

## Coronavirus (COVID-19): Care Home Visiting Policy V9

This policy is intended to protect our residents from visitors inadvertently bringing the virus into the home with them.

CCSL are closely monitoring the relevant local infection and growth rates and will make decisions based on the information provided, for the health and safety of residents and staff. Visits to the Homes may be postponed, restricted and/or cancelled at short notice should the risk of infection be felt to be beyond a safe level.

When standard visiting is suspended, the following may be exceptions to the rule:

1. Essential visits, such as those from Healthcare Professionals will continue. During such visits, prior to entering the home they will be asked observe hand washing and social distancing policies and to follow our infection prevention and control procedures.
2. Exceptional circumstances, such as next-of-kin visits at end of life. During such visits those entering the home will be asked to observe hand washing and social distancing policies and to follow our infection prevention and control procedures.

**All visitors to the Home will be required to take a rapid LFD test**, have their temperature checked and will be asked to answer the following health questions (signed and dated), prior to gaining entry into the Home:

1. Do you currently have any signs/symptoms of a respiratory infection such as fever, loss of taste or smell, cough, shortness of breath, body aches or sore throat?
2. Have you had any symptoms of respiratory illness (cough, nasal congestion) in the past 14 days?
3. Have you come into close contact with someone who has symptoms as described in Q1 & 2, in the past 14 days? (eg family member)
4. Have you travelled within the last 14 days to countries with substantial community transmission, or have you been in a location where crowds are restricted to a common location (e.g. cruise ship / airplane)?

Following Governments guidance in the document 'Visiting Arrangements in Care Homes for the period of National Restrictions' CCSL will endeavour to facilitate face-to-face visits, wherever it is safe and appropriate to do so, and will continue to prioritise end of life and mental deterioration cases. Maintaining a covid secure environment within the Homes is a priority, and stringent risk assessments will be carried out prior to any family visit taking place.

**When family visits** are possible, the following additional measures are in place to ensure the visits take place safely, for both residents and families:

## The visit (without rapid testing)

- May take place
  - Through a window or
  - In a designated meeting room, or
  - In a sheltered outdoor space
- The visits will be restricted to **one** family member per resident and this should remain the constant visitor (should other meetings be necessary). **A maximum of 2 visitors can be in the home at the same time.**
- **Whilst we appreciate the importance of seeing your loved one face to face, due to the risk of high infection load, we are unable to facilitate visiting inside the Home for family members/visitors coming from a Zone 3 area, and we ask that those coming from Zone 2 areas consider the safer alternative methods of staying in touch at this time.**
- In the event of an outbreak in the home, or evidence of a community hotspot or outbreak, we may have to **cancel the meeting with immediate effect**, to protect our residents, staff and visitors.
- We ask that you avoid using public transport, as your mode of attending the meeting.
- Visits may be limited to 30 minutes duration.
- If you are entering the Home, you will be required to wear **FULL PPE for the duration of your visit.**
- You will be asked some health screening questions at the start of your visit. You will also be asked to use the sanitising gel provided and will have your temperature taken. **If you are showing any symptoms which could indicate coronavirus, please do not travel to the care home as we will need to refuse entry.** As you will be aware, these symptoms include a raised temperature, a new and persistent cough, a loss of taste or smell and generally feeling lethargic and unwell.
- **Test and Trace:** In line with test and trace guidance, you will be asked to provide a contact number and/or email address.
- Social distancing measures will remain in effect, visitor and resident must maintain social distancing and refrain from close contact.
- Any indoor space **MUST** be well ventilated
- The visitor should enter the space from outside wherever possible (without entering the main home)

- Where there is a single access point to the space, the resident and visitor enter the space at different times to ensure that safe distancing and seating arrangements can be maintained effectively
- In line with Government guidance, visitors will not be able to use facilities such as refreshments or toilets (unless for emergencies).
- We understand that you may wish to bring a gift for your loved one, but the latest guidance from the Government stipulates that any such item should be able to be easily cleaned by the care home to prevent cross contamination. We ask that any gifts you wish to bring comply with this guidance. E.g. a box of chocolates would be able to be wiped clean, but a bunch of flowers would not.
- The visits will be cancelled immediately, if there is a positive case of COVID-19 within the home.

## The Visit with Rapid Testing

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, 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. In addition to the above guidance:

- The test MUST take place outside of the Home.
- With a negative result, the visit may take place inside the care home in a designated area or in an individual's room.
- There will be no time restriction imposed, but ideally around 30 mins.
- Visitors are asked to remain in the designated area.
- Visits will be limited to one person per resident at any one time. A maximum of 3 visitors may be in the home (for individual residents) at any one time.
- We will maintain one family member, one visit per week.
- PPE should be worn when moving around the home (going to and from the meeting space)
- Test and trace information must be completed.
- Any gifts brought to the Home, must be able to be wiped down prior to being presented.
- If the home has a COVID Positive case, the visit will not go ahead.
- The visits will be cancelled immediately, if there is a positive case of COVID-19 in the home.

**All visits remain at the discretion of the Home Manager.**

Some residents will have particular needs (for example, those who are unable to leave their rooms or those living with advanced dementia) which will make COVID-secure visits challenging. Where a resident requires individualised visiting arrangements CCSL Home Manager's will work with the resident, and their family/friends to develop a tailored visiting policy within the principles outlined above.

The factors relevant to decisions about particular individuals or groups of residents include the following, as described in the document 'Visiting Arrangements in Care Homes for the period of National Restrictions':

- the benefits to a person's wellbeing by having a particular visitor or visitors
- the extent of the harm that will be experienced by the resident from a lack of visitation or whether the individual is at the end of their life
- whether residents or staff or visitors are in the extremely clinically vulnerable group (see latest government [guidance on shielding](#))
- whether the resident's state of physical health is such that they may be more seriously affected if they develop COVID-19
- the provisions and needs outlined in the person's care plan
- the level and type of care provided by external visitors and the ability of care home staff to replicate this care
- the appropriate duration of any visit for the particular resident
- the appropriate level of staff to enable safer visiting practices
- the extent to which remote contact by telephone and/or video addresses any wellbeing issues above and is available and reduces any distress or other harm caused by the absence of visits. When developing visiting policies, care homes should consider how they will support remote contact (for example, wifi access for all residents).

Family visits will be regularly reviewed, and remain dependent on a number of factors, including the individual Home having no suspected or positive COVID-19 cases, the local rate of infection remaining low and on Government updates. Face to face visits may be closed/cancelled at short notice for the safety of everyone.

Clear guidance on visiting will be circulated to residents and to relatives. Staff will take time to explain the policy to residents and to support them through this difficult period. This should include giving residents support in using devices such as mobile phones, tablets and computers to stay in touch with family.

### **Other Visitors to the Home**

All visitors (including CCSL Management, other outside Health and Social Care agencies, etc) to the Home must follow the current Government Guidance and CCSL Infection Control Procedures. This includes taking a LFD test, with a negative result, prior to entering the building.

### Contractors

Contractors on site should be kept to essential visits only where the safety of residents is impacted, eg boiler breakdown. In such circumstances strict social distancing will be maintained and emergency service personnel asked to comply with all infection control, **including the taking of a LFD test with a negative result prior to entering.**

It is expected that all contractors coming onto site will come with their own infection control & prevention equipment, including hand sanitiser, disposable gloves, apron and facemasks.

Signed:	Stuart Clarkson
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Last Reviewed:

- V9 18.1.21
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- V6 8.11.20
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