



# Provider Bulletin

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Any comments you have about these Bulletins (good or bad!) are welcome. Please contact:  
Q&MI Team:

[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

It is a few weeks since I have written directly to you in the Provider Bulletin, although I have written to all, or most of you, about your share of the first wave of the Infection Control Fund, distributed by the Government. Thank you to all of those colleagues who have signed up for this money and it either should be with you already or is on its way. If you have not signed up yet, then please do so as soon as possible!

Since my last message, we have, fortunately, seen a reduction in the number of cases and deaths from Covid-19. However, we are not yet back to normal. Indeed, far from it! The R rate continues to hover just below the magic figure of 1 and, although lockdown is easing, the improvements remain fragile. So, my message to everyone is definitely: **stay alert!**

In the light of recent changes to the lockdown and social distancing, the County Council will be reviewing its advice and guidance around care home visits and extra care lettings. The attached documents set out our latest position

We are also working with NHS colleagues to review safe discharge pathways and I hope that we will have something to update you about on that in the near future, including in response to the new guidance published last week

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-admission-and-care-of-people-in-care-homes>

In the meantime, I am grateful for all that you have done to support safe discharge from hospital.

The Government has now introduced a national Test and Trace programme and the details are beginning to emerge. Our local response is set out in a plan which we are publishing on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> June. Once published we will share the link to the document via our usual communication links. As you will see, the care sector, especially care homes, are pivotal to this plan and we will be continuing with our regular calls, at least for the time being.

We have seen significant improvements in testing availability for care homes recently including securing local facilities for dropping off and collecting tests to care settings across the County. We are monitoring turnaround times for test results and this can be very variable so we are constantly escalating this issue nationally. We also hosted a webinar for providers regarding testing recently and please see slides from this session attached.

Just a reminder that as well as our daily calls, we are also open for contact to all providers 7 days a week via a dedicated email account [socialservices.contractingunit@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:socialservices.contractingunit@northyorks.gov.uk)

On final news item. The Government has asked for nominations for the delayed Birthday Honours, with a focus on people's contributions to tackling Covid-19. If you would like to make a nomination, then more information is available at <https://www.gov.uk/honours> Equally, if you can email Dawn in my office ([dawn.day@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:dawn.day@northyorks.gov.uk)) by **30 June** with the person's name, role and organisation, we can also forward your nominations.

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.

Best wishes,

Richard

### Interpreting COVID-19 PPE guidance (North Yorkshire & York)

There have been no changes to the PPE Guidance since the last Provider Bulletin was issued, however, we are continuing to share the documents and relevant links to Providers to ensure you are aware of the requirements around PPE. The **documents are attached to this bulletin.**

We are also attaching the updated how to work safely in care homes and how to work safely in domiciliary care documents, for your information. These were updated on 15<sup>th</sup> June, so please review to ensure as an organisation you are fully briefed.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-how-to-work-safely-in-care-homes>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-how-to-work-safely-in-domiciliary-care>

### Online Learning on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

This course is suitable for people working in Health, Social Care and Education settings.

People who manage community settings that remain open during the epidemic would also benefit from it.

Please follow the link below to access the online learning:

<https://breeze.northyorks.gov.uk/pe1ash2qrdfe/>

#### **Important note:**

**There is a limit to the number of users able to view online learning simultaneously via the Learning Zone. As this package is likely to be viewed by a large number of people, you may see a message to say the "server is busy" or similar. If this is the case, please try again later. We'd recommend waiting at least an hour before trying again.**

In the meantime, if you have any queries about the information in this online learning package please discuss with your line manager or email [NYPublicHealth@NorthYorks.gov.uk](mailto:NYPublicHealth@NorthYorks.gov.uk) and write "**PPE questions**" in the Subject line.

**Please note that this email address is only for queries relating to this online learning.**

### Guidance around visitors to Care Settings in North Yorkshire – June 2020

Following on from recent announcements from the Government in relation to Covid-19 and the easing of the lockdown, the Council has produced a **guidance note** for its internal care settings, however, we wanted to share this with the whole care market to clarify the Council's position in relation to visitors to care settings, and is based on advice from the Director of Public Health.

### Personal Protective Equipment - LRF Process

The LRF Process continues to be available to Providers and **Please find attached the process.** If you have any queries, please email [covid19PPE@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:covid19PPE@northyorks.gov.uk)

Care Providers that would like to make a request for an emergency supply of PPE should complete the form contained within the process and send by 11:00 each day (currently Monday-Friday) to [covid19PPE@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:covid19PPE@northyorks.gov.uk).

