



Provider Bulletin

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December 2020 (2)

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Any comments you have about these Bulletins (good or bad!) are welcome. Please contact the Q&MI Team:
socialservices.contractingunit@northyorks.gov.uk

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

Dear Colleagues

Thank you, again, for all you are doing to keep people safe and well as we all work together to try and prevent, contain and manage Covid-19

What a year! And what a response from across the whole of the care sector, public, private and voluntary! This time last year, there were concerns about what was happening in Wuhan Province, China and here are, a year later, having battled against two waves of a deadly pandemic and facing an imminent third wave.

Overall infection rates are fluctuating across North Yorkshire as a whole, and have been since the end of the national lockdown, although all areas are below the England average. However, the number of people in hospital and the number of care home outbreaks is still high and will take some time to reduce. Moreover, infection rates are still five to ten times higher than they were at the start of September. A lot of us are very focused on the situation in Scarborough district at present (260/100k rates as I write) but the virus could flare up anywhere and at any time and we still need to be very mindful that the virus is still out there, community transmission can happen very quickly and we need to continue to be vigilant and to follow all the rules to keep ourselves and those we love and those we support safe. As yet, we do not have any confirmed cases of the new variant but it is only a matter of time. We need to behave and respond as if the new variant is here already and, in the words of the Prime Minister and the Chief Medical Officer last weekend, we need to act as if each of us is infectious now.

We have delayed sending this bulletin out because we wanted to update on weekend's restrictions, as well as testing and vaccinations.

Many of us ourselves, or our colleagues, will live in Tier 3 areas. If that's the case, then stricter rules apply. However, if you have to travel to a workplace to undertake an essential job (for example as a care worker), you can do so, as long as you take all necessary precautions. However, you take your Tier 3 restrictions with you, so you cannot undertake other Tier 2 activities and can only undertake essential work.

Today, we are publishing our latest guidance to care settings: residents, families and providers <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/visiting-care-homes-during-coronavirus-covid-19>, which sets out our immediate advice for visiting, trips out and for Christmas. We are asking you all to be careful and cautious.

We also set out advice about lateral flow testing and vaccinations, for the weeks ahead. And we are grateful to those providers who are taking part in regular webinars and training events.

Home care, extra care and supported living testing is being expanded nationally and we will continue to work with you to help address any problems and to provide any support that you may need.

Designated beds

Thank you, too, for those providers who have come forward to provide NHS Designated Discharge Beds and to express an interest in what we are calling "Amber" Beds for people who do not have a Covid diagnosis but who may have been in contact with someone who has. If you are interested or have a query, please contact the generic email address below.

PPE

Please ensure that you have sufficient PPE available to prepare for the new variant of Covid (faster spread and more cases), a third wave of the pandemic and contingency planning around the potential absence of a UK/EU trade deal.

Funding and insurance

I just wanted to mention local and national funding. We are continuing to make some local payments (for example, for planned day services activity), although have had to cease the 2.5% compensatory payments scheme as the national rules around procurement and State Aid have changed. We do continue to have an expanded hardship scheme in place and we continue to review what else we can do to support. We are sending out the national Infection Prevention Control 2 funding and are hearing rumours, as yet unconfirmed, of further potential funding. ICG and ourselves are continuing to use every opportunity to raise points about care provider insurance and are trying to get a more concerted picture of where premia have increased and where providers have had insurance refused.

Workforce

Like you, we await the new workforce regulations.

The UK's new relationship with the EU

Subject to confirmation of any potential trade deal between the UK and the EU, we would ask you to step up your business continuity planning in relation to supplies and other issues.

Weekly webinar

In the meantime, just a reminder that we have a weekly NY Care Connected open session every Wednesday 5-6pm. Please join in and I look forward to talking with you. You can join the sessions here:

Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/210744229>

New to GoToMeeting? Get the app now and be ready when your first meeting starts:

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/install/210744229>

These sessions will be held on 23 and 30 December and then every Wednesday at 5pm thereafter.

