

# ***CORONAVIRUS INFORMATION***

## ***Coronavirus update***

Since early March 2020 all our staff have been working hard in dealing with the effects of coronavirus within our care centre.

Whilst we have recently tested all our residents and staff and declared the centre covid free, we continue to care for residents who are very frail and vulnerable, and in accordance with Government guidelines we must ensure that all our residents continue to be shielded as far as possible.

The support of family and friends in adhering to the stringent restrictions we have put in place has been crucial to ensuring the safety of our residents and staff and we would like to thank everyone for their understanding.

You will find a summary of all our covid secure measures by clicking in the tab on our homepage. Below is a more detailed look at the measures that we are putting in place for the continued safety of our residents and staff.

## ***Safer relative visits***

As per Government guidelines and providing that we have been free from covid infection in all our units for a period of 14 days, we have opened up the centre again so that family members can start to visit.

However, we are very conscious that as lockdown measures are loosened there is a danger of a third wave of the virus, especially in care settings, and we have therefore put in place special measures with regards to visiting which will apply for at least the remainder of 2021.

- Visits will need to be pre booked by calling our main reception on 01782 644800 during Mon – Fri 9am to 3pm (please be aware that bookings cannot be made by calling one of the units). We will have a limited number of slots for each unit and these will be allocated on a first come first served basis. Visiting times will be as follows;

**Monday, Wednesday**

11am – 6pm

Tuesday, Thursday, Friday	10am – 4pm
<b>Saturday</b>	10am – 2pm
Sunday	No visiting

- Visits will be limited to 45 minutes, for two family members only, and no Children under 16 will be allowed.
- You will need to go to our main reception upon arrival, and you will be asked a series of questions and have your temperature checked. ***If you are showing any symptoms of the virus, or feel generally unwell, please don't travel to the centre as you will be refused entry.***
- It will be a condition of the visit that you clean your hands with our sanitising gel, wear gloves which we will provide, and a **face mask**.
- You will be taken by a member of staff directly to the visiting lounge and you must stay in the visiting lounge at all times. You should try and touch as little as possible and you cannot bring anything into the lounge including food, clothes, gifts etc. for your relative. When you are ready to go please use the call button to alert a member of staff and they will show you out, do not return to reception.
- You should use the WC provided at our main reception as you will not be allowed to use any toilet facilities within the unit.

### ***Safer staffing***

Where possible we have changed how we staff our units, and have put in place measures to limit the deployment around the site and to keep staff within “staffing bubbles”.

- We have changed our rotas, where possible, to ensure that staff work on dedicated units only and do not cover shifts on multiple units, this includes support staff. In the event that agency staff are used we ensure that they are regular staff to NG and have the details of all recent places of work.
- Staff facilities have been adapted so that staff from each unit take their breaks in pods which are specifically for their unit only. Training has been changed and is conducted in small groups from

the same units. We have also increased the number of uniforms we provide to all our employees.

- Temperature checks are conducted daily for all staff members and anyone showing signs of covid symptoms is asked to self isolate. In accordance with Government guidelines the centre is visited by public health periodically to carry out testing.
- All staff have weekly PCR tests in addition to two LFD tests.
- Staff are required to inform our HR department of all intended overseas travel, and should they be traveling to a country that is not on the Governments list of quarantine free destinations are required to self isolate upon their return.
- Until otherwise directed by the Public Health all our staff will continue to wear full PPE.

## Safer environment

The need to keep our units as clean and free from transmission is of paramount importance to the safety of all our residents and staff, and we have been working hard and monitoring what other healthcare providers, and the hospitality sector have been putting in place to help combat the virus.

- Additional cleaning, including evening and night time cleaning, has been put in place especially to high use communal areas and for heavy use items such as door handles and handrails etc.
- A special infection control training course has been developed to ensure that housekeeping staff are aware of best practice. We have also appointed “hygiene champions” on each unit who meet monthly to monitor our cleaning and infection control regimes.
- Communal areas have been re-arranged to limit numbers of staff and residents using them at any one time. Toilets, other than those in assisted bathrooms and residents bedrooms, have been closed.

- Some ancillary services such as the friends and family room, visits by entertainers and other outsiders, beauty and spa treatments have been discontinued. We are working to re-introduce a hairdressing service which will visit residents in their individual bedrooms.
- Catering services have been redesigned to allow some meals to be generated within each unit's own pantry facilities. Main meals continue to be delivered from our central kitchens by catering staff but they no longer enter any units. This has resulted in some changes and minor limitations to our menus which we are monitoring as things move forward.
- In order to make cleaning easier and more effective we have been "de-cluttering" all areas including residents' bedrooms. This will mean that going forward we are unable to accommodate excess items stored in your residents' rooms, and sadly it has meant we have removed all fridges and food storage from all bedrooms. We would ask that when you start to re-visit you do not bring in any items at all for the foreseeable future and look to see what unwanted items can be removed from your relative's bedroom.

## Safer admissions

One area that has received widespread press coverage during the pandemic is the issue of care homes being forced to admit residents from hospitals that had not been tested for Covid 19. We are pleased to say that this is something that we always refused to do, despite criticisms from some professionals, and we continue to insist that all new residents that come to our centre are tested for the virus and adhere to our covid secure admissions policy.

- New residents are isolated and barrier nursed in their bedrooms for a minimum of 14 days.
- All residents have their temperature checked daily and are monitored for signs of the virus on a regular basis. Any resident showing symptoms are self isolated and barrier nursed in their rooms for a minimum of 14 days, with full use of PPE, and monitored by our retained GP service. All residents have a PCR test monthly.

- The centre is regularly tested by Public Health and any residents or staff members who test positive, whether they have symptoms or are asymptomatic, are required to self isolate for a minimum of 14 days.

### ***Thanks – your understanding is appreciated***

Whilst we are beginning to see some light at the end of the tunnel there is no doubt that the last year has seen some of the most difficult circumstances that most of us can remember in our lifetime. Its been somewhat heart-warming to have received such support and encouragement for the measures we have taken from residents and family members.

And the final thank you must go to all our amazing staff, from the nurses and carers on the front line, to our support staff – cleaners, catering staff, administrators and maintenance personal – all of whom have worked through the period of lockdown in circumstances which have been above and beyond the call of duty.