The request will be considered by a multi-agency panel and a same day decision will be provided, with information on how to access stocks if the request is approved. The Quality & Market Improvement Team are available for care providers to discuss their current stock levels of PPE.

### Heatwave Planning

There is expected to be a hot spell of weather this week and from Wednesday temperatures will widely reach into the high twenties Celsius and it'll be hot across much of the UK. This hot weather is expected to last until at least Friday. The Met Office have issued a health – heat alert as a result of this hot spell of weather, so we felt it was a good time to request that Providers continue to review their Heatwave Management Policies or Business Continuity Plans to ensure they remain effective.

### Free Psychological First Aid in Emergencies Training

Public Health England have created a free psychological first aid in emergencies training for frontline staff and volunteers. Training will equip staff to provide support and recognise people at risk of distress. The course follows a globally recommended model for supporting people during emergencies, tailored to the specific challenges of coronavirus (COVID-19). This training takes place over 3 weeks and those who register are asked for a 1 hour per week learning commitment. To register and for information please follow the link below:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/news/psychological-first-aid-in-emergencies-training-for-frontline-staff-and-volunteers?utm\\_source=76c6f000-c89a-42c6-9252-42bb8b3f6094&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=daily](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/psychological-first-aid-in-emergencies-training-for-frontline-staff-and-volunteers?utm_source=76c6f000-c89a-42c6-9252-42bb8b3f6094&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily)

### Care Sector Webinars

The most recent Webinar was held on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June and we covered Covid-19 Testing and PPE in care environments. Thank you to those care providers who engaged and hopefully you found the topics of interest.

We have already distributed relevant documents and slides, however, **we have re-issued these with this bulletin for your attention.**

If you have any ideas on topics for future webinars, please contact us at:

[Socialservices.contractingunit@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:Socialservices.contractingunit@northyorks.gov.uk)

### **Testing information for Care Homes**

We have been given named contacts in each CCG in case care providers need support with swabbing:

Sam McCann on: [sam.mccann@nhs.net](mailto:sam.mccann@nhs.net) Mobile: 07813437242

Mark Lagowski: [mark.lagowski@nhs.net](mailto:mark.lagowski@nhs.net) Mobile: 07881 956285

Sarah Fiori: [sarah.fiori@nhs.net](mailto:sarah.fiori@nhs.net)

### **Storage of tests:**

Test kits should be stored in a safe place with an ambient temperature of between 5 and 22 degrees Celsius. This would apply to both used and unused kits.

There should be courier collections on any day that test kits are being used – couriers operate 7 days a week so that should not be an issue.

Kits that have been used must be taken to the lab within 48 hours for assessment, so there should not be any long-term storage of used kits.

The [new online portal](#) can still be accessed which makes it easy for care homes to arrange deliveries of coronavirus test kits. All symptomatic and asymptomatic care home staff and residents in England are now eligible for testing.

The first time a care home suspects an outbreak of coronavirus, care home managers should still contact their local health protection team to arrange testing.

Find attached a guidance document produced by the Department of Health & Social Care on how care homes can raise issues with the national testing programme, you can also continue to use the following email address:

[COVIDCareHomeTesting@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:COVIDCareHomeTesting@dhsc.gov.uk)

### **Support for people working in adult social care**

We continue to share support that is available for people who may be feeling worried or overwhelmed or you may have things on your mind that you want to talk through. There are a number of helplines and resources to offer support, detailed below.

#### **Samaritans helpline**

Samaritans have introduced a confidential emotional support line for social care staff that is free to access from 7am-11pm, seven days a week. You can speak to a trained Samaritans volunteer who can help with confidential listening and signposting to specific support you might find helpful. **Call 0300 131 7000**

#### **Bereavement and Trauma Line**

There is a team of fully qualified and trained professionals ready to help you at the Bereavement and Trauma Line. This assistance is available from anywhere in the country and is provided by Hospice UK. Specialist counsellors and support workers are available to support all adult social care staff:

- who have experienced a bereavement
- whose wellbeing has been affected by witnessing traumatic deaths as part of their work
- to discuss any other anxiety or emotional issues they are experiencing as a result of the coronavirus epidemic.

