

Dear Colleague,

## **Coronavirus: Health & Care System Support for Care Homes in Birmingham**

I am writing to you on behalf of the Birmingham Health & Care system to thank you and your teams for the essential role you are playing in Birmingham's response to the present COVID-19 pandemic.

As a health and care system, we recognise that Care Home providers are facing unprecedented challenges in maintaining the delivery of safe, high quality care. It is critical to Birmingham's on-going response to COVID-19 that Care Homes continue to operate in as safe and resilient way and that your staff and residents get the support they need.

As a system, we must all play our part in ensuring that Care Homes remain able to care safely for your residents, to accept people who no longer require hospital-based care and to avoid unnecessary admissions to local acute hospitals, where capacity will be severely stretched in the coming weeks.

We understand that you will have received a large amount of guidance and information from a number of organisations in recent weeks and we will be looking to streamline how we support you going forward. In this letter we want to focus on some key messages and set out an offer of an enhanced support from the City Council and the NHS in Birmingham to help you care for your residents.

### **1. Health Protection Team Toolkit**

The first point we wanted to bring to your attention, was to reinforce the advice that where there are 2 or more residents with symptoms of COVID-19 within a 14-day period, please ensure you report this outbreak to your local Health Protection Team (HPT) from Public Health England (PHE) using the following link, where there will be information on how to manage the outbreak:

<https://surveys.phe.org.uk/TakeSurvey.aspx?SurveyID=n4KL97m2l>

The HPT will review all submissions via this link and will then contact you if they require further information. If you require URGENT advice or guidance that cannot be located in the information sent then the contact details for the HPT are:

**0344 225 3560 Option 0, Option 2**

However, the HPT are currently managing a large volume of calls so please only contact the office directly if absolutely necessary.

## **2. Enhanced Care Home Support Team**

Birmingham Community Healthcare NHSFT (BCHC) has this week established an Enhanced Care Home Support Team. This service is contactable 8.00am – 8.00pm, seven days a week via the number below:-

**0121 466 6390 or via email at**

**[bchnt.covid-19pathway3@nhs.net](mailto:bchnt.covid-19pathway3@nhs.net)**

The team is made up of Advanced Nurse Practitioners and Clinical Support Staff based across Birmingham who will be offering direct support to Care Homes which will include:

- help to support discharge from hospital and supporting the appropriate placements of patients depending on their need
- support with the management of patient care in times of deterioration in health, ensuring they get the support they need, when they need it
- working with you and your staff to arrange the support required for your residents to remain within the care home, unless hospital admission is unavoidable

The BCHC team will also be able to provide practical advice to help navigate all the guidance that you will have received on topics such as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), infection control and access to swabbing for residents from our dedicated swabbing team (following notification to HPT at Public Health England as outlined above). Your staff will also be able to access online training to support them to identify the early signs of residents whose conditions are deteriorating.

## **3. Access to Primary Medical Care (Birmingham & Solihull CCG Homes)**

Birmingham and Solihull CCG have commissioned South Doc Services to provide medical support to care homes across Birmingham. This service will be provided 8:00am-8:00pm 7 days per week via the number below.

**0121 483 2142**

The service will provide robust medical assessment and advice via a team of GPs, Advanced Nurse Practitioners, Pharmacists and support staff. The service will dovetail with the service offered by BCHC above should a patient need further community assistance.

SDS will be in touch with Care Homes and primary care colleagues over the coming few days to clarify the primary care arrangements. If the patients registered GP is not the Birmingham Care Home Service operated by South Doc Services MyHealthcare then all routine queries and medication requests should be dealt with by the registered GP practice as usual.

For those care home residents who's registered GP is the Birmingham Care Home Service operated by South Doc Services, all queries routine and urgent together with all medication/other requests can be made via the number above

#### **4. Access to Primary Medical Care (Sandwell & West Birmingham CCG Homes)**

For those care homes in west Birmingham, Malling Health are now providing a 24/7 advice line for care homes with residents who have tested positive for COVID-19. The provider can be contacted on:-

**0333 996 0222 or via email [sandwell.ooh@nhs.net](mailto:sandwell.ooh@nhs.net)**

The list of Care Homes in appendix A confirms which Care Homes we consider to be in west Birmingham.

Both of the services above are also linked to the BCHC Enhanced Care Homes Service if additional support is required.

#### **5. Personal Protective Equipment**

We are aware that the supply of PPE remains an ongoing issue for Care Homes. In response the Government has made additional supply available to a number of wholesale suppliers who should be contacted in the first instance. The full list is available in Appendix B to this letter.

