

# Guidance for Social / Community Care and Residential Settings on COVID-19

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**Guidance:** Social Care and Community Setting

**Document Owner:** Centres and Regions Operations Cell (COVID-19), Public Health England

| Organisations consulted                           | Date sent for comments | Version number | Date signed off |
|---|------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| PHE   | 18.02.2020             | 00.01          |                 |
| Association of Directors of Adult Social Services | 19.02.2020             | 00.02          |                 |
| Care Provider Alliance                            | 19.02.2020             |                |                 |
| Association for Real Change                       | 19.02.2020             |                |                 |
| National Care Forum                               | 19.02.2020             |                |                 |
| Care Quality Commission                           | 19.02.2020             |                |                 |
| DHSC Chief Social Workers                         | 19.02.2020             |                |                 |
| Local Government Association                      | 19.02.2020             |                |                 |
| Devolved Administrations                          | 19.02.2020             |                |                 |
| NHS E & I   | 19.02.2020             |                |                 |
| PHE   | 19.02.2020             | 00.03          |                 |
| Department for Education                          | 20.02.2020             | 00.04          |                 |
| Department for Health and Social Care             | 20.02.2020             | 00.05          |                 |
| CMO   |                        | 00.06          |                 |

**Accredited and endorsement:** Department of Health and Social Care, Chief Medical Officer, England

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## Background and Scope of Guidance

Social and community care is taken to cover:

- Long-term conditions services (LTC)
- Rehabilitation services (RHS)
- Community healthcare services (CHC)
- Community-based services for people with mental health needs (MHC)
- Community-based services for people with a learning disability (LDC)
- Community social care (Domiciliary care services including those provided for children (DCC)
- Community-based services for people who misuse substances (SMC)
- Community Social workers,
- Residential children's homes, including secure children's homes
- Care home services with nursing (CHN)
- Care home services without nursing (CHS)
- Support to people in their own homes

This guidance will assist social, community and residential care employers in providing advice to their staff on:

- the novel coronavirus, COVID-19,
- how to help prevent spread of all respiratory infections including COVID-19,
- what to do if someone suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 has been in a health or / social care setting,
- what advice to give to individuals who have travelled to specific areas, as outlined by the Chief Medical Officer (full list available here),
- risk assessments for undertaking domiciliary visits / providing care in residential settings,
- actions to take if staff come into contact with someone who is self-isolating or is a possible or confirmed case of COVID-19.

This guidance is intended for the current position in the UK where there is currently no transmission of COVID-19 in the community. It is therefore very unlikely that anyone receiving care in a care home or the community will become infected.

these settings. Facemasks are only recommended to be worn by infected individuals when advised by a healthcare worker, to reduce the risk of transmitting the infection to other people. It remains very unlikely that people receiving care in a care home or the community will become infected.

PHE recommends that the best way to reduce any risk of infection for anyone is good hygiene and avoiding direct or close contact (within 2 metres) with any potentially infected person.

## **7. What to do if an employee becomes unwell and believe they have been exposed to COVID-19,**

If the staff, member of the public or resident has not been to specified areas in the last 14 days, then normal practice should continue.

If staff, member of the public or resident becomes unwell in the workplace **and** has travelled to China or other affected countries, the unwell person should be removed to an area which is at least 2 metres away from other people. If possible find a room or area where they can be isolated behind a shut door, such as a staff office. If it is possible to open a window, do so for ventilation.

The individual who is unwell should call NHS 111 from their mobile, or 999 if an emergency (if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk) and explain which country they have returned from in the last 14 days and outline their current symptoms. If the person affected is not able for any reason to call NHS 111 themselves then a staff member should call on their behalf.

Whilst they wait for advice from NHS 111 or an ambulance to arrive, they should remain at least 2 metres from other people. They should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects and be advised to cover their mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when they cough or sneeze and put the tissue in a bag then throw the tissue in the bin. If they don't have any tissues available, they should cough and sneeze into the crook of their elbow.

- Inform your manager so that a full risk assessment can be undertaken with an infection control specialist to decide the next course of action.

***If the patient requires urgent medical attention***

- If the patient is critically ill and requires an urgent medical attention or ambulance transfer to a hospital, inform the ambulance call handler of the potential links to COVID-19.
- Following the patient transfer to hospital, the room should be closed and should not be used until further advice is provided by the local Health Protection Team.

***If the person has a negative COVID-19 test***

If after assessment the person has a negative test, then no further action is required.

***If the person has a positive COVID-19 test***

If after assessment the person has a positive test, then a contact tracing exercise will be undertaken by the local Health Protection Team. You will be advised on any further actions, depending on your recent exposure to the patient.

Appendix 1

**What Social, Community and Residential Care settings need to do now**

Currently there is no evidence of transmission of COVID-19 in the United Kingdom.. There is no need to do anything differently in any care setting at present.

If any of your staff do become infected through travel to affected countries you will be contacted by your local Health Protection Team to take you through a risk assessment for your particular setting.

You may find it helpful to know about your local health protection team in advance of any outbreak of disease. Details of your local Health Protection team can be found [here](#) health protection teams