

Today we add the '**Care**' logo following the Government's adoption of it on the Action Plan for Adult Social Care. We're delighted at this important step of national recognition for the sector.

Praise for social care teams

Carers for vulnerable and elderly adults are among frontline staff praised for delivering high quality care services in Oxfordshire, during the coronavirus outbreak.

While large numbers of Oxfordshire County Council staff work from home in line with the Government's guidelines, key worker teams, care providers and personal assistants go above and beyond the call of duty to deliver essential and flexible services across the county.

Stephen Chandler, the Director for Adult Social Care at Oxfordshire County Council said: *"We work with inspirational and dedicated professionals and I would like to express my sincere personal thanks on behalf of Oxfordshire County Council for all that you are doing. Our teams of social workers, care providers, personal assistants and carers are observing social distancing and still providing care while using innovative ways to facilitate safe and timely discharges."*

[Read more](#)

Yesterday, [Oxfordshire County Council changed](#) the way the providers could access the [emergency funding from national government](#) of £14,539,189 will be used in Oxfordshire. The Sustainability Fund has been withdrawn with a replacement system of 10% for every Council contracted provider based on their council-related business between December 2019-February 2020.

We have received a number of concerns from providers regarding this change and we are in conversation with the Council regarding their new stance.

Testing update

The system that started this week has had criticism from providers faced with long journeys to testing centres. Feedback has been given about testing site location and CQC location address. Note that this a new system being put in place - please bear with it. A home testing kit is being developed.

If your current CQC location listing is out of date, please contact CQC urgently to get it updated.

PPE Plan & Social Care Action Plan

The government published its [PPE Plan](#) earlier this week and yesterday's social care action plan branded with the Care logo should be read alongside it. There isn't much in the initial PPE plan that we didn't already know and in particular we are still waiting for more information about the online [Clipper] portal for ordering PPE.

NCF has done brief analysis of the [Social Care Action Plan](#) and have highlighted things to note. The action plan is more of a summary of actions taken so far by Government, but provides little in the way of concrete detail, adequate funding or timescales.

Distribution of PPE

Section 1.12 to 1.22 details the plans to distribute PPE.

Section 1.16 states that the government will continue to deliver emergency PPE drops to Local Resilience Forums until a parallel supply chain is in place. Oxfordshire's LRF connection is via ASCcovid19@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Managing Outbreaks

See sections 1.23 to 1.27 about managing outbreaks. Section 1.27 in particular confirms the move to testing all symptomatic residents in care homes, but there is no timescale on this.

Safe discharge from the NHS to social care settings

This section can be found between 1.28 and 1.36. Section 1.30 says that Government will move to institute a policy of testing all residents prior to admission to care homes. This will begin with all those being discharged from hospital...'

This does not have a clear start date and is more vague than the verbal commitment the Secretary of State gave in his press conference.

Section 1.31 suggests a new role for the Nightingale Hospitals in providing space for NHS rehabilitation and recovery for those that recover from COVID-19, before being moved to social care settings.

Section 1.34 talks about starting to move towards testing for individuals being admitted to care homes from the community.

Workforce

Section 2.12 mentions the ambition of the government to recruit 20,000 people into social care over the next three months. This will be done using an online platform and a new recruitment campaign. These are detailed in sections 2.13, 2.14 & 2.15.

Section 2.18 states that the government has been working with Skills for Care to make it easier for employers to access rapid online induction training for new staff.

Section 2.22 explicitly states that returning nurses will also be used in social care. Nurses and student nurses are being deployed by regional hubs to where they are needed most, irrespective of organisation.

Wellbeing

Section 2.33 states that social care workers can now access a text messaging support service.

Section 2.34 extends wellbeing resources previously only available to the NHS to social care workers. This includes the NHS support helpline (Section 2.35).

Recognition

Section 2.39 states that the CARE badge brand will be used to create a greater sense of identity and parity with the NHS brand. The sale of the Care badge is currently suspended presumably due to the current crisis.

Technology

Section 2.45 a text messaging service for extremely vulnerable people to provide up-to-date information, guidance and advice to support them during isolation.

Supporting independence, supporting people at the end of their lives and responding to individual needs

Section 3 largely reinforces the importance of support from primary and community health services.

