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## Briefing to care homes and domiciliary care providers during COVID-19.

Will Maimaris, Director of Public Health

*This is the eighth in a set of regular briefing letters from Haringey's Director of Public Health, in collaboration with our Clinical Commissioning Group.*

*Thank you to everyone in the sector for everything you have done to care for Haringey's residents. Although levels of COVID-19 are now falling in all settings it remains really important to be vigilant both for staff and residents.*

### Latest updates

#### *Easing of Lockdown*

As lockdown measures are eased across the county, staff are reminded to please take extra care outside of the settings to ensure they reduce potential exposures to COVID.

#### *Lack of sense of smell/taste added to the list of symptoms for COVID-19*

The government has added a loss of or change in your sense of taste or smell to the [self-isolation guidelines](#). If any member of staff experiences this symptom, or any of the others, they must immediately self-isolate along with members of their household. They should also get a COVID-19 test.

#### *Antibody tests for care staff*

From later this week, the Government [has announced](#) it will offer antibody tests to health and social care staff and patients in England. More details of the test can be found [here](#). Details of how these will be accessed will be released shortly.

#### *Journalists looking for information*

Please be aware that we have had reports of a number of calls to care providers asking about PPE. Any genuine enquiries from the Council or Health would normally be via a recognised Council or NHS email address.

#### *Reminder: touching your mask*

As stated in [How to work safely in care homes guidance](#), you should not touch your mask during a session of care. If you do, then that session is ended, and you must change the mask for a new one.

#### *Update on PMART*

Pandemic Multiagency Response Teams (PMART) were established in the early stages of the pandemic to respond to suspected Covid19 deaths in the community, and as a result PMART also attended deaths in care homes. A decision was taken on the 15th of May to stand down the PMART response due to the continued decrease in the number of deaths from COVID19 across London

#### *NCL Care Home and Domiciliary Care information and resources*

Access to the NCL resources for care homes, including access to testing can be found [here](#).

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#### *Aerosol Generating Procedures (AGPs)*

There have been enquiries on what is considered an AGP. There was an update of the evidence in [section 8.1 of the governments' PPE guidance](#). This states that for patients with possible or confirmed COVID-19, any of these potentially infectious AGPs should only be carried out when essential. The NERVTAG group advised that during nebulisation, the aerosol derives from a non-patient source (the fluid in the nebuliser chamber) and does not carry patient-derived viral particles, therefore it is not considered an AGP. Suctioning of the respiratory tract or of a tracheostomy ARE considered AGPs and appropriate PPE should be worn.

#### *CQC updates*

- The CQC have released a slide pack entitled "[COVID Impact: Focus on Adult Social Care](#)".
- They have also updated their information for adult social care on medicines:
  - [COVID-19: medicines information for adult social care providers](#)
  - [Medicine support care plans - making adjustments during the coronavirus pandemic](#)
  - [Medicines disposal during the coronavirus pandemic](#)

## COVID-19 SUPPORT DIRECTORY

### Testing for staff and residents

An [online portal](#) that makes it easy for care homes to arrange deliveries of coronavirus test kits has been launched. You can apply whether or not any of your residents or staff have coronavirus symptoms.

### Testing for staff or their household contacts

<https://self-referral.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/>

There are walk-in options for care staff on the [STP website](#).

### Testing for Residents in a new outbreak

To access tests, homes need to contact the LCRC ([LCRC@phe.gov.uk](mailto:LCRC@phe.gov.uk) or call 0300 303 0450) if they have residents with symptoms who have not been tested. The LCRC will then arrange for test kits to be delivered and picked up directly from the care home.

### Infection control support

- **NCL drop in webinars** for care home and domiciliary staff on use of PPE, infection control and end of life care (check the topic that week). Every Wednesday at 2pm. To attend email [Christina.Sheils@Barnet.gov.uk](mailto:Christina.Sheils@Barnet.gov.uk) who will send you the link to join.

