

## Care Homes and Hospice

### **Some care homes are not accepting referrals for patients who have not been tested for COVID-19. What should happen in these cases?**

- Further guidance will be issued on these issues shortly and we recognise that local systems are experiencing challenges.
- The government has issued initial advice to the care home and home care sectors, which is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-residential-care-supported-living-and-home-care-guidance/covid-19-guidance-on-residential-care-provision>

### **How are Care homes going to access Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)?**

- The Department for Health and Social Care wrote to the care sector recently about provision of PPE. This confirmed:
  - Free distribution of fluid repellent face masks from the pandemic flu stock commenced on 18 March. Every care home and home care provider will receive at least 300 masks.
  - Distribution should be complete by 24 March
  - The government is working with wholesalers to ensure a longer term supply of all aspects of PPE. Providers should order future stocks from their normal suppliers
  - If you have immediate concerns, you should contact the dedicated line.

The National Supply Disruption Line

0800 915 9964

[supplydisruptionservice@nhsbsa.nhs.uk](mailto:supplydisruptionservice@nhsbsa.nhs.uk)

- DHSC has indicated that no wholesaler has been asked to prioritise NHS provision over the care sector

### **How are social care providers (care homes and domiciliary) going to access the PPE they need to keep their clients and staff safe?**

- A distribution list that covers CQC registered providers of residential, nursing and domiciliary care has been drawn up (this covers around 25,000 providers) and PPE equipment is being distributed.
- Deliveries should be made by the end of Wednesday 25 March.
- Government is working with suppliers to continue to acquire and distribute stocks.

### **We haven't received supplies. What should we do?**

- You should contact the supply disruption helpline in the first instance. They will advise you on next steps. They will either
  - Signpost you to the nearest wholesaler, or
  - Arrange emergency supplies

### **We contacted the supply disruption line and were told we are not on the distribution list. What do we do?**

- DHSC are investigating this currently.

### **What about non registered providers – e.g. councils?**

- DHSC are aware of this and are developing guidance. We will update as we know more.

## **How are the current stocks of PPE going to be enough? When should we be using them?**

- Advice from the Chief Medical Officer is that, for people who are asymptomatic and have no positive diagnosis, it is not necessary to use full PPE.
- From 19 March, Coronavirus is no longer classified as a High Consequence Infectious Disease. This means that, provided normal infection control is exercised, it is unlikely to spread.

## Capacity Tracker

### **Is use of this tracker compulsory?**

- We need one version of the truth in terms of bed capacity in the system to help providers collaborate to ensure that patients and the public are cared for in the right setting. That is why we are encouraging
  - all care homes,
  - all hospices (including children's hospices) and
  - all providers of inpatient community rehabilitation and end of life care
- to input their data

### **If we are saying that home first is the priority, why are we steering people towards a bed tracker?**

- Home first is a priority but in reality some people (around 5%) will need to be cared for in bed based facilities. Knowing where available beds are will save everyone in the system time and effort in understanding where capacity is in the right setting

### **What support is there for care homes to get their data onto the tracker?**

- For current support please visit Capacity Tracker website address at: <https://carehomes.necsu.nhs.uk/>. This weblink will signpost to wider resources when they are available to be released.

### **What if a local care home does not sign up?**

- We know that everyone across health and social care is pulling in the same direction, and that everyone recognises that by working together we can help the country get through this incident. Therefore, we are confident that care homes will work with us on this.

### **We use a different capacity tracker tool – can't we just use this instead?**

- We are asking systems that use another system to use the capacity tracker in parallel for the duration of this incident. The reason for this is that the Care Tracker system is being used to collect data nationally and co-ordinate the response. We therefore need consistent data that we can use and need all places to use this system.

### **Does the capacity tracker include Community beds - not just care homes?**

- NHS community providers will need to report all beds through the Capacity Tracker from 23 March. This will provide an overview of all bed based capacity across community health and residential care.

## Wider market issues

### **How do we manage capacity issues in the home care market?**

- Co-ordinators from local government should work with domiciliary care providers to manage capacity and ensure that providers are paid promptly. They should work with the single co-ordinator and system partners to manage the market and allocate resources as effectively as possible.

#### NHS mail

#### **What will happen with the normal Information Governance requirements for NHS mail**

- To improve communication between health and social care during the COVID-19 outbreak, NHSX is speeding-up the roll-out of NHSmail and temporarily waiving the completion of Data Security Protection Toolkit (DSPT) to allow for quicker on boarding. This is in-line with information governance guidance for COVID-19.
- These are temporary measures to improve communication during COVID-19. NHSX is committed to enabling care providers to choose the right communication solutions for them. Providers will be asked to give their own assurance that they are secure and post-COVID-19, afterward NHSmail regional teams will take providers through the full DSPT process, supporting them to accredit their secure email system or NHSmail for sharing in future.