If you continue to experience difficulties, please call the National Supply Disruption Line on:

**0800 915 9964 or email [supplydisruptionservice@nhsbsa.nhs.uk](mailto:supplydisruptionservice@nhsbsa.nhs.uk)**

In addition, and in order to support the supply of PPE over the coming Easter bank-holiday weekend, all patients discharged to a Care Home will be supplied with 4 day of PPE supplies to ensure that ongoing protective care can be provided. This will be organised by the team at BCHC.

If you continue to have issues with the supply of PPE and all existing channels have been exhausted then you can contact the Care Home Support Team on the number above.

#### **6. Key National Guidance**

We understand that you will already have received large amounts of guidance on coronavirus from a range of organisations. We hope however that it is helpful if we include a link to two of the key documents designed to support you and your team.

- Personal Protective Equipment Guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-and-control/covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-ppe#summary-of-ppe-recommendations-for-health-and-social-care-workers>

- Admissions and Care of People in Care Homes

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-admission-and-care-of-people-in-care-homes>

If you need support to work through what the above guidance means in your particular situation please do contact the Care Home Support Team on the number included above.

This overall support offer is also in addition to your usual commissioning arrangements and has been designed to provide further clinical support at this difficult time. Local commissioners are producing regular updates via their FAQ's which also includes details of who to contact for all other commissioning or contract management enquiries:

[www.birmingham.gov.uk/stm](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/stm)

<https://www.birminghamandsolihullccg.nhs.uk/your-health/coronavirus-advice-for-professionals>

Thank you, once again, on behalf of the health and social care system for the role you are playing. I hope that you will find the support set out in this letter helpful, however, I recognise that the challenges we face together are to some extent unpredictable and subject to change.

Please contact the BCHC Enhanced Care Homes Service should you require further support not covered in this letter and I will look at how as a system we can help you to meet that need.

Yours sincerely



Richard Kirby

Lead – Birmingham & Solihull Discharges & Care Home Support

Chief Executive, Birmingham Community Healthcare NHS FT

## Appendix A: Sandwell & West Birmingham CCG Homes

The following Care Homes are considered as being under Sandwell & West Birmingham CCG for the purposes of sections 3 and 4 above (Access to Primary Care)

- Acorn Care Home
- Albion Court Care Centre
- Ashmill Residential Care Home
- Beeton Grange
- Church Rose Nursing Home
- Clare Court Care Home
- Dartmouth House
- Robert Harvey House
- Sharmway Private & Residential Home
- The Royd
- Willowbrook

## Appendix B – list of Care Home distributors

Supplier	Healthcare Sector
Careshop <a href="mailto:coronavirus@careshop.co.uk">coronavirus@careshop.co.uk</a> <a href="https://www.careshop.co.uk">https://www.careshop.co.uk</a> , Telephone 0161 848 4000	Social Care (e.g. community care, home care, hospices)
Blueleaf 03300 552 288 <a href="mailto:emergencystock@blueleafcare.com">emergencystock@blueleafcare.com</a> *	Social Care (e.g. community care, home care, hospices)
Delivernet 01756 706 050 <a href="mailto:lee.morris@delivernet.co.uk">lee.morris@delivernet.co.uk</a> <a href="https://shop.delivernet.co.uk/protective-clothing/">https://shop.delivernet.co.uk/protective-clothing/</a>	Social Care (e.g. community care, home care, hospices)
Countrywide Healthcare 01226 719 090 <a href="mailto:enquiries@countrywidehealthcare.co.uk">enquiries@countrywidehealthcare.co.uk</a>	Social Care (e.g. community care, home care, hospices)
Nexon Medical Supplies <a href="https://www.nexonhealthcare.co.uk">https://www.nexonhealthcare.co.uk</a> , 00800 999 5006 <a href="mailto:info@nexongroup.co.uk">info@nexongroup.co.uk</a>	Social Care (e.g. community care, home care, hospices)
Wightman and Parrish 01323 445 001 <a href="https://store.w-p.co.uk">https://store.w-p.co.uk</a> <a href="mailto:sales@w-p.co.uk">sales@w-p.co.uk</a>	Social Care (e.g. community care, home care, hospices)
Gompols 0345 450 2420 <a href="https://www.gompels.co.uk">https://www.gompels.co.uk</a>	Social Care (e.g. community care, home care, hospices)

Most distributors are open Mon-Fri, 8/9am- 5/6pm (varied); \* indicates preferred contact method