



Provider Bulletin

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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 a second wave of Covid.

North Yorkshire's situation is not as bad as many other parts of the North of England: however, we need to remain vigilant and to take every opportunity to close down the spread of the virus.

That is why I wrote to you all recently to advise a pause on all but essential visits within care homes during October. I have now also written to residents and their relatives, friends, and we have put more information on our website. Thank you to colleagues who are also supporting the work of the task group, which is looking to see if we can find a longer-term Covid-secure approach to visiting throughout the Winter and Spring. You can find more information here:
www.northyorks.gov.uk/visiting

We have also just received a letter from the Department of Health and Social Care, which is being sent alongside this Provider Bulletin, setting out urgent requirements around safe discharge beds. Fortunately, we have been working with you for some time to both commission additional beds and to support people where they return to their existing care home and need to self-isolate. I welcome the fact that Ministers are now saying that people with a confirmed or suspected Covid diagnosis should not be discharged into care homes that are Covid-free.

Colleagues are also getting in touch about the next wave of the national Infection Prevention and Control Fund and we hope that we can pass that onto you very soon.

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>

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.

Best wishes,

Richard

Content of Provider Bulletins

Providers have fed back that the Provider Bulletins are becoming unwieldy and that it is difficult to identify, when links to guidance are attached, whether there are changes and what those changes may be. As a result, we will add links to useful documents to the Council's website. Where guidance changes we will highlight the change within the bulletin and attach the relevant guidance once. The guidance will then be added to the website and the link will not be added to the ongoing bulletins. We are also aiming to issue Provider Bulletins earlier in the week and any urgent messages later in the week will be shared via email and attached guidance will be uploaded to the website. We are going to undertake a piece of work so that news, guidance and tools can be more easily identified on the Working with Providers website page and this may take a little while to complete. However, in the meantime, we will continue to add to the current webpages. We would welcome your feedback to ensure that this approach assists providers.

Consideration of COVID if residents are presenting with other symptoms of illness without the three main COVID-19 symptoms

We have been advised that there have been cases of people testing positive for Covid-19 who have presented as unwell without having one of the three main symptoms of Covid-19. This includes older people presenting with Delirium. We would urge all providers to seek medical advice where you have a resident who is presenting as unwell in case they do need to be prioritised for a test.

Care home Visiting

A task group charged with looking at the County's approach to care home visiting, during the pandemic, has met for the second time this week. The task group was set up following the latest advice being issued by the Council for care homes and supported living schemes to limit routine visiting during October. The task group has been asked to see what, if anything, can be done to provide Covid-secure visiting options. The task group, which includes residents of care settings, family members, dementia experts and care provider managers as well as County Council Public Health and Social Care staff, meets online. Members have shared their own experiences and observations of the impact of restrictions to visits on people and their loved ones. Some people on the group had not had any visitors in over six months, in spite of the easing of lockdown over the Summer. The group also acknowledged the risks to residents that visiting could bring and talked about the need for more flexible approaches based on risk assessments for individual people and specific settings. The task group has begun to explore the pros and cons and practicalities around solutions for trying to re-start visits. These include:

- Testing for designated visitors;
- The creation of a separate place outside of the main care setting building for visits;
- The need for additional resource in care settings to support visiting and going out into the community

Care homes are still currently encouraged to allow window visits for all residents so that family members, friends and residents can still see each other, alongside greater use of remote contact by telephone and other technology. Providers can support residents to be able to take trips out from home, although ideally outdoors and wearing face masks for protection.

BREXIT – EU Settlement Scheme

There are concerns nationally that people who work in adult social care or receive services and support may not have applied for EU Settlement Status. The attached leaflet provides some basic information regarding the EU Settlement Scheme. Please remind staff and the people you support of the need to apply, where relevant. If you identify anyone who accesses your service who may need support to complete this and who lacks capacity please contact the Customer Service Centre on 01609 780780.

Christmas and New Year admissions/new packages of care

The Council has requested clarity on the Command Centre operating hours over the Christmas and New Year period to support hospital discharges. Once this information has been confirmed, it will be shared with providers. Availability of staff to discuss and agree new placements/packages of care continues to be required 7 days per week between 8am and 8pm. We have endeavoured to contact out of hours contact details for key staff so that hospital discharges can be progressed. The Quality & Market Improvement Team will be contacting providers where out of hours contact details are unknown to gather this information. If your out of hours contact has changed in recent weeks please provide updated details to socialservices.contractingunit@northyorks.gov.uk When planning rotas please ensure you have included sufficient capacity to cover illness/self-isolation of staff and availability for new admissions/packages of care. Brokerage will begin to capture information about your additional capacity at the beginning of November.

North Yorkshire Care Connected Webinars

North Yorkshire Care Connected webinars are being held each Wednesday from 5pm to 6pm. The sessions are hosted by Richard Webb, Corporate Director Health & Adult Services. The sessions include an update on the spread of Covid-19 across the county, guidance issued and provides an opportunity for providers to raise any issues or questions they may have for wider discussion. The reference is used all of these webinars and the joining instructions are:

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>

Antibody Testing

Antibody tests are now being provided free of charge by the Department of Health & Social Care to anyone in paid adult social care employment, whether they have had symptoms or not. The antibody test is a voluntary blood test and determines whether you have had Coronavirus. Antibody test results will help to understand the prevalence of the virus across the country and may be helpful in the future, if scientific research is released with conclusive findings about immunity. Please find attached to this Bulletin a guide on Antibody Testing.

