



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

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

Dear Colleagues

I am writing this latest update after a week which has continued to see rapid changes in how we all respond to Covid or, maybe, as some people are beginning to describe it, live with Covid.

Many of us will have welcomed the gradual easing of lockdown, the opening of shops and pubs and cafes and the opportunity to meet up more easily with more friends and family members. At this stage, it is too early to say about how these changes will impact on turning around the economy and on raising the risk of a second spike of the virus.

As we know, the virus is still out there and new cases are still being confirmed, albeit at a much slower rate. The last ten days has been quite a game-changer, not least because as lockdown has eased for many, in hotspots such as Leicester, it has remained in place and intensified. The Government is now publishing much more data on cases and infection rates and we have, in effect, a national league table emerging of hotspots based on that data. Fortunately, as I write, the North Yorkshire infection rate stands at 410.2 per 100000 people – with some variation within the County - which is nearly a third of the level in Leicester. These figures cover all cases since early March. The 7-day rolling average of indicators such as cases, infection rates and hospital admissions for Covid for North Yorkshire remains amongst the lowest in Yorkshire.

Against the backdrop of these figures, it is also good news that we are currently with a reduced number of care providers with active cases. 20 homes and 1 home care provider. This is a welcome reduction. However, the tide could turn quickly and we must remain on our vigilance and continue to do everything we can to prevent Covid spread and to contain and eradicate it where it exists. The New Zealand All-Black mantra of “go early, go hard” applies here, too!

In the last week, the Government has announced the introduction of routine testing for all care home staff (every week) and all care home residents (every 28 days). Whilst not without its challenges, and some important ethical issues, I would join other care sector leaders in welcoming this development. Emergency times require emergency measures and it is important that, as long as we implement them with humanity and appropriate safeguards, then this feels like the right way forward. We will support you to take forward this routine testing throughout the sector.

I would like to thank you for your continued participation in daily calls. This work has enable you and us to tackle Covid early and to take swift action where providers have been struggling or – rarely – have been unwilling to take the necessary steps to keep people using services and staff safe and well. We are currently reviewing these calls and will be able to update you next week on our plans for the future. My expectation is that we are likely to continue the calls for the foreseeable future, but that frequency may vary depending on how well individual providers are able to keep services Covid-free. We will continue to have a range of practical support available for providers who need them.

This week, the Health and Social Care Secretary has indicated an opening up of care homes for non-essential visits. We are awaiting national guidance on this proposal and we will work with you to get the balance right between connecting residents with their loved ones and, also, making sure we keep homes Covid-free. We will also work with providers of day services to look at what a gradual recovery and re-start will look like.

We are continuing to work with the NHS on reviewing safer discharge from hospital and I am hoping we will have some progress on that front by the end of July, if not sooner. Meanwhile, we are really grateful to you for providing quarantine beds and self-isolation arrangements to protect people. One final update from me is around funding. Each month we have reviewed the additional payments we have been making to providers in response to Covid. Current payments are in place until the end of July. We will be reviewing arrangements beyond July, mindful that Government guidance is now potentially limiting longer term payments. In terms of what North Yorkshire County Council funds, I would expect us to continue some form of additional payments, even if tapered over time, from the end of July and we are continuing to highlight the importance of this issue at national and regional levels.

Just a reminder that as well as our daily calls, we are also open for contact to all providers 7 days a week 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

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 15th 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 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

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.

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.

Cleaning and Disinfecting During COVID-19 (Fogging)

There is no national guidance on the use of Fogging and there are many different companies offering it as a service. It would be difficult for us to confirm how effective the chemicals they are using are and both the application and H&S requirements. It is important for Managers to ensure that if they choose to have the home fogged, they are aware of the Health and Safety issues relating to the chemical used and that a manual deep clean, involving thorough cleaning and disinfection of all surfaces must be performed before the fogging.

We would advise that establishments concentrate on effective manual cleaning of the environment with a pH neutral detergent e.g. Hosppec, followed by disinfection, using either a Chlorine based product at 1,000ppm (e.g. Milton 50ml in 1 litre of cold water), or a Virucidal product that is tested and conforms to EN testing standard EN17746. Alternatively, a 2-in-1 cleaning and chlorine disinfection product e.g. Chlor Clean can be used as a one-step method.

For equipment, clean with detergent wipes, then disinfect - where possible with a Chlorine based product at 1,000ppm (e.g. Milton 50ml in 1 litre of cold water), or with a Virucidal product that is tested and conforms to EN testing standard EN17746, or 70% alcohol wipes.

Alternatively, a 2-in-1 cleaning and chlorine disinfection product e.g. Chlor Clean, or EN14476 compliant wipes e.g. Clinell Universal can be used as a one-step method.

Surfaces that will not tolerate Chlorine based cleaners, e.g. soft furnishings, carpets, should be cleaned with detergent products. They should, where possible, then be disinfected with a product that is compatible with the surface i.e. will not damage it, and be a Virucidal product that is tested and conforms to EN testing standard EN17746 or 70% alcohol wipes. Alternatively, a non-chlorine 2-in-1 cleaning and disinfection product EN14476 compliant can be used as a one-step method.

Out of Hours Contacts

Although the numbers of cases of Covid-19 has improved in North Yorkshire we are continuing our work in the response phase of the outbreak. As a result, we are still required to source placements and packages of care into the evening and at weekends. It has been increasing difficult to progress this work over recent weeks as management cover has returned to previous business as usual arrangements. If managers are not available within a service at evenings and weekends and the staff who are working are unable to make the decision to accept a placement or package we will need to approach Out of Hours managers.

