

12th June 2020

Dear Provider,

SOCIAL DISTANCING

Social distancing in care homes

- It is, of course, important to practice social distancing at all times, including when colleagues are together. This includes not sharing food as this is high risk for passing on the virus. One of the best ways we can stop the spread of Covid-19 into our care homes is by making sure we are providing a buffer around the homes and each other by strictly practicing social distancing when out in the community and when in the workplace. With the NHS test and trace system now up and running this also means that we minimise the risk of staff members having to undergo 14 day isolation periods unnecessarily due to being a contact of a work colleague.
- **Symptomatic care home staff should follow national guidance on self-isolation.** Please click [here](#) for the latest guidance.

PPE AND INFECTION CONTROL

National PPE Portal for care homes with 24 beds or fewer

- Following your invitation last week, there is now a guidance page on the PPE portal, to help provide information to those invited to register and order emergency PPE through the site: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ppe-portal-how-to-order-emergency-personal-protective-equipment>
- This portal aims to replace the council's emergency PPE route for smaller providers, however Emergency PPE will still be available from council in meantime via the PPE inbox. You will only be able to order small quantities to top up supplies of PPE via the portal (100 masks, 400 aprons and 400 pairs of gloves), however if you are interested in sourcing larger orders of PPE (up to 6 weeks' worth) at cost prices please contact pperequests@croydon.gov.uk
- Wherever possible we would encourage you to continue to try and secure PPE supplies through your usual supply routes in the first instance. Further information on sourcing PPE and emergency supplies can be found on the webpage, please click [here](#).

PPE use for aerosol generating procedures:

- Please click [here](#) for the updated guidance on PPE for use aerosol generating procedures. If you have any residents who require Aerosol Generating Procedures, please complete the information required in the **attachment 1** letter if you require any of the procedures listed in the letter.

Infection Control Fund

- On Thursday 4 June all care homes in Croydon will have received a letter from the council about the allocation of the first tranche of the Infection Control Fund. For those who returned the letter on by Monday, the first tranche of funding will be received on Monday 15 June. If you have not returned your letter you still can by emailing it back to enquiriesBC@croydon.gov.uk.
- The letter also outlined the terms of the funding. More details on this can be found [here](#). If you have any queries about what to spend the funding on please email

enquiriesBC@croydon.gov.uk. Please note the guidance states that the funding cannot be used for costs incurred before 13 May and funding must be spent by 23 September.

TESTING

Online portal for care homes to arrange Covid-19 testing

- All symptomatic and asymptomatic care home staff and residents in England are now eligible for testing, with priority for those in homes that look after the over-65s. Please click [here](#) for further information. **Please let us know when you have registered for the portal and as soon as you get the results by emailing us on enquiriesBC@croydon.gov.uk**
- Please note as of 4 June 2020, DHSC has moved the employer referral portal to a “continuous run” state. This means the 3pm daily submission deadline has been removed. Employers will still upload only one spreadsheet a day, but all uploaded spreadsheets will be processed every 5 minutes between 8am and 6pm. So if an employer believes they are ready at 11am for example, they can upload then and it will be almost instantly processed. The DHSC have also simplified the form to avoid errors that prevent employers from uploading successfully. For example, they no longer ask for the vehicle registration number. Please click [here](#) for the latest guidance on testing.

Testing someone who has impaired decision making capacity without their consent

- The MCA is still the law and there has not been any amendments to the act during the COVID-19 pandemic. Nothing in the Coronavirus Act 2020 (for instance) changes the obligations imposed under it. However, since COVID-19, the Act is having to be applied in a different context, which will require all those involved to think creatively about how to secure its core principles, as well as to be clear (for instance) as to when a particular option is simply not available so that it does not fall for consideration as part of any best interests decision-making process.
- With regards to testing incapacitated clients and use of Blanket testing approach and Best Interest we can clarify that as the Supervisory Body Croydon does not encourage blanket approach in testing and the best interest decision should be taken case by case basis based on the MCA. The 5 statutory principles which underpins the Act is still to be applied. Don't forget to consider carefully the 5 legal principles one of which is that individual are able to make unwise decisions when assessing a person not to have the mental capacity to understand and make an informed decisions for themselves.
- The requirement to consider each person's individual circumstances is also a significant part of the process along with the need to adopt a 'person centred approach' to practice. Those involved in assessment a person's mental capacity to make a decision should be confident and competent to apply the law. To set aside a person's ability to make their own decisions is a serious matter which can be challenged in law.