All calls will be treated in the strictest of confidence and this will be explained to you when you call. This service is open to all adult social care staff and is available, seven days a week, between 8am and 8pm. You do not need a referral. **Call 0300 303 4434**

### **Care Home Resilience Plan**

North Yorkshire County Council and its partners continue to provide practical support to care providers, including help with staffing and HR, help with safe hospital discharges, advice on infection control and a dedicated email address for advice and support: [SocialServices.Contractingunit@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:SocialServices.Contractingunit@northyorks.gov.uk)

These measures have been open to all care providers but have, inevitably, been focused on the care homes and extra care housing schemes which have outbreaks.

You should continue to receive daily contact from a Care Home Contact Worker or if you require a Care Home Liaison Officer, if you have any queries regarding why you are continuing to receive daily contact please do not hesitate to contact the Quality & Market Improvement Team via the email address listed above.

We have previously attached the checklist being used by the Care Home Contact Workers so Providers can see the types of questions being asked, this will ensure that communication can flow between partners easily and quickly.

Homes experiencing difficulties are then supported by a Care Home Liaison Officer who will channel

resources to meet requirements such as support on HR, staffing and recruitment, reducing agency usage if possible, help with sourcing PPE, infection control, zoning of care homes, cohorting of staff and residents, safe hospital discharge, clinical advice, registered manager support and more.

### **Testing for Self-isolating Social Care Staff**

Eligible key workers or their households who are displaying symptoms, can register for a test at <https://self-referral.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk>

These tests are available for eligible key workers who are self-isolating because they are within the first 5 days of displaying symptoms of COVID-19. Testing is most effective within 3 days of symptoms developing.

The tests are also available for key workers who are self-isolating because someone else in their household is displaying symptoms. The householder displaying the symptoms can also be tested at the site with the key worker.

Eligible key workers will need to bring their work I.D. with them to verify their role and will need to attend in their own household vehicle. Those arriving without identification will not be able to undergo a test.

The current list of eligible key workers can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested>

### **People testing positive after 14 days**

We continue to receive queries regarding how to manage people who continue to test positive after 14 days of symptoms, so we are re-issuing the following advice.

“There have been several reports of people testing positive for COVID-19 after 14 days of symptoms; sometimes for weeks or even longer. This is well documented in literature. Some studies have shown that viable virus is not detected more than 9 days after the onset of symptoms. This suggests that these individuals are not shedding live virus. Persistent shedding does not equate to infectivity. If an individual is over 14 days post symptom onset and they have been afebrile (without a fever) for 48 hours without medication, they may come out of self-isolation. Post-viral cough is known to persist for several weeks in some cases so on its own is not considered as a marker of ongoing infectivity either”.

### **Adult Social Care Infection Control Grant- update**

#### **Care Homes**

We continue to process payments to care homes and we have now paid the first instalment to 162 care homes. We still have a number of care homes who have not yet returned their agreement and we are unable to process your payment until we receive a signed agreement from you.

If you are yet to complete the survey, please find below the link to the snap survey to confirm how you plan on spending the funding. We have extended deadline until 25<sup>th</sup> June to ensure every provider has enough time to submit.

<https://consult.northyorks.gov.uk/snapwebhost/s.asp?k=159249072596>

#### **Domiciliary Care (including Supported Living)**

We have also started to make payments to the Domiciliary Care providers and we have now paid the first instalment to 59 providers. This piece of work continues and we need all providers to engage with the Council to ensure that payments can continue to be made.

If you are yet to complete the survey, please find below the link to the snap survey to confirm how you plan on spending the funding. We have extended deadline until 25<sup>th</sup> June to ensure every provider has enough time to submit.

<https://consult.northyorks.gov.uk/snapwebhost/s.asp?k=159249074424>

There are a number of specific conditions around how the money can be spent and these are contained within the agreement that organisations need to sign to obtain the first payment. Please make sure that you review the conditions to ensure you are spending the funds appropriately. These conditions have been set by the Department of Health and Social Care.

We have had a number of Providers querying whether they are able to use the funds for the purchase of PPE. To clarify, the purchase of PPE falls outside of the conditions attached to the funding and so the monies cannot be used to purchase PPE.

