

# COVID-19 VISITORS POLICY

## Aims and Objectives

To ensure the safety of our staff and residents during the extraordinary circumstances by limiting the number of people entering the home.

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## Introduction

This visitors policy sets out how we manage visits safely within the care home. The guidance is designed to keep all our residents safe bearing in mind the significant impact a care home outbreak can have.

We are required to be mindful of the local, dynamic, risk assessment of the Director of Public Health who is responsible for deciding at a local level whether visits in care homes can take place.

Our policy has been written with reference to the latest Government guidance on care home visits. We have developed a risk assessment for visits at each site, which is available on request from your manager.

In the event of a local outbreak in the care home and/or local community we may rapidly impose visiting restrictions to protect vulnerable residents, staff and visitors. In this situation we will continue to ensure communication as per 'Ensuring Continued Communication' below.

**All aspects of this policy are at the discretion of Registered Manager's (RM) or person in charge at the time of the visit.**

**Island Healthcare retains the right to end any visit, or prevent people from visiting, if they are not adhering to the below policy.**

## Visitors Policy

To limit risk by maintaining a low number of overall visits we are limited to one constant visitor, per resident. Families must decide who the continuous visitor will be and register with the Registered Manager of the home. Only the registered visitor will be permitted to book a visit.

To allow the home to be able to manage visits most effectively, and to give all families an opportunity to visit safely, **we will be limiting the registered continuous visitor to just 2 visits a week.**

To support NHS Track and Trace the names and contact details of all visitors will be maintained.

All visits must be booked in advance, we cannot allow ad hoc visiting at this time.

Visitors will have no contact with other residents and minimal contact with care home staff i.e. less than 15 minutes and maintaining the 2m social distancing. Conversations with staff can be arranged over the phone following an in-person visit.

All visitors must follow good hand hygiene practices, using hand washing facilities when entering and leaving the home, washing hands for at least 20 seconds.

Visitors must wear a face covering when visiting (and should ensure they wash hands before and after putting it on and taking it off). Island Healthcare can provide a mask if necessary.

As with our employees, visitors should wear PPE appropriate to the need of their visit. If a visitor is making close personal contact (within 2m) they are required to wear gloves and aprons, which can also be provided by Island Healthcare.

All visitors will be screened on entry and any visitor who is currently experiencing, or first experienced coronavirus symptoms in the last 7 days will be refused entry. As will anyone who has, or is in the same household as someone who has, been advised by NHS Track and Trace to self-isolate.

We will ask the following screening questions on entry:

1. Have you been feeling unwell recently?
2. Have you had recent onset of a new continuous cough?
3. Current temperature
4. Have you noticed a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell?
5. Have you had recent contact (in the last 14 days) with anyone with COVID-19 symptoms or someone with confirmed COVID-19 – if yes, should you be self-isolating as a family member or as a contact advised to do so by NHS Test and Trace?

All visits must either take place in a communal garden or outdoor area, which can be accessed without anyone going through a shared building, in a person's room or a designated meeting space. Outdoor visits will always be the primary option, weather permitting. If visiting does take place in a resident's room, visitors should go there directly upon arrival and leave immediately after.

Visitors should walk or use their own transport to get to the home wherever possible.

Social distancing must be adhered to with personal interaction and skin-skin contact kept to a minimum. This is not just to protect your loved one but all the people living at the home.

If a visitor wishes to bring a gift this must first be discussed with the Registered Manager when making the appointment. All items must be easily disinfected i.e. flowers would not be allowed but a box of chocolates would be fine.

### **Individual Risk Assessments for people who cannot accept visitors wearing face coverings**

In exceptional circumstances people may have difficulty accepting staff or visitors wearing masks or face coverings. The severity, intensity and/or frequency of the behaviours of concern may place them, visitors or the supporting staff at risk of harm.

A comprehensive risk assessment for each of these people will be carried out to identify the specific risks for them and others

Individual visitor plans will be developed in accordance with the risk assessments which may include the use of visors or clear face coverings. Under no circumstances can this assessment be applied to a whole care setting.

### **End of Life**

This is a particularly difficult situation, but our visitor policy must be adhered to.

We may be able to extend the number of people visiting although this will be at the discretion of the Registered Manager and all visitors must ensure they remain only in the person's room.

### **Ensuring Continued Communication**

Although we are now allowing in-person visits we will continue to encourage and facilitate alternatives, such as the use of telephone or video visits. This will remain important for people not registered as the 1 continuous visitor and in the event we are required to locally lock down.

All homes have active WiFi, although bandwidth can be limited at busy times.