We have attempted to capture out of hours contacts a number of times in the past with limited success. In order to ensure we can continue to respond to service need during this period we will be contacting all care homes and domiciliary care providers over the next week to obtain this information. For care homes this will be captured during Care Home Contact Officer/Liaison Officer calls. For domiciliary care, included supported living, you will be contacted via the Care Home Liaison Officers.

We will only use this information where we need to source placements during the Covid-19 response phase. As we make plans for business as usual processes we will contact you again to check contact details as we are aware the staff may be working to different roles across a number of organisations.

Temperature Screening Products

Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency is telling manufacturers and suppliers of thermal cameras that they should not make claims which directly relate to COVID-19 diagnosis.

https://www.gov.uk/government/news/dont-rely-on-temperature-screening-products-for-detection-of-coronavirus-covid-19-says-mhra?utm_source=85281642-c80a-4f56-8cf8-0855812de819&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

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 Mobile: 07813437242

Mark Lagowski: mark.lagowski@nhs.net Mobile: 07881 956285

Sarah Fiori: 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.

Guidance for taking swab samples:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-taking-swab-samples>

Department of Health & Social Care, Care Home Testing Email Update

On the 8th July the Department of Health & Social Care shared with care homes an update on care home testing. We are sharing the update via this bulletin to ensure that providers are fully aware of the content of the update.

Lift Sanitisation

We have received a query in relation to the use of lifts and whether people accessing a lift should wear appropriate PPE before accessing a small space, such as a lift where appropriate social distancing cannot be undertaken. We would suggest that all providers update their service risk assessments to reflect the practice to follow when using lifts within the care setting and the Council would recommend the following:

All staff and tenants/residents know when using the lift, a face mask should be worn as per government guidance on social distancing. Hand sanitisers should be available to use before entering the lift. Take note of the maximum number of people to be in the lift on this site and do not exceed this. Notices should be available outside the lift doors to clarify the use of appropriate PPE. This instruction to be passed onto all visitors and/or contractors.

The lift/s are cleaned regularly with appropriate disinfectant/cleaning solutions as per guidelines with a suitable cleaning chart made available near /in the lift to show this has been done.

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

Thank you to those providers who completed the survey, providing details of how they have used the grant funding so far. There have been a number of queries arising from this and so we wanted to clarify the position and also inform you of next steps. In relation to domiciliary care providers, the data supplied to the Council by CQC was taken from their database with a cut-off date of 20 May. A small number of providers were not included in this data set, as CQC did not hold the relevant information on that date. Those providers have now been identified and we will be in touch with them shortly.

In terms of the use of funding, domiciliary care providers may use it to purchase PPE however care homes, which have nationally set conditions on use, cannot. Survey results indicated that some care homes have used the funding to purchase PPE. We will contact care home providers who have used funding for PPE, and any providers where it is thought that the funding has been used for something out of scope, for further information and to determine whether adjustments to funding are required for second payments.

The Council cannot release the second payment to any provider which has not submitted information regarding expenditure to date. As a result, we will be contacting all providers who did not complete the survey within the deadline to obtain this information. We will contact the authorised signatory of the grant agreement in the first instance. If that is not, you please ensure your authorised signatory has the required information. Where providers had not used all of their funding prior to the survey closing we will be in touch to clarify the position and determine whether any unallocated funding needs to be repaid. For those providers who submitted their survey and where expenditure was appropriate we will start to process second payments.

A further survey will be issued in September to capture information on the use of the total funding provided. This information will be submitted to Department Health & Social Care for review and consideration will be given to any outstanding funding which needs to be reclaimed. If you have any queries in relation to the IPC funding please contact socialservices.contractingunit@northyorks.gov.uk and someone will contact you.

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-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.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

<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>

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/publications/vivaldi-1-coronavirus-covid-19-care-homes-study-report/vivaldi-1-covid-19-care-homes-study-report>

Video links:

Carers - https://youtu.be/umPwH_hYhPQ

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

PPE - 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. 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

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 – updated 10th July

Direct Payments – Our latest advice to you about the council's Direct Payment Recipients and the arrangements made in respect of invoicing. Over the coming weeks it is expected for direct payment recipients to start reinstating their domiciliary support dependent upon individual circumstances and provider capacity to do so.

The Council will continue to work closely with its DP recipients to make sure they understand their obligations around paying invoices. We will also continue to make the appropriate financial arrangements until the end of July.

See below some questions and answers to help you understand when the council would expect direct payment recipients to reinstate the services they have contracted from you.

Venue based providers.

The Council has kindly advised that day services should remain closed. For this reason, we will continue to pay our direct payments to enable you to retain your valuable staff resource.

Domiciliary Care Providers 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 is able and willing to resume the care and support they need, the council expects the direct payment recipient to discuss and make arrangements to restart the service they contracted with you.

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

Although the Council expects direct payment recipients not to pay for services, they have not received, at this stage if your organisation is able to resume its usual service, you can make contact with your Direct Payment customers to discuss and arrange to restart the care and support they contracted with you.

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? Dependent on your circumstances in respect of capacity and ability, the Council expects you to make arrangements with the direct payment recipient to resume the service you would normally deliver.

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 to 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.

Should you have any concerns or difficulties to reinstate your services you can contact us using the following email Directpayments@northyorks.gov.uk

People testing positive after 14 days – re-issued 22nd 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 29th 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 22nd 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 July, 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.