Contacting the County Council

Just a reminder that we can be contacted by all providers via our dedicated email account

socialservices.contractingunit@northyorks.gov.uk

As ever, I would like to thank you for all your continued hard work and to pay tribute to your teams and our frontline colleagues. And to hope that you get some rest at some point over Christmas and the New Year and to wish you all the very best from North Yorkshire County Council.

Best wishes,

Richard

Capacity Assessments and Best Interests Checklist for Care Providers

A Vaccinations for Covid-19: Mental Capacity Act/Best Interest checklist for care providers has been produced. A copy is attached to this bulletin together with the MCA/DOLs guidance which includes the NYCC Decision-making flow chart for decision makers in hospitals and care homes. These tools should support providers in preparations for the roll out of Covid-19 vaccinations.

Use of Fogging Machines

In discussions with providers it has come to light that, in some cases, providers believe that the use of fogging machines means that cleaning regimes can be reduced and should not be undertaken for 28 days to maintain the protective layer which is generated through the process. This is not the case. Advice from the Infection Prevention Control Team remains that robust cleaning regimes should be followed even when fogging machines have been used. Please contact the Infection Prevention Control Team to discuss this further if you have any further concerns.

Brexit

The UK has left the EU, and as you know the transition period after Brexit ends on 31st December 2020. The Council expects providers to ensure their Business Continuity Plans are updated and reflect any potential situations, which may affect service delivery. Providers should, for example, ensure that they understand and

monitor their supply chain. Providers should ensure that they have RAG rated all of the people they support to ensure that they have identified those who are most vulnerable and have updated 'Must Do' care plans. Information is available from www.gov.uk/euexit and use the Brexit checker to get a personalised list of actions.

Visiting queries

We are aware of some situations providers are facing in relation to visiting, where visitors are not aware of current guidance. The information on visiting and vaccinations detailed in the letter linked to this bulletin can be shared with visitors. If a visitor refuses to have a test the provider may refuse access to the home. However, the risks should be explained to the visitor and consideration of the presenting circumstances for people at the end of their lives. Where a visitor has had one Covid-19 vaccination the vaccine will not be effective and will offer them limited protection. It will not prevent them from passing on the virus to others.

Also,

LFD testing for people who have previously tested positive

If a visitor tests positive they do not need to wait for the 90 days required under the PCR staff / resident care home testing protocols. They will be required to self-isolate for 10 days, but if they then wish to visit the care home they should have another LFT test and if negative (likely to be negative) and recommence the visiting along with usual IPC guidance. A PCR swab can remain positive for 90 days as it detects fragments of viral RNA. However, LFD tests for acute infectiousness and is therefore different.

NHS numbers for Covid-19 vaccinations

It is preferable for staff to provide their NHS number so that the record of their vaccination can be linked to their health record. This can be found on prescriptions, GP Online, some Covid-19 testing results notifications and other medical appointment documents. It may be possible for the vaccination to be progressed without it in some localities however, this is not guaranteed. Please do not contact your GP for this information. If you have staff who are not registered with a GP they will not be able to be vaccinated. They must register to be able to access it.

PPE

Providers are reminded to ensure they have sufficient supplies of PPE for the festive period. Orders should be requested via the usual arrangements, however, there may be some delays in deliveries being received due to the Christmas Break. If you have any concerns regarding your PPE stocks please contact socialservices.contractingunit@northyorks.gov.uk

Change in national guidance for Covid Contacts

The definition of a Covid contact has been amended slightly. It now reads that a contact is someone who has "been within 2 metres of someone for more than 15 minutes (either as a one-off contact, or added up together over one day)". This will have an impact on providers for example where staff take breaks and may relax their use of PPE. Providers will need to consider how this change will impact on arrangements in the home. Providers The link to the guidance is:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-contacts-of-people-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-who-do-not-live-with-the-person/guidance-for-contacts-of-people-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-who-do-not-live-with-the-person>

Link to Swabbing training

Providers felt it would be useful to revisit the training for swabbing to ensure accurate results can be achieved. The link to the training video is: <https://youtu.be/DzupABtuk3E>

Daily contacts for care settings liaison over the Christmas and New Year period

Care settings liaison staff will be working throughout the Christmas and New Year period, with the exception of 25 & 26 December 2020 and 1 January 2021. They will continue to make contact with providers with current Covid-19 cases and outbreaks. They will also remain in contact with providers in localities with higher levels of community transmission. However, the weekly calls to providers will cease on 24 December 2020 and recommence from 4 January 2021.