### **Track & Trace**

The Council is currently reviewing the potential impacts of Track and Trace and how this may affect providers. We are asking providers to update their Business Continuity Plans to reflect this and we'll be contacting care home providers initially in the coming days to ask for details of their minimum staffing levels. When looking at your Business Continuity Plans you should consider whether family groups work within the service, where staff live or access accommodation which would be deemed to be housing for multiple occupancy and whether staff teams socialise outside of work and the impact this could have on your planning.

## **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/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-and-control/covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-ppe>

<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.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-admission-and-care-of-people-in-care-homes?utm\\_source=ac47bed8-b52a-4c2f-b961-a48468e031b1&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=immediate](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-admission-and-care-of-people-in-care-homes?utm_source=ac47bed8-b52a-4c2f-b961-a48468e031b1&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-changes-to-the-care-act-2014/care-act-easements-guidance-for-local-authorities#what-the-powers-actually-change>

Find below other useful links:

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

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

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

<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/coronavirus-covid-19-health-and-wellbeing-of-the-adult-social-care-workforce?utm\\_source=d49d25b1-8b6d-4079-a9be-a21c447364a9&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=immediate](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-health-and-wellbeing-of-the-adult-social-care-workforce?utm_source=d49d25b1-8b6d-4079-a9be-a21c447364a9&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate)

<https://www.recoverycollegeonline.co.uk/your-mental-health/coronavirus/Top of the Document>

<https://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-providers/all-services/covid-19-interim-guidance-dbs-other-recruitment-checks>

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

<https://www.careprovideralliance.org.uk/coronavirus-supplies-including-ppe.html#food>

<https://www.digitalsocialcare.co.uk/digital-social-care-launch-phone-helpline/>

[www.cruse.org.uk](http://www.cruse.org.uk)

<https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Leadership-management/support-for-registered-managers/support-for-registered-managers.aspx>

<https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/About/News/COVID-19-Essential-training.aspx>

<https://www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk/content/uploads/2019/07/CH-09-Environmental-cleanliness-June-2019-Version-1.00.pdf>

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

### **Video links:**

Carers - [https://youtu.be/umPwH\\_hYhPQ](https://youtu.be/umPwH_hYhPQ)

Swabbing - <https://youtu.be/DzupABtuk3E>

PPE - [https://youtu.be/-GncQ\\_ed-9w](https://youtu.be/-GncQ_ed-9w)

Understanding Care Needs - <https://vimeo.com/423176181/8abd9b5422>

Use of Pulse Oximeters <https://vimeo.com/425543209>

Previous NYCC Provider Bulletins set out this and other advice:

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

### **Outpatient Appointments for People living in a Care Home**

There will be no request for care home residents to have a COVID-19 test prior to attendance at a hospital out-patient appointment, however they will be asked to wear a mask if they can.

If there is a requirement for the person to have a clinical procedure carried out as a day case there may be a requirement for them to have a test prior to attendance but this will be communicated by the hospital in advance.

If the resident has any symptoms of COVID-19, or other infection the care home should contact the hospital out-patient's booking line or consultant's secretary to seek advice and their appointment may be re-arranged.

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

We would like to thank those providers who are continuing to keep the Council up to date by submitting a Risk Notification Return, specifically 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 providers continue to complete the form and submit to [socialservices.contractingunit@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:socialservices.contractingunit@northyorks.gov.uk). The Risk Notification Process should still be followed for non-Covid related situations, in line with current guidance.

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. If the person is known to HAS their LLA number should be added to the form.

### CQC

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

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

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### Direct Payments – Dealing with Provider Invoices During The COVID Period

Over the last few weeks we have received enquiries about receiving payments from individuals who use a Direct Payment to contract support or an activity from care providers.

We recognise that many of you have adopted a flexible approach and have developed new ways of operating and continue to provide a valuable service that is greatly contributing to people's well-being and meeting support needs.

In line with the services that we would contract with you directly the council continued to pay its direct payments to enable direct payment users to continue to fund their existing contracts to enable you to retain your staff resource.

The council is working closely with its DP Recipients to make sure they understand how we expect them to deal with the invoices they receive from you.

We will do this initially until the end of April, at which point we will review the situation.

See below some questions and answers to help you understand when the council would expect direct payment recipients to pay their invoices from you.

#### **Q's & A's**

How should we deal with Direct Payment users who have declined our service because they are anxious about the coronavirus?

**Where direct payment recipients have declined your service and your organisation was able and willing to continue to provide the care and support they needed, the council expects the direct payment recipient to continue to pay invoices for the services they would normally receive from you.**

We took steps to cancel all services to the direct payment recipient. Should we continue to invoice for services we would normally deliver?

