

Visiting our Care Homes

VISITING PROTOCOL (Xmas & New Year)



Introduction

Welcome,

We recognise that Christmas and New Year are an important time for many residents and their loved ones. We had hoped to introduce new controlled and time-limited visiting inside the care home for Xmas and New Year 2020. However, following the change in the rules around lockdown easing over Christmas, this will only be possible on Christmas Day.

Your continued support in protecting not only our residents and staff, but also you as visitors and the wider community, is especially important. The latest guidance from the Scottish Government is that “the safest way to spend Christmas if you want to visit someone in a care home, hospital or hospice is to stay within your own household and not form a bubble with any other household.”

It is critical during this stage that visits only take place at pre-arranged times. These will be jointly agreed between you, our residents and the care home. This arrangement is in place to ensure we reduce the number of people inside the care home at any one time, to protect our residents and staff.

Visits on Christmas Day will take place in a safe location, most likely the Garden or open socially distanced space. You will be asked to enter through a predetermined route deemed safest. This reduces the risk of someone who is asymptomatic inadvertently taking the virus deeper into the care home. This is a critical safety measure to protect your loved one, the other residents and our staff.

Visits can be for a period of up to 4 hours. We would ask for your co-operation in following this limit as this allows us time to implement infection prevention and control processes to clean the visitor area thereby enabling other visitors to visit their loved ones safely.

Action you will be asked to take during your visit

1. You will be asked to **bring a face covering with you**. If you don't have one, a mask will be supplied by our staff. You must wear this mask at all times during your visit. If you are supplied with a mask, they are all single use items and must be disposed of in the bin provided at the end of your visit. In some instances, you may be asked to put on additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Staff will be on hand to show you how to put any PPE on and more importantly how to take them off safely, thereby reducing any infection risk.
2. You will be asked on entering **to wash your hands with soap and water**. Handwashing should take a minimum of 20 seconds, following the hand-washing guide on the wall. If there is no hand washing facility, you will be asked to use alcohol hand gel.
3. You will be asked **to sign that you have read this visiting protocol** and completed the accompanying health pro-forma and whether or not you consent to taking a

Lateral Flow Test (LFT). You will again be asked to clean/rub your hands with the alcohol gel at the meeting area.

4. You are asked to **maintain a two-metre distance** between you and your loved one. We fully understand this is difficult for both you and your loved one. However, it is a critical protective factor for you both, our staff and the wider community.
5. With prior approval and in a very few limited situations, **closer contact with your loved one**, including touching, may be permitted (both indoors and outdoors) at the discretion of the care home manager who will provide you with the details of how this can be permitted.
6. **You can bring in Xmas presents**, as long as they can be easily wiped down before passing on to the resident. Anything that cannot be easily cleaned will need to be bagged and stored for 72 hrs before being passed to the resident.
7. **You can also bring in small amounts of food or home baking** as long as it is only consumed by the resident who receives it (sharing food and utensils can be a source of transmission so should be avoided).
8. **If you are bringing in a pet**, you must get prior approval from the care home manager, who will provide you with the details of how this can be permitted.
9. **Staff will show you how to remove PPE safely**. You must dispose of the PPE in the bin provided and perform hand hygiene immediately on removal.
10. As you leave the **please use the alcohol-based gel** provided to clean/rub your hands.

Future Focus

At all times we will follow Scottish Government guidelines related to visiting. As the whole of mainland Scotland will move to Tier 4 from Boxing Day, indoor visits will not be able to take place, other than essential visits. However, outdoor visits can continue to take place but will be limited to one visitor and children and young people cannot visit. We know that outdoor visits are far from ideal in the middle of winter and are looking at how we can make them as pleasant as possible in the New Year.

We will continue to keep our visiting arrangements under review as the guidance from the Government changes and keep you informed of each change as it occurs and how it impacts on our residents and on you as a family member.