Surveys will be issued throughout the Christmas and New Year period to all providers, including to providers of daytime activities who have re-opened. This is an automated process, therefore if you are a care home or domiciliary care provider and are already known to have current cases or an outbreak you do not need to complete the survey as you will still receive a call from care settings liaison staff. If you provide daytime activities and have reopened and are not operating on the day you receive a survey you do not need to complete it for this period. We have kept this process as straightforward as possible while acknowledging the need to ensure we can capture accurate information as the number of cases continue to rise. If you have any queries in relation to this you can contact socialservices.contractingunit@northyorks.gov.uk

Adult Social Care Infection Control Fund – Safe Visiting Fund

There is an error in the letter regarding the above funding. For clarity, the closing date for submission of applications is **31 January 2021** and not as stated in the letter to providers.

Information about Covid-19 and keeping safe in accessible formats

Accessible information about Covid in community languages and easy read can be found on the NYCC Outbreak

Management pages and more is being added, so do check back. New ones in community languages about Christmas bubbles are attached. We have collated some great accessible resources on North Yorkshire Partnerships as well.

For the most recent easy read Photosymbols posters, including ones on Christmas and Covid vaccines, please go to the Keep Safe website.

<https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/communications-packs>

<https://www.nypartnerships.org.uk/covidinfo>

<https://www.keepsafe.org.uk/posters>

North Yorkshire Steps up support this Christmas – this information may be shared with people you support, relatives and staff

Residents across North Yorkshire are being reassured that help is available over the festive period for those who need it.

North Yorkshire County Council is leading a relief effort for vulnerable residents who don't have anybody to call on.

The Customer Service Centre will act as an emergency community support line every day from 9am to 5pm on 01609 780780. The Stronger Communities team and Team North Yorkshire volunteers will be on stand-by for anyone who needs help and doesn't have friends or family to contact.

It is closed to all routine queries between Christmas Day and 28 December, then again on New Years Day.

Otherwise, normal opening times of 8am to 5:30pm Monday to Friday apply. Many services will remain available online by visiting www.northyorks.gov.uk/do-it-online

Community support organisations are continuing to help people who have been left isolated by the pandemic to plan ahead. Volunteers have been helping to make sure residents who have relied on support with shopping, collecting medication and other essentials have everything they need over the festive period.

"We have staff and extra volunteers ready to meet any additional demand but we would also encourage people to think ahead about what they might need, particularly food and essential medications," said Gary Fielding, the County Council's Director of Strategic Resources.

The County Council has been working with 23 community support organisations alongside partners and the voluntary sector for the last ten months.

Residents are also being urged to check on their friends, family and neighbours, particularly if they helped someone during the first or second lockdown.

Gary Fielding added: "I would like to thank our residents who are continuing to look out for those left isolated and the countless volunteers supporting vulnerable people at this difficult time. We've seen so much kindness and community spirit, and I know that is continuing.

"While the community support organisations take a well-deserved break over Christmas, our staff are going the extra mile and I want people to feel reassured that we are here to help."

Household waste recycling centres are closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Years Day. Otherwise, normal opening times of 8am to 4pm every day except Wednesdays apply.

All registration offices are closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day, 27 December, 28 December and New Years Day. During the closure appointments can be booked online by visiting www.northyorks.gov.uk/births-deaths-marriages

Libraries are closed between Christmas and New Year with the exception of Thirsk, Hawes and Nidderdale Plus. While your local library is closed, you can still browse, reserve and renew items and download e-books, e-magazines, e-comics and digital audiobooks online. For more information please visit

www.northyorks.gov.uk/libraries

For full details of services over the festive period, including the opening times for each library, please visit

www.northyorks.gov.uk/christmas-and-new-year-opening-times