Section 3.12 emphasises that Do Not Attempt Resuscitation (DNAR) orders should not be applied in a blanket fashion to any group of people. Similarly section 3.21 states that decisions made under the Mental Capacity Act cannot be made in relation to groups of people. Mental Capacity Act principles and DoLs still apply.

Section 3.16 states that the government is developing tailored guidance for social care providers supporting people with learning disabilities and autism.
Section 3.17 states that there is ongoing work with the National Clinical Director for dementia, service providers and user groups to develop additional resources on dementia to support those in care homes and the community.
Section 3.23 states that local authorities should "only take a decision to begin exercising the Care Act easements when absolutely necessary.....".

Supporting local authorities and the providers of care

Section 4 outlines funding but makes no new commitments. It simply emphasises that local authorities must use it correctly and distribute it in a way that supports the social care sector.
Section 4.3 details what the £1.6bn should be used for.
Section 4.16 contains a reminder of the CQC Emergency Support Framework. This is something that is currently being piloted. We are awaiting more details.
Section 4.24 confuses us as we believe most providers had already been doing this. It states that social care providers need to start telling CQC about all deaths from suspected and confirmed COVID-19 from this Friday. We suspect that this is merely a hangover from a previous draft and the CQC notification change happened before publication.
Section 4.26 states that £9m will be given to local authorities to give them access to expert advice and support to respond to the challenges of COVID-19
Section 4.32 - a Government commitment to 'ensure guidance is clear and practical and that messages from Government are joined-up and non-duplicative'. [Amen!]

PPE update

Government guidance published on Monday confirmed the need for PPE in all situations due to [sustained transmission in the community](#). This includes the use of:

- Aprons - single use
- Gloves - single use
- Fluid-resistant (Type IIR) surgical mask – a mixture of sessional and single use depending on risk assessment.
- Eye visor/ face protection – sessional (risk assessed) - can be single use if you can't disinfect.

We are well aware - thank you to everyone who has let us know - of your continuing difficulties in obtaining PPE. In general the government suppliers are saying:

1. **Blueleaf** - new accounts on hold.
2. **Care Shop** – new accounts on hold
3. **Countrywide Healthcare** – new customers to provide payment upfront but no stock.
4. **Delivernet** - new accounts on hold
5. **Gompels** – no longer taking orders by phone only by email. They will lead the order to a maximum of £100.
6. **Nexon Healthcare** - have sent a request to government - awaiting stock
7. **Wightman and Parrish** – taking new accounts, restricted stock, small quantities on an ad hoc basis by email only in advance, 5 working days delivery time.

For other suppliers you may use, various reports of no stock until September, hikes of up to 1000%. We are feeding all your concerns to Oxfordshire County Council who are leading the response for the County.

PPE usage | direct from BCA's conversation with Public Health England

Use of PPE, in particular masks:

- PHE give 'advice and information sharing' – this means it is not the law, or essential – it is up to you whether you should follow it or not. You need to risk assess as we advised on Wednesday.
- 'Rapid transmission in the community' refers to the increase of care homes acknowledging COVID-19 symptoms across the country, hence the heightened recommendation - you need to risk assess.

- 'Sessional use' of masks can include room to room including personal care UNLESS the patient is covid symptomatic or positive
- Wear masks for a max of 4 hours - rehydrate in between mask usage
- Masks should be fluid resistant
- PHE recognise that the guidance for use, and availability of, PPE was not connected
- We cannot use what we do not have and to use as preventative to protect patients we care for, and have none if/ when we do have symptomatic patients, is silly, so risk assess

Our advice

- Be sensible, be wise, use PPE carefully as per Government guidance
- If nothing has changed in your environment, and your staff and patients are asymptomatic, don't suddenly change what you are doing because of 'guidance' (which also says risk assess – if nothing has changed, neither does your risk assessment).
- The MOST effective PPE is HANDWASHING and NOT TOUCHING YOUR FACE
- As previous, people will touch even more with masks on – so only use if essential
- Reassure staff on the ground with information - talk it through
- Reassure your patients and their families with information
- Don't waste PPE to prevent us giving COVID-19 to people we care for, (unless that person needs barrier nursing sort of scenario), and then have none when we need protection!
- Until there's evidence otherwise, in your environment, use table 2

You may also be interested in this fascinating webinar - [Coronavirus and the Social Sector: The Long View from Laing Buisson](#) [1hr: 38m] with [an accompanying slide deck](#). Speakers include Oxfordshire's own George Tuthill and Berkshire West CCG Chief Officer Catrhy West.