COVID-19 Support Visits

There appears to be some misunderstanding about the numbers of staff from the Council and CCG who may be involved in a Covid-19 Support Visit to care providers. Usually there will be one member of staff from the Council who will undertake the visit. In some instances, there may be two staff but this will be based on the need to include a representative from the relevant Clinical Commissioning Group or where a member of staff is being inducted to the visits process. We can confirm that the number of attendees are being kept to a minimum.

Business Continuity Plans

As we head towards winter the Council would like to remind providers to review and update their Business Continuity Plans to ensure they reflect potential impacts of staff shortages (Covid-19 and non-Covid-19 impacts), minimum viability staffing levels and robustness of supply chain. For supply chain this should consider potential impacts from Covid-19 and BREXIT.

Testing – 90 days

Weekly testing should continue for staff and every 28 days for residents. Guidance has been updated on when to retest positive staff members and this has been changed to 90 days after their last positive test instead of 6 weeks. (Unless there are further symptoms) Further information is available [here](#) and we are awaiting feedback on whether the 90 days also applies to positive residents.

Communications Pack

The Council has developed a Covid-19 communication pack, which has been translated into a number of languages. These can be found on the following link:

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

NHS COVID-19 App

There have been questions asked regarding the use of the NHS COVID-19 app. The following update was recently shared with care providers.

Should I use the NHS COVID-19 app while I'm at work?

It's important you use the app at all times, including while at work, except if you:

- store your phone in a locker while you're working or are involved in a leisure activity, like swimming
- are already protected by a Perspex (or equivalent) screen
- are a health and care worker and are wearing medical grade PPE, such as a surgical mask, in a clinical setting

In most of these situations, you are already protected, so it is highly unlikely that you would catch the virus. If your phone is not with you, use the 'pause' function on the app so that the contact tracing part does not work.

Alternatively, you could switch your phone off. If you forget, you might get an alert because an infected person was near your phone when your phone was not with you. [Read more about how and when to pause contact tracing](#)

Capacity Tracker- New Questions

Care homes registered with the capacity tracker will have received an update around new questions that will be launched on the tracker on **Wednesday 14 October**. The 3 questions added are as below, and are designed to help understand any issues providers may be having around these topics on a national and local level.

- How many staff and residents are known to have had a flu vaccination
- Where there may be issues accessing flu vaccinations
- The COVID-19 status of residents received from NHS Trust hospitals.

In addition, there will also be 2 surveys, these only need to be completed once.

- Survey 1 'Syringe Pumps' (to be completed by Nursing homes only):
- Survey 2 'Proxy Medicine Ordering' (to be completed by All Care Homes)

Upcoming Registered Manager Wellbeing Webinars

Skills for Care are offering Registered Managers a series of two wellbeing webinars.

1. Wellbeing for managers

The first webinar will include practical support and ideas to look after yourself to help you look after others. This will be held on **Thurs 15 October from 3.00 – 3.30**.

[Booking link](#)

1. **Leading for wellbeing**

The second webinar will focus on 'Leading for Wellbeing' with practical support and ideas to support your teams with wellbeing. This will be held on **Weds 4 November 11:00 to 11:30**.

[Booking link](#)

The sessions are designed for registered managers and managers who directly supervise others. Places are limited and advance booking is required.

[COVID-19 in Care Settings and Access to Hospitals](#)

We have had a number of queries from care providers who have people they support needing to access Hospital sites for elective procedures and the process to follow prior to attendance at the Hospital. To aid providers NY CCG have contacted a number of Hospital sites to obtain their processes in such situations and compiled the **attached document**.

[MCA DoLS Team update 14th October 2020](#)

The Department of Health and Social Care have released several guidance notes in relation to the Mental Capacity Act, which can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-looking-after-people-who-lack-mental-capacity>

The message is clear – during the Pandemic, the regulations and requirements still apply, this includes the need to ensure that people who are Deprived of their Liberty are provided the relevant Safeguards.

- The role of the advocate, Independent Mental Capacity Advocate (IMCA) and the paid Relevant Person's Representative (RPR) is a health and social care role and should be treated as an 'essential visitor'.
- Best Interests Assessors (BIAs) require access to care records, they will contact you in the first instance to discuss the most appropriate way to view these records. It would be advisable to review records and prepare them to be electronically shared (securely) where possible.

If you need information or advice on how to support people who lack capacity to consent to testing, isolation, visiting or community access – you can find information on the SCIE website:

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

Please contact us if you wish to discuss a specific case:

MCA DoLS Team

dols@northyorks.gov.uk

01609 536829

[Flu](#)

This year, with COVID-19 in circulation, it's more important than ever that eligible groups are vaccinated to protect them from flu. The FREE flu vaccine will help prevent people from getting flu and is the best protection from the flu virus. Health and social care staff have been included in the national free flu programme again this year which includes:

- social care and hospice workers employed by registered residential or domiciliary care providers.
- health and social care workers employed through Direct Payment (personal budgets) and/or Personal Health Budgets, such as Personal Assistants, to deliver domiciliary care to people
- all care home residents
- Carers

This is in addition to a range of other eligible groups, details of which can be found [here](#).

All front line health and social care workers should be supported to access the vaccine and it is the responsibility of the employer to enable this to happen. There are a number of options for staff to have the vaccine which include:

- Arrange for a flu vaccination at their GP or pharmacist stating that they are eligible through the national scheme
- Invite a pharmacy into the setting to vaccinate staff
- Liaise with the GP linked to the care home to discuss who is best to vaccinate residents and whether they can also vaccinate staff at the same time (pharmacies can vaccinate staff and residents at the same time but it's good to discuss with GP in the first instance)

Please note there are currently shortages of the vaccine so vulnerable groups are being prioritised. Further supplies are expected imminently.

For more information contact carly.walker@northyorks.gov.uk or ruth.hine@northyorks.gov.uk