
COVID-19 Policy

Coronavirus Policy

To be read in conjunction with the Business Contingency and Emergency Planning, Good Governance and Infection Control.

Overview

The Coronavirus disease named COVID-19, has now been classed by the World Health Organisation as a Pandemic. As the virus has the potential to spread extensively, it's likely to pose a significant challenge to many organisations. Providers must work in a collaborative and multi agency way to mitigate the spread and contain the risk of the virus.

The government, Public Health England and all Local Authorities will be responsible for the advice and guidance disseminated to their Local Providers.

As a provider there are several things that we have put in place and that are continually monitored as the spread and breadth of the virus increases.

Inform

Staff need to be aware of the responsibilities of informing the management of any symptoms of the virus.

The incubation period of COVID-19 is between 2 and 14 days.

Symptoms of Coronavirus are:

- High temperature
- New, continuous cough
- Loss or change to your sense of smell or taste

These symptoms do not necessarily mean you have the illness. The symptoms are similar to other illnesses that are much more common, such as cold and flu.

If staff exhibit any of the above symptoms, they must contact the NHS 111 service for advice. Do not go to your GP, an Outpatient Walk- In or Hospital. Follow the advice given by the NHS 111 Service staff. Staff must then inform us (the employer) as soon as practicable to inhibit the spread of the virus.

Advice will then be given to individual staff who may have contracted the virus on what they must do next including where a sick note has been issued by the NHS 111 Service.

Employees returning from Annual Leave

All employees returning from certain designated areas must contact NHS 111 and inform their employer, of the advice given before they return to work.

The Government updates the information about COVID-19 at 14:00 daily, and it's vital that everyone keeps up to date with the latest official advice on travelling to and from certain countries.

This is in order to delay the spread of infection to both staff and residents. Staff will be kept up to date through formal identified communication channels.

Communication

This is a developing situation and changes daily. The following methods will be used to update our staff on any developments of new advice issued by the Government or other statutory bodies:

- Telephone
- Email
- Letter
- Text message

Infection prevention and control

The prevention of the infection in our homes is of paramount importance to us. We have adhered to all the guidance and regulation set out by Public Health England.

We continually adjust our prevention control measures as they are published by the government.

See Infection prevention and control guidance document [here](#).

Prepare

In order to prepare for any staff shortage, our Business Contingency Plan is robust and tested to ensure reliability.

We will keep up to date with Government and Public Health England advice as the situation is developing hour by hour.

There are basic but effective ways to follow to help prevent the infection's spread including:

- Making sure our workplace is clean and hygienic
- Promoting regular and thorough hand-washing by everyone
- All employees must wash their hands thoroughly upon entering of the building
- All employees have their temperatures tested once a day
- Providing all employees with an alcohol-based hand rub which is at least 80% alcohol
- Staff, visitors, contractors, service users and residents need to be aware of the importance of good personal hygiene practice including used tissue appropriately disposed of immediately after use
- All staff need to be aware of the need to comply with the Infection Control Policy

The Identified Lead or Teams are the designated communication channel that feeds back to senior management who have the responsibility for the liaison with Local Authorities designated Leads.

Local Authorities will have already begun preparations to manage the pandemic it is therefore crucial that any guidance and advice issued via our Local Authority Commissioning is followed and implemented. Several Local Authorities have already issued contingency planning assessments for providers.

Business Contingency Planning

As part of Regulation 17 Good Governance every provider we have in place a Business Contingency Plan. This will be reviewed, amended and tested for its reliability. As the situation develops we will regularly review the preparations and ensure they are still fit for purpose.

Our organisation has a statutory duty of care for people's health and safety. Looking after our Residents and Employees, health, well-being and safety is our number one priority during this outbreak.

Workforce Planning:

- Actions have been planned based on essential needs
- Available staff will be asked to work overtime in accordance with working time regulations
- Where possible we will cancel all annual leave
- Offer incentives to work additional shifts/hours
- Office staff to assist where possible
- Use Agency Staff if required
- Office staff will work remotely
- Office will be closed if necessary
- Flexible Working will be implemented
- Where possible staff will be accommodated overnight

Service Users or Residents

All steps have been taken to protect and mitigate the spread of the virus to the people who matter most, our residents and employees. It is important that staff remain calm, diligent and observation will be key to picking up any likely infection source. Close monitoring of our residents is introduced in order that any contagion is picked up as early as possible and appropriately reported in order that the required measures are put in place. We will follow specific government guidance for care homes and community settings.

All service users, and their wider support network will be contacted to assess their wellbeing and to inform them that there is a disruption to the service and therefore an interruption or change to their normal service is going to be made. It is important that people are reassured during this time and anyone that is particularly alarmed or distressed will be offered some support. Reassurance of residents is paramount to prevent panic and distress.

For more information please click the links below:

- [Public Health England](#)
- [Department of Health and Social Care](#)
- [Guidance to Employers and Businesses About Covid-19](#)
- [Guidance for Social or Community Care and Residential Settings on Covid-19](#)
- [Infection prevention and control guidance](#)
- [Infection prevention and control guidance - Appendix 2](#)