- The lives of those with impaired decision-making capacity have also directly, and, as will be seen, disproportionately, been affected by the public health measures taken to respond to the COVID-19 crisis.
- “A diagnostic test for COVID-19 and is ‘an act in connection with care or treatment’ for purposes of s.5 Mental Capacity Act 2005 (and paragraph 6.5 of the Code of Practice, specifically refers to ‘carrying out diagnostic examinations and tests’). The critical question is whether, for the person, carrying out a test will be in that person’s best interests. A question to ask is ‘Will a positive or negative result alter how this person is cared for?’ Blanket policies may offer testing, but the decision for the individual must be made on an individual basis”.
- The first instance, all practicable steps should be taken to support the person to make the decision to be tested for COVID-19 for themselves. However, if after assessment it is determined on the ‘balance of probabilities’ that the person is unable to make the decision for themselves... then it may be appropriate to make a best interests decision under the MCA. When doing so, the decision-maker must consider all the relevant circumstances, including the person’s past and present wishes, beliefs and values, the views of their family and what the person would have wanted if they had the capacity to make the decision themselves.
- A record of the decision, evidence and basis of the judgements made must be made. It is important to remember that there is a Best Interest Check List (reference chapter. 5 of the MCA Code and states that: "An act done, or decision made), ‘Best Interests decisions should be made on an individual basis. No automatic assumption should be made that what was in the best interests of one person will be in the best interests of another, even if the 2 cases share similar characteristics.
- Take account that decisions must be :
 - Proportionate to the potential harm
 - Evidence based – mental capacity decisions are time and decision specific
 - Those carrying out the testing of a person’s possible COVID-19 current infection must remember that this is a clinical procedure
- Further information can be found on DHSC covid-19 guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-looking-after-people-who-lack-mental-capacity/the-mental-capacity-act-2005-mca-and-deprivation-of-liberty-safeguards-dols-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic> Also as mentioned at the briefing session on Thursday by Public Health colleagues, please do feedback where testing isn’t being done for the reasons above so that this can be captured and reported back.

Please click [here](#) for further information on testing and what to do if your home as a coronavirus outbreak.

Testing for staff

Covid-19 mobile testing unit

- The government mobile testing unit will be back in Croydon on Monday 15th and Tuesday 16th June 2020 for key workers whether symptomatic or asymptomatic. The unit will be based outside the back of Fairfield Halls via the Barclay Road slip road

entrance. This unit can be walk up or drive thru. The site will be open from 10.30 and 15.30 for **booked appointments only** via <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested>

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

- **Pharmacy and medicines support for care homes in Croydon** - In response to the covid-19 pandemic, pharmacists across the system are working closer than ever to better support GPs and care home residents and staff. Please find attached (**attachment 2**) a poster on resources you may find useful.
- **Reuse of medicines in a care home or hospice during the COVID19 pandemic** - The Department of Health and Social care (DHSC) published guidance enabling the re-use of medicines in care homes or hospices during the COVID19 pandemic. This document (**attachment 3**) outlines the process to be followed by care homes and hospices when considering re-using medicines that have been supplied for a patient who no longer needs them during the COVID19 pandemic. To make it easier for you to complete the appendices are also attached as separate word documents.
- **Prince's Trust workforce project** - Provides care homes a pool of ready candidates for virtual interviews, for positions including Health Care Assistant roles, Volunteer Roles, Manager Roles, Administrative Roles, Kitchen staff, Cleaning staff and potentially any other vacancies care homes have. If you are interested in receiving support from this scheme, please contact Andre Chagwedera (Andre.Chagwedera@swlondon.nhs.uk) who is available to provide this support. **Please note the recruitment day for 18th June is now fully booked. However, they have scheduled their next day for 30th July.** To avoid disappointment, please contact Andre asap so that he can explain the process and help get you booked in.
- **Croydon Talking Therapies (IAPT)** is providing **immediate support to front line/key workers** in the Borough. Simply call 020 2338 4040 and *state you are a staff member* and you will be connected to a clinician who you can talk to, confidentially, about how you're feeling.

WEBINARS AND VIRTUAL MEETINGS/TRAINING

- **FREE bite size sessions** aimed at a number of professional groups (including GPs and care homes) are also being planned. The following sessions are available so far:
 - Advance Care Planning
 - Challenging Conversations
 - Terminal Agitation
 - Wellbeing, resilience and self-care (includes 4 short videos) For further information please click here: link to webpage: https://www.stchristophers.org.uk/stc_education_event/virtual-learning/

For further information on other training please click [here](#).

Next Info Session on Teams – We look forward to seeing you at the next information session on **Thursday 18th June 2020 at 1pm**. If you have any queries please contact enquiriesBC@croydon.gov.uk

Please check <http://valuecroydon.com/support-for-care-homes-during-covid-2-2> for all the latest guidance and information for care homes during Covid-19.

Thanks again for you and your carers great support of our vulnerable residents.

Care Home Commissioning Team