For **lifting equipment and passenger lifts**, [LOLER examinations remain mandatory says HSE](#). HSE will adopt a pragmatic and proportionate approach towards enforcement action for non-compliance with statutory requirements which are directly attributable to the coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak. The usual enforcement response will be to take no action if the only failing is that TE&T is not carried out by the required date. Equipment should only be used outside of its test regime if you can demonstrate that it is critical for essential work and that it can still be operated safely. You must be able to demonstrate that you have made all reasonable attempts to have the TE&T carried out, made a thorough assessment of the increased risk and taken appropriate action to manage it.

Are you looking for extra staff as a result of the current system pressures? OACP can help...

What are OACP doing?

- In partnership with Oxfordshire County Council, OACP have launched a public-facing workforce campaign to encourage those whose jobs and employment has been affected by the coronavirus to join the care sector in Oxfordshire, either temporarily or permanently.
 - we have a strong social media presence including sponsored ads, aimed to reflect the variety of job roles and workforce diversity found in our sector;
 - we have linked with businesses, business groups;
 - educational establishments, and other organisations to identify and approach appropriate pools of people currently looking for work;



- we have developed [an efficient online form](#) for job seekers to register their interest in employment opportunities.
- OACP complete a telephone screening with interested job seekers (who have completed the above form) and match them to suitable sector vacancies. Contact details are shared between the job seeker and care provider and you then make contact and continue the recruitment process.

What have we achieved?

- 48 CQC locations responded to our initial request and have completed [our online form](#) outlining their recruitment needs
- Since the end of March, 26 job seekers have registered their interest, in working in the sector, and 31 job seekers (five already registered with OACP) have been matched directly with suitable vacancies;
- Already we know of multiple success stories where matches have translated to actual appointments, and these new starters are now working as part of their new teams.
- Almost 70,000 views of OACP Facebook and Instagram test advert with just short of 500 click throughs indicating positive interest.

What is our plan for this current campaign?

- Increase social media presence with additional funding and sponsored ads
- Potential Indeed campaign advertising care providers job roles in postcode areas

Want to get involved?

- If your organisation would like to get involved, [please complete our online form](#);
- Or [email OACP](#) or call 01235 248085 to discuss further.

This is an unprecedented time, the need for frontline staff is immeasurable, OACP understands fully what you do every day to fulfil your commitment to the people in your care, for your staff, for each other, for your business and for the families of loved ones.



Government extends Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

The [Government has extended the furlough scheme](#) until the end of June. Eligible employees need to be have been [registered with HMRC \(via an employer's RTI Submission\) by 19 March](#).

Following representation by James Sage at Royds Withy King, [Darren Jones MP has written to Rishi Sunak](#) regarding the furloughing of employees funded by public sector funding. We are aware that some staff may be shielding in line with public health guidance, but at present they do not qualify for the CRJS. This has the impact of reducing provider income to pay for staffing and they can't claim that funding back.

Supermarkets

Are you having any of the following difficulties with your local supermarket:

1. Not being able to book deliveries?
2. Despite having delivery passes for certain supermarkets you are unable to access?
3. Your company ID card/ uniform does not allow you priority?

4. Limited number of items ie. 3 loaves of bread for a 40 bedded care home or 4 bed SL?
5. Limited total spend?
6. Limited number of total items?

Please let us know via [the usual address](#) and include name of supermarket + location and which issue you had. Only recent examples please (last two weeks).

Further to previous **training** summaries, The Grey Matter Learning have added a [stress and resilience](#) course to their FREE offer during the coronavirus crisis.

We are working with the Council and the NHS to bring together a more comprehensive package of staff support.

Reminder

Following on from the recent webinars run by NHSE, NHSI and PHE covering the use of PPE in Care Homes in the South East there is a further webinar, which is to be run for **Care At Home services**.