**Where you have cancelled your usual service and have not taken any steps to provide alternative support, the council will expect direct payment recipients not receive and pay invoices for the services you would normally deliver.**

The council recognises this may have a negative impact on your financial circumstances and advises that you seek assistance in this difficult time using the following link:

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

We decided to change the way we operate our service during the coronavirus period and we are now using alternative methods to keep in touch and continue to provide some on-going support to our direct payment recipients. How should we invoice for this support?

**The council will continue to pay its usual amount of direct payment to enable the recipient to pay for the service that you would normally deliver to them.**

#### **People testing positive after 14 days – re-issued 22<sup>nd</sup> June**

"There have been several reports of people testing positive for COVID-19 after 14 days of symptoms; sometimes for weeks or even longer. This is well documented in literature. Some studies have shown that viable virus is not detected more than 9 days after the onset of symptoms. This suggests that these individuals are not shedding live virus. Persistent shedding does not equate to infectivity. If an individual is over 14 days post symptom onset and they have been afebrile (without a fever) for 48 hours without medication, they may come out of self-isolation. Post-viral cough is known to persist for several weeks in

some cases so on its own is not considered as a marker of ongoing infectivity either”.

### **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.

### **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? – updated 29<sup>th</sup> May**

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”.

CQC have also issued some advice in relation to the recruitment of staff, link is below:

<https://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-providers/all-services/covid-19-interim-guidance-dbs-other-recruitment-checks>

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

As part of our commitment to our local suppliers, we are taking 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>

We have also introduced a Compensatory Payment arrangement for a range of providers, as detailed above.

### **What is the current guidance on anti-inflammatory medications? –**

Guidance has been released in relation to the concerns raised regarding ibuprofen, link is below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ibuprofen-use-and-covid19coronavirus>

### **What do I do if a supported living, homecare or care home care worker is concerned they may have covid-19?**

If care workers are concerned they have COVID-19 they should follow the NHS advice.

### **What is the North Yorkshire’s mutual aid plan?**

North Yorkshire County Council have established arrangements for giving advice, guidance and information to service providers and other organisations in communities who are looking to provide assistance in response to Covid-19. To further support this in the challenging months ahead, we are developing a North Yorkshire Mutual Aid programme. This programme will look to bring together resources across organisations, to ensure they are being used in the most effective way.

The two key areas we want to develop with providers are:

- The prioritisation of care: working together to coordinate risk assessments across providers to ensure security of support to the most vulnerable service users;
- The most efficient and effective use of overall staff resource: working with community, voluntary and statutory providers to ascertain which services have capacity to provide additional support and share available workforce, including re-deploying staff who work at services that close.

North Yorkshire County Council is in direct contact with providers and we are starting to gather information together of what could be required. We will be in touch about how you can be involved and about any changes to arrangements that will be required to enable mutual aid agreements to be delivered effectively.

### **Will we continue to receive payment for day services/non-regulated activity? – updated 22<sup>nd</sup> June**

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 have agreed to extend this until the end of June, at which point we will review the situation.

### **How will I find the money to pay SSP (Statutory Sick Pay), including zero hours contracts?**

The government has released legislation to allow small- and medium-sized businesses and employers to reclaim Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) paid for sickness absence due to COVID-19. The eligibility criteria for the scheme will be as follows:

- This refund will cover up to 2 weeks' SSP per eligible employee who has been off work because of COVID-19.
- Employers with fewer than 250 employees will be eligible – the size of an employer will be determined by the number of people they employed as of 28 February 2020.
- Employers will be able to reclaim expenditure for any employee who has claimed SSP (according to the new eligibility criteria) as a result of COVID-19.
- Employers should maintain records of staff absences and payments of SSP, but employees will not need to provide a GP fit note.
- Eligible period for the scheme will commence the day after the regulations on the extension of Statutory Sick Pay to those staying at home comes into force, the government will work with employers over the coming months to set up the repayment mechanism for employers as soon as possible.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/sick-pay-from-day-one-for-those-affected-by-coronavirus>

### **What changes to our cleaning regime do we need to consider at this point?**

You should consider frequent and thorough cleaning of well-used touch points such as door handles and lift buttons, with regular cleaning of surfaces in communal areas including phones etc.

There is government guidance available, see link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

### **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.