

An update on visiting guidelines & COVID-19 Vaccinations December 2020

As a company we remain committed to updating you about our homes during the Covid-19 outbreak.

Due to the fast-moving nature of the situation the best way to do this is via email and the majority of our communication has been coming in this format. Going forward, we will be moving to email-only updates. If you have not received any email correspondence from us over the past month, it is likely that we do not have your email address on record. To update these details please email your individual Home (nameofhome@cornwalliscare.com) with the following details:

- Name of your relative
- Email address to be added

If you have been receiving the email correspondence, there is no need to contact us.

Many of you may have seen the news from the Government about rapid testing being available to visitors of care homes across the country. While on the surface this is good news, we are approaching it with caution for several reasons.

As has happened throughout this pandemic, the concept has been announced before the structure to deliver it is in place; at this time, we don't have the test kits for any of our homes and are unsure when we will receive them. The reliability of these tests has also been queried in many places, with reports that around 1 in 10 positive cases can be missed. This is highly concerning, as allowing just one positive person into our homes can have grave consequences.

With this in mind, testing visitors is an added tool in the fight against Covid-19 but is not a failsafe option to preventing its spread. We will include the testing as part of our visiting procedures when available, but feel it is important to continue with our current infection prevention & control guidelines, i.e., socially distanced, full PPE, etc. We must continue to take a safety-first approach.

We have had many questions about visiting over the Christmas period. We are conscious of how important these celebrations are for you and your loved ones, but also need to be aware that the risk of Covid-19 remains as high during this period as any other. With so many people to look after in each home, as well as a range of factors to consider, it will sadly prove impossible to make the perfect arrangements for everyone.

We have debated every option available and have tried to come up with the fairest solution, while considering it is imperative that we continue to follow the safety measures, whatever day of the year it is.

We will be opening our homes for family visits from **Monday 14 December** and will of course do our best to ensure that every resident gets a visit during this period. However, to ensure the risk of infection is kept to the absolute minimum we will be operating under strict guidelines:

- Family visits will be available 6 days a week* between the hours of 1pm and 5.30pm.
*Allowing for a day of deep cleaning.
- Visits will be restricted to ONE family member per resident
- Visits MUST be booked in advance – if you arrive without a booking, unfortunately you will be turned away.
- So as to allow as many families to see their loved ones as is possible, we will restrict visits to a maximum of ONE visit per resident per week.
- ALL visitors must consent to
 - having their temperature taken,
 - answering COVID-19 screening questions,
 - completing the test & trace information
 - wearing FULL PPE
 - and abiding by the Home's Infection Prevention & Control procedures.
- Visits will take place in a designated area and we ask that you do not go anywhere else within the Home during your visit.
- Visits will be restricted to 30mins to allow for cleaning down of the area in between visits.
- Any gifts you wish to bring into the Home, must be able to be wiped down prior to being given.
- Visits will be cancelled immediately, should the Home have a COVID-19 positive case.

To book a visit, and for more details of the individual Home's visiting procedures, please contact your Home's administrator via email or telephone.

Alongside the face-to-face visits, we continue to provide online communications with loved ones and facilitate visits for exceptional circumstances (eg end of life, mental health deterioration).

As the Covid-19 pandemic continues, we are constantly having to adapt and make the best of each situation. While this Christmas won't be the same, we will do everything we can to ensure your relatives have an enjoyable and joyous time, full of love and care. On the 25th December it will be Christmas Day for everyone, including our incredibly hard-working staff, and we will celebrate in the best way we can.

Vaccinations

On 2 December, the Government announced the authorisation of the Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine.

The NHS will start giving the coronavirus vaccine as soon as it is available, offering it first to people who are deemed most at risk from Coronavirus stated as:

- People who live in care homes and care home workers
- People aged 80yrs and over
- Health and social care workers in England, including frontline NHS workers.

Your Care Home Manager will be in contact over the coming week with more details about the vaccine and the necessary consents.

Many thanks for your continued patience, support and understanding in these rapidly changing times.

Stuart Clarkson

Managing Director