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- NCL have a dedicated IPC email and telephone helpline manned by a member of staff with significant IPC knowledge and experience –
  - o Email helpline address [nclccg.covid-19infectioncontrol@nhs.net](mailto:nclccg.covid-19infectioncontrol@nhs.net)
  - o Phone helpline No: 020 3816 3403
  - o [IPC website](#) with all up to date resources in one place

#### Acquiring Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Request PPE through your usual supplier.
- Log any difficulties in getting PPE with the **The National Supply Disruption line (0800 915 9964, [supplydisruptionsservice@nhsbsa.nhs.uk](mailto:supplydisruptionsservice@nhsbsa.nhs.uk)**.
- If you are still having trouble, contact either Rick Geer from the Public Health Team ([rick.geer@haringey.gov.uk](mailto:rick.geer@haringey.gov.uk)) or Sujesh Sundarraj, Commissioning and Safeguarding Officer ([Sujesh.Sundarraj@haringey.gov.uk](mailto:Sujesh.Sundarraj@haringey.gov.uk)), who can help you obtain interim PPE in an emergency. You will need to provide evidence that you have already tried through your usual route and that you have contacted the Supply Disruption Line.

#### Reporting and communications

- Please ensure you are registered for an NHS email account.
- Care homes should use both tools to report capacity for bed vacancies (NHS's [Capacity Tracker](#) and London ADASS Market Insight Tool's [Provider Portal](#)) to support system resilience.
- Homecare providers should please **report daily to the CQC using their webform**.
- Please inform the local Health Protection Team (HPT) if you suspect you have an outbreak of COVID within the care home.

#### Reporting the death of a worker

In the unfortunate event of a death of a member of staff, please inform the DHSC using the process outlined in the following link: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): informing DHSC of the death of a worker in social care](#)

#### Mental Health Support

[Let's Talk Haringey](#) provide talking and digital therapies for stress and low mood. They prioritise care sector staff in its current access criteria and include all staff working in Haringey even if they are registered with a GP elsewhere.

[Together in Mind](#) is a wellbeing and mental health project that connects and supports the North Central and North East London health and social care workforce.

[SilverCloud](#) is offering unsupported pure self-help programmes for staff. The access code is NHS2020.

[NCL in Mind](#) is a wellbeing and mental health project to connect and support the North Central London health and social care workforce during the COVID-19 outbreak developed by The Tavistock and Portman NHS foundation trust.

[Good thinking – tools to help your mental health](#) is an online resource which can help with issues such as sleep problems, anxiety and low mood.

[Cruse bereavement](#) helpline for those struggling without support in self-isolation - 0808 808 1677

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**NHS mental health hotline** to support NHS staff

- 0300 131 7000 (Open between 7am - 11pm every day)
- Text service available 24/7. (Text FRONTLINE to 85258)

**Self-Care during Coronavirus (Covid-19) – free apps for NHS Staff**

- [Unmind](#) is a mental health platform that empowers staff to proactively improve their mental wellbeing
- [Headspace](#) is a science-backed app in mindfulness and meditation, providing unique tools and resources to help reduce stress, build resilience, and aid better sleep
- [Sleepio](#) is a clinically evidenced sleep improvement programme that is fully automated and highly personalised, using cognitive behavioural techniques to help improve poor sleep
- [Daylight](#) provides help to people experiencing symptoms of worry and anxiety, using evidence-based cognitive behavioural techniques, voice and animation

Social Care App

There is a [dedicated app](#) which allows care workers to access COVID-19 guidance, learning resources, discounts and other support all in one place. The app is available on Android and on Apple phones. It is also accessible on the website at <https://workforce.adultsocialcare.uk>.

Haringey Council Contacts

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Public Health England

Please inform the London Corona Virus Response Cell (LCRC) ([LCRC@phe.gov.uk](mailto:LCRC@phe.gov.uk) or call 0300 303 0450) if you suspect you have an outbreak of COVID in your care home. They will advise on further communication to local infection control teams and local authority colleagues and CCGs.

Covid-19 information and guidance

We continue to update the Haringey website with the latest information and guidance related to Covid- 19 to support you. Visit [www.haringey.gov.uk/asc](http://www.haringey.gov.uk/asc)