

Trips out with your relative or friend who is living in a care setting

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Care settings such as care homes and nursing homes are starting to support residents to see their families and friends in person again following the publication of the government's national guidance. This also includes the opportunity for residents to go out of the care setting into the community, for example on trips out with family and friends, or to routine appointments. However, all of our residents remain at a higher risk from COVID-19 (Coronavirus) because of their age and / or other medical conditions.

This means that during this transition period, as lockdown eases, visits out of the care setting will need to be managed to make sure that:

- The risk of infection is minimised
- The safety of our residents, their visitors, and our staff is prioritised
- That residents who are shielding are given additional protection.

Every person's experience is unique, but we hope this document might help to address some of your concerns. If you want more advice, please contact the Home Manager who will be very happy to speak to you.

Planning a visit out of the care setting

The top priority has to be the prevention of infection. This means that the care setting will work with you and the resident to understand and manage the risk of the proposed visit out. They will do this by carrying out a risk assessment, which will include these questions:

- What are the levels of Covid-19 infection in the local community, and in the area of the planned visit out?
- Where is the proposed visit taking place, and how easy will it be to follow social distancing and hygiene rules?
- How well is the resident able to understand and follow social distancing and hygiene rules?
- How essential is the visit out?

What do I need to do to arrange a visit out with my family member / friend?

You should contact the Home Manager to discuss the plans, so that they can work through the risk assessment with you and your family member/friend.

Visits out should be pre-planned wherever possible and 5 working days' notice should be given to enable the care setting to make the necessary arrangements

It is important to know that if the plans include an overnight stay, the resident will be required to self-isolate for 14 days on return to the care setting.

If the risk assessment shows that the risk of a trip out is too high, the trip should not take place. The Home Manager will explain this to you and the resident. If this does happen, we understand that it will be disappointing but it will be to protect the resident and the care community.

What should I do to prepare for the visit out?

To help reduce risk, think carefully about the visit and how it can be made as safe as possible for your family member/friend, and for you.

- Think about the place you are planning to go to – how well will you and your friend or relative be able to maintain social distancing and hygiene?
- If there are any children on the visit, will they be able to understand about social distancing?
- Remember that you will need to take personal responsibility to ensure your own social distancing, wearing of face coverings and hand hygiene.

What should I be thinking about during the trip out?

Whilst out on a visit the resident, with support if required, will need to consider Covid-19 hygiene and rules. The care setting staff will talk to you to about this, but here are the main things to consider:

- Making sure the resident has the medication/aids they need and that they can be transported safely
- Following social distancing and hygiene guidance, including using face coverings
- Carrying hand sanitiser if washing facilities are not available, and spare face coverings
- Thinking about travel – it's preferable to travel by private transport where possible, and face coverings should be worn on public transport or if travelling in a car with someone who is not from your bubble
- Hygienic storage of soiled face coverings (eg sealable plastic bag)
- Making contingency plans if the trip is delayed, for example taking enough medication

Coming back to the care setting

When the resident comes home to the care setting, the staff will support the resident to follow hygiene precautions, such as hand washing, changing clothing and cleaning any mobility equipment.

Suspending visits out

If there is an outbreak of COVID-19, and/or evidence of community hotspots or outbreaks, visits to the care home or going out from the care home will have to be restricted. The care provider will let the nominated family and friends know about this, and return where necessary to virtual and telephone communication with family, friends and advocates.

Non-essential trips out of the care setting should be able to re-start at the end of the outbreak when the home is Covid-free (28 days following the onset of the last case).

Further support and advice

You may have further questions or concerns about going on visits away from the care setting; in the first instance you should talk with the care setting directly who will be able to offer support and advice.

You may also find our joint guidance on **visits to care homes** useful:

<https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/adult-social-care-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

For more information about City of York Council and North Yorkshire County Council's response to the Covid pandemic, please visit our websites:

<https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/coronavirus-advice-and-information>

<https://www.york.gov.uk/coronavirus>