



Firstly a note about the changing circumstances for **PPE usage**. We are now in a period of sustained transmission for all settings, including care at home.

On Friday, PHE Guidance was published with approval from HSE, which approves re-use of PPE in certain circumstances - this mostly relates to aerosol generating procedures, but allows for re-use of washable coveralls or other appropriate PPE. This is in response to the sector concerns about lack of disposable PPE and we welcome this additional advice bringing guidance into line with supply line challenges. This is important for your duty of care to staff and provides clear guidance to aid your risk assessments.

Today was **Care at Home** day on the national webinar aimed specifically at care in the community. Main take-aways:

- To reiterate, we are now in a 'Period of Sustained Transmission' applicable not just in care homes, but across all care settings. So care providers should use Table 4 in the PHE published guidance to guide PPE use. This is sessional use (one household) of:
 - disposable gloves - no requirement for double gloving;
 - disposable apron;
 - surgical fluid resistant mask;
 - additional eye/ face protector in case of risk of splashing.
 - or use appropriate reusable coveralls/ masks which can be disinfected as per new Friday guidance above.
- It is not recommended to use the same disposable mask for multiple clients when working in dom care – use one set of disposable items per household including mask.
- Cloth or homemade facemasks are not recommended – they can result in higher risk taking behaviours, they may not fit correctly resulting in increased touching of the face, or are not made of appropriate quality fluid resistant material and are not safety checked.
- Putting PPE on and taking it off (non-aerosol generating procedures) should be done when 2 meters away from the client. In very small properties this may mean doing so on the porch/ doorstep.
- Surgical/ FFP3 respirator masks should only be needed for potentially infectious aerosol generating procedures (tracheostomy, manual ventilation, open suctioning). A fluid repellent gown and eye shield would also be needed.
- Double bagging for the disposal of PPE should only be required for suspected/confirmed COVID cases.
- Care at home staff should change clothes immediately on arrival home - remove all reusable coveralls, clothes, bag up and wash at 60oC.

- If staff support clients all day /live in, they should follow guidance for care homes regarding sessional use of face masks. If possible a 'break out area' should be identified where staff can take breaks and be without their PPE. Rehydrate regularly in between usage.
- PHE are publishing guidance specifically for Care at Home and this will be released in the next couple of days.

Price inflation has been a challenge. Providers were asked to buy through the suppliers who have received government stocks, as they are being sold at reasonable market cost. Link to Clipper website to be included in distribution of slides to follow on Wednesday - [follow the current process](#).

And there is more:

A series of webinars this week to discuss **Home Care NHS England guidance documents** and other queries and issues relating to the Home Care sector. Same seminar repeated over three days to fit around your schedule. The webinar will consist of short presentations, followed by opportunities for Q&A. This is for anyone working in the Home Care sector, including Personal Assistants.

Times below:

- Wed 22 April 11:00 - 12:30
- Wed 22 April 15:00 - 16:30
- Thur 23 April 15:00 - 16:30
- Fri 24 April 11:00 - 12:30

[Sign up here](#)

A reminder that this is the [donning and doffing video for care homes](#), which was published on Friday 17 April.

[Some topical advice from Tissue Viability Nursing](#) on repositioning as COVID-19 is likely to mean more patients/ residents/ clients lying in a prone position.

Testing update

Testing for social care staff is still being developed. We have no news yet of arrangements in Oxfordshire (NHS route) - CQC registered care providers will have had an email stating the CQC route involving potentially long journeys. Experience from pilot areas shows where arrangements are local/ accessible, it is working well. Focus is on getting those in self-isolation back to work quickly. Nearly 12,500 social care workers have already been referred for testing so far. Minister for Care, Helen Whately, goes on to say that:

"The plan also gives guidance to help minimise the spread of infection within all care settings, including advice on safe discharge from the NHS, testing prior to discharge and when isolation is recommended. "This new plan also further sets out how the government will ensure PPE supplies reach those who need it in care homes, including immediately through Local Resilience Forums and piloting direct dispatches via Royal Mail, a 24/7 hotline and a new website. Over one hundred and fifty social care providers have already been invited to test out this new pilot.

"As set out in the action plan, Public Health England has issued [an explainer video and case studies showing how the PPE guidance works in practice for the social care sector](#).

"Beyond this, to give the care sector the boost it needs at this challenging time, we are keen to get as many people on the care frontline as possible. That is why we're launching a campaign to attract people to the sector to support the national effort. I am urging former social workers, occupational therapists and nurses to return to the sector and for anyone furloughed interested in care to step forward and join the fight to protect our most vulnerable.

"Finally, you, the care workforce, are playing an essential role in the fight against COVID-19, and as such, you deserve the same recognition and support as your colleagues in the NHS. That's why we plan to help unify everyone in our existing care workforce under an NHS-style identity - a new 'care' brand for care workers. This will ensure all care staff, everywhere, get recognition and access to key benefits during the outbreak.

"I am incredibly proud of our care sector and I will make sure we do everything we possibly can to support you."

Helen Whately, Minister for Care

Did you catch Vic Rayner's recommendation for [a ring of steel around care homes](#) on Sunday?

Two other TV stars emerging too - on Friday BBC South covered the issue of PPE shortage reality from the excellent perspective of Charles Taylor on behalf of Banbury Heights and a 20 minute interview with Eddy McDowall (OACP) edited to one sentence :/

Sadly for you, local BBC News is not available on catch up.

And for some light relief tonight - comedian [Rhod Gilbert's Work Experience, Series 9: 1. Care Worker](#): via @bbciplayer

Look after your wellbeing

We've previously listed a few items that might help sleep patterns and general wellbeing. Here's a list that's been collated by Oxfordshire County Council.

[MindEd resources](#) to help front-line staff in care services manage your own mental health and wellbeing, whilst looking after others during the Covid-19 crisis. Bite-sized information in top-tips format. Main focus on staff's own wellbeing but relevant to supporting others.

Guidance for **parents and carers** on supporting children and young people's [mental health and wellbeing](#) during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

There is a new **24/7 Mental Health helpline** in Oxfordshire & Buckinghamshire during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. It offers mental health advice for people of all ages including children and older adults.

- Adults: 01865 904 997
- Children and young people: 01865 904 998

Guidance on the [mental health and wellbeing](#) aspects of coronavirus (COVID-19). This includes guidance for people with existing mental health conditions.

Cruse Bereavement Care guide to [dealing with bereavement and grief](#) during the global coronavirus pandemic.

[This resource from the NHS](#) provides many more tips on how to deal with stress.

This King's Fund article discusses [importance of restorative self-care among leaders](#) for sustaining energy and building resilience in the weeks and months ahead.

[Every mind matters](#) - tips for wellbeing when isolated or working from home

Coronavirus and your wellbeing support from [MIND](#)

A wellbeing for staff programme has been created for the health and care workforce by **HEE's