximise resources during the COVID-19 crisis. For the purpose of this arrangement, "mutual aid" is an agreement between a contracted Organisation and North Yorkshire County Council to exchange resources and services to deliver an interim emergency response to another Service Provider. This agreement would only be in place during the period of the COVID-19 crisis and is not intended to be a long term arrangement. The aid is required by the Service Provider in order to continue operations for the Council, and the Organisation has the resources to provide such aid. We hope to have this in place early next week and further details will be shared then.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Self-Isolation in Care Homes and in Community Settings**

National guidance is available on who needs to self-isolate. If in doubt you can use the NHS 111 online service for advice (<https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19>). If a case is identified in a care home or any other setting, Public Health England will be in direct contact to give appropriate advice on how to manage the risk of spread, including around people for whom traditional isolation procedures may be difficult.

### **Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards**

Further discussions are on-going in relation to the impact of self-isolation on people in receipt of care, however, in the first instance we would advise that you seek legal advice when considering the legal implications for quarantining individuals.

If a person still meets DoLS criteria:

1. They are unable to consent to their residence to receive care and treatment;
2. They are under continuous supervision and control;
3. And not free to leave.

A DoL'S authorisation would still need to be applied for as usual.

Following ongoing advice from the Government around the containment of individuals suspected to have the COVID-19 Virus, we would advise, in the first instance that you seek legal advice from your organisation when considering the legal implications for isolating individuals upon receiving medical advice.

For those that need to be isolated urgently due to suspected COVID-19 there are provisions laid out in The Health Protection (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020 and Article 5 (e) of the Human Rights Act 1998 to respond to these situations, again I would advise that you seek legal advice on how these provisions may affect your organisation.

Any authorised decision to isolate a person (as detailed in the Coronavirus legislation) must continue to take into account, what would be in the person's best interests and what is the least restrictive option.

### **Fulfilling Contractual Responsibilities**

Any Provider that is unable to meet its contractual responsibilities as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak should review their business continuity plans as a matter of course and in the first instance contact the Quality & Market Improvement Team to discuss this.

### **Difference between Coronavirus Strains & COVID-19**

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that are common in people and animals. Some types of coronavirus cause less severe disease, such as the common cold. However, others can cause more severe disease such as Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) coronaviruses. COVID-19 is a disease caused by a new type of coronavirus that first appeared in Wuhan, China in December 2019.

### **Do I need to wait for available staff to have enhanced DBS checks before they can start work?**

A new member of staff may start work under supervision with a clear DBS Adults First Check while waiting for their full DBS check results. The Council's Pre Purchase Agreement states that an appropriately qualified and experienced member of Staff is appointed to supervise the new member of Staff; and the new member of Staff is accompanied at all times by another member of Staff, preferably the appointed supervisor, whilst providing services under this Pre-Purchase Agreement"

### **If I was considering suspending services what measures could be put in place to prevent social isolation?**

Many local voluntary organisations, charities and community groups provide valuable services and activities for people across the county. We would encourage you to consider whether there are other things that your organisation or its volunteers can do to help reduce the risk of loneliness and social isolation of your members and others in your community such as:

- Ask volunteers to regularly ring people to check they are ok and to have a chat;
- Encourage your members to contact each other by asking for permission to share contact details;
- If people need help with things such as shopping or caring for pets during periods of self-isolation encourage them to ask family, friends and neighbours first, if they still need help this may be something your volunteers can help with;

- Community First Yorkshire are posting regular updates on their website to support voluntary sector groups - <https://communityfirstyorkshire.org.uk/coronavirus-advice-and-updates/>;
- The National Council for Voluntary Organisations are also keeping their website regularly updated with ideas and advice - <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/>.

If you know of anybody in your community who you think needs support and where they don't have anyone locally who can help, please encourage them to contact North Yorkshire County Council's Customer Centre on 01609 780780.

### **What financial support is available from NYCC to support providers?**

As part of our commitment to our local suppliers, we are taking dynamic action to help our small and medium-sized businesses. In recognition of the value we place on our local suppliers and the difficult times they are facing, we will be fast-tracking payments for invoices – which means they will receive payment from us more quickly. We hope that this will be of some assistance during this difficult time.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/covid-19-support-for-businesses>

### **Finally:**

Remember - prevention is always better than cure. As with the flu virus, the most effective way to protect yourself from Covid-19, Coronavirus is to adopt good respiratory and hand hygiene to prevent the risk of infection and a 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach to coughs and sneezes.

The best way to protect yourself and others is:

- wash your hands with soap and water, or use a sanitiser gel, regularly throughout the day;
- catch your cough or sneeze in a tissue, throw away the used tissue, bin it, and wash your hands;
- if you don't have a tissue, use your sleeve;
- avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands; and
- avoid close contact with people who are unwell.