

Guidance for visitors to care homes during Covid-19 - July 2020

This Guidance has been written for visitors of Knowsley Councils' care homes. It is based on national guidance. It outlines the safety measures that we are putting in place to ensure that all residents and their visitors can continue to meet each other in a meaningful and safe way.

It outlines

- Measures to facilitate social distance visits
- What we ask of visitors to support us
- What you can expect from us before and during your visit

Socially Distanced Visiting for Relatives, Friends and Others

People who are shielding and residing in long-term care facilities remain vulnerable and strict precautions need to continue. You may be aware that allowing visitors into care homes is subject to a number of things, for example the care homes risk assessment, whether there are any residents who are symptomatic and we need to take into account the presence of Covid-19 outbreaks in the community. For these reasons visiting practices are subject to change, sometimes at very short notice.

To support us to ensure all visits can be facilitated safely, all visits must be pre-booked. Ad-hoc visiting will not be allowed. Visits will be time limited and can be weekly. On arrival you will be asked to complete a risk assessment, by completing a short form. You may also be asked for permission to check your temperature prior to the visit.

In line with national guidance there should be a single consistent visitor for each resident, wherever possible, to reduce the number of potential contacts in the home. This means the same family member visiting each time to limit the number of different individuals coming into contact with your loved one.

Visitors should have no contact with other residents and minimal contact with staff members (less than 15 minutes at 2 metre distance). If an in-depth conversation is required you are asked to do this by telephone please.

To help keep our residents safe we ask:

- That on arrival you will wash your hands for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser on entering and leaving the care home and to catch coughs and sneezes in tissues and clean their hands and dispose of tissues.
- That you wear face coverings during the visit, and wash your hands before and after putting it on and taking it off. (There may be some instances when a visitor will need to wear additional PPE). Wearing a face covering may make communication difficult so it is important to speak loudly and clearly, keeping eye contact with your loved one. Do not wear a hat or anything else that may conceal your face and it may help if you wear your hair in a way that a resident would be more likely to recognise
- Whenever possible please walk to the care home or use your own transport and avoid using public transport
- Adhere at all times to 2 metres social distancing and not to have contact with your loved one (no hugging/touching)
- If visitors bring toiletries or a gift for their relative this should be something that is easy to clean – these should be left in a plastic bag for staff to collect and disinfect before taking to the residents room

Unfortunately we will not be able to offer refreshments to visitors and ask that you do not share any food or drink that you bring in with you, with your loved one. The toilet facilities will also be unavailable for visitors.

If you are unable to physically visit your relative but would like to explore other options for example window visiting, drive by visiting or the use of technology please contact the care home to discuss.

We will be happy to discuss any other suggestions with you and support your needs

Government guidance remains in place:

We ask that you do not visit if:

- You have you been told to stay at home, self-isolate or shield for health reasons
- You or any of your immediate family members have symptoms or have had a positive test within the past 14 days
- You have been identified as a CONTACT of a positive case and must self-isolate for 14 days
- You have been in contact with any person experiencing flu like symptoms in the past 14 days
- If you have been out of the country within the last 14 days
- Have experienced any symptoms you think could be Covid-19 related in the past 14 days

We can all help control the virus if we all stay alert. This means you must:

- Stay at home as much as possible
- Work from home if you can
- Limit contact with other people
- Keep your distance if you go out (2 metres apart where possible)
- Wash your hands / sanitise regularly
- Do not leave home if you or anyone in your household has symptoms

Please talk to the Home manager or a member of their team if you require clarity in relation to any of this guidance.