



Keeping safe when visiting care homes

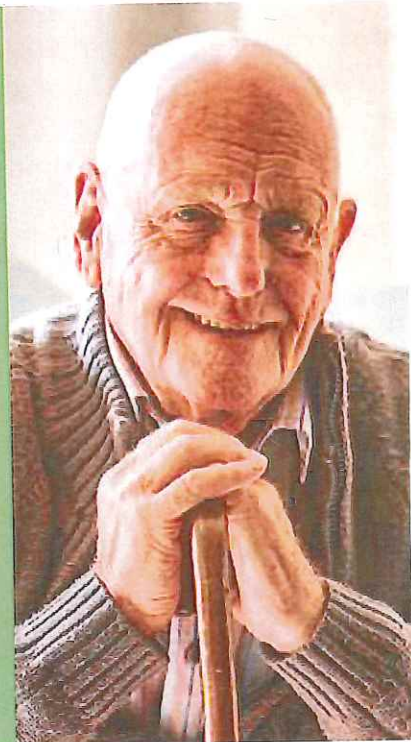


Knowsley Council has been working with care homes across the borough to once again welcome visitors, and we are absolutely committed to ensuring that this is done in the safest way possible.

COVID-19 is easily spread from person to person, and many residents of our care homes are more vulnerable than the general population. It is therefore vital that we take extra precautions in order to keep everyone safe from harm.

This leaflet explains the guidance that the council has provided to care homes across the borough, adhering to the latest advice from the Government and Public Health England. We hope that this will provide reassurance that we are all taking the necessary steps to keep your relative as safe and comfortable as we possibly can.

As well as measures our care homes have introduced to stop the spread of the virus, visitors are also asked to play their part and to follow the advice being issued.



Before you visit

- Book your visit in advance (we need to limit visitor numbers to ensure social distancing measures can be adhered to).
- For many homes, visits will be limited to one per week and a limited amount of time. This is to ensure that there are enough visiting slots for every resident to see their family member.
- There should be one consistent visitor for each resident, in order to reduce the footfall through the home, and so reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. In some specific cases, this may be more difficult for your family to arrange, and there may be the potential for multiple family members to take it in turns to be the designated visitor. If you feel that this applies to you, please contact the care home manager to discuss further. Please bear in mind that the council have given them specific guidance about when this can be allowed, but they will try to accommodate you wherever possible.
- You will need to complete a screening form before visiting to confirm that you do not have any COVID19 symptoms or been in contact with anyone who has tested positive. Depending on the home, you may receive this in advance when you book your visit, or may be asked to sign this when you arrive.

When you visit

- Keep to your allocated time (please don't come early or stay later).
- If possible, avoid coming to the home via public transport. If you do, ensure you wear a face covering on public transport.
- Please wash your hands for at least 20 seconds when you arrive and leave and use hand sanitisers and tissues (to catch coughs and sneezes) provided.
- Please maintain social distancing (2m or more) and wear a face covering in communal areas.
- Whilst we appreciate it is hard, refrain from hugging or kissing your relative – social distancing needs to be maintained. This is so important to reduce the risk of spreading the virus.
- If you bring a gift, ensure it can be wiped down with disinfectant (COVID-19 can



live on some surfaces that aren't cleaned properly) – please hand it to a member of staff in a plastic bag when you arrive so that it can be cleaned.

- Toilets will be closed to visitors.
- Visits will be conducted outdoors where possible to further reduce the spread of the virus. Some care homes will have a room available where they can safely accommodate visits indoors, but some may not. We ask you to please be understanding if this is the case. Care homes will do their best to rearrange your visit if it gets "rained off".

Please note

We are reviewing COVID-19 cases daily and should an outbreak be identified in a care home, visits will need to temporarily cease. Steps will be taken for the home to reopen once it is safe to do so.

Alternatives to visits

The safest way to keep in touch is through video calls using FaceTime, Skype, Zoom or WhatsApp. Staff in the home can support your relative with these.

A note on hairdressers and entertainers

Government guidance has not yet been issued around hairdresser or entertainers visiting care homes, so they are currently not able to visit Knowsley homes. As soon as there is an update, we will share with our care homes.



Thank you for your understanding and cooperation with this guidance during this incredibly difficult time.

We know that it has been hard for everyone, but we are doing all that we can to support both you and residents in our care homes.

Thank you too to all care homes who have followed our guidance and worked incredibly hard during the pandemic to maintain the safety, comfort, dignity and happiness of all of their residents.

If you want to get in touch with us about this leaflet please visit the council's website at www.knowsley.gov.uk and go to 'Have Your Say' or call us on **0151 443 3231**.