This is on **Monday 20th April 3-4pm** and there will also be an opportunity to submit questions.

[Coronavirus and domiciliary care](#) - there is no requirement to book just click the link on the day to join.

A reminder will be sent on Monday morning.

If you can't make it, the recording will be available after the session and we will aim to circulate the link to this as soon as possible.

Thank you to the 80+ care homes which joined the PHE SE, OCCG and OCC Webinar for Care Homes on Thursday. [Here's the slideset](#).

LD and ASD Training Tender update

Oxford Health has said they are not able to progress the consortium training in response to the mandatory training requirement. They are in contact with HEE to ensure if the tender submission date can be postponed.

The Association of Mental Health Providers (AMHP) has [published a briefing on how coronavirus is impacting the voluntary, community and social enterprise \(VCSE\) mental health sector](#).

The live briefing document details nine key priority areas, which have been brought together based on conversations AMHP has had with its members about how they have been affected by COVID-19.

COVID-19 and the VCSE Mental Health Sector outlines the impact of the pandemic on members' services, as well as looking at the impact on the people that they work with and for. AMHP is now calling on Government to focus on the nine key priority areas to give them urgent attention and a response.

The nine key priority areas to note in the AMHP briefing on coronavirus are:

1. Rising service demands
2. Workforce
3. Loss of access to care co-ordinators
4. Infection control
5. Commissioning and collaboration with statutory services
6. Advocacy services
7. Adapting service delivery
8. Changes to legislation
9. Sustainability of the VCSE sector

NHSmail | Reminder - please act on this opportunity

NEW - daily webinars on signing up for NHS mail: Introduction to NHSmail for Social Care

Please note these sessions do not run on a Saturday or Sunday

These sessions are included in the registration email for new accounts, but all are welcome to join please email HLP.ehchprogramme@nhs.net and the team will forward the invite

Every day from 3 Apr 2020 until 2 May 2020, 14:30 to 15:30

Fast track application for NHS Mail:

- [Social care coronavirus NHSmail form](#) - send to care.registration@nhs.net
- [NHSmail user guide](#)
- [NHSmail set-up](#)

Key contact :[Todd Davidson at South Central and West Commissioning Support Unit](#) who will help you with questions you might have and locating your organisation Code.

(If you already have and use NHS Mail, he would like to know that as well).

Government guidance issued over the last few days:

All links and documents shared through this mailing are at our [shared #Coronavirus page](#).
BCA, MKB Care and OACP working together for you.

Care Association Alliance

As well as a constant stream of questions and answers by email from around the country, we are also part of the CAA weekly teleconference - Wednesdays at 10am. This informs us of current concerns and potential solutions and helps inform our local communications.

Oxfordshire Adult Social Care

We have a weekly call with local sector leaders + OCC + Oxfordshire Public Health + CQC Area Inspector on a Tuesday at 1pm. [Local questions to us by noon each Tuesday](#).

Learning Disability/ Autism liaison

There are specific issues that LD/ Autism providers face. We have a call with our local LD/ Autism network every Tuesday at 11am. And a call with commissioners on Thursday pm to provide a feedback loop.

Consistent, quality information

We are mailing out three times a week (Monday, Wednesday & Friday) at around 3pm, so you know when to look out for it. These updates will provide summary advice on emerging issues and signpost providers to government and other statutory agency advice as needed.

Reminder

We are working across the Thames Valley with Berkshire and Oxfordshire. All the government guidance disseminated by us and local templates shared with us is [on one page at Oxfordshire Association of Care Providers](#). Items published since the last mailing are marked **NEW**. We're a little behind, but we'll get to it.

We are always keen to hear from providers, if you have anything you would like to share with provider colleagues, please send to [the usual address](#).

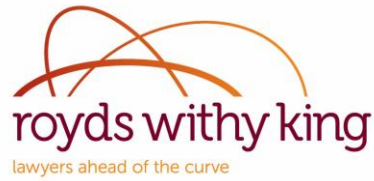
Receiving this newsletter for the first time?

We are adding new colleagues all the time.

[Please let us know](#) if there are other colleagues you would like this mailing sent to.

OACP

OACP works with the following suppliers to bring you market insight, quality products and expert advice. Contact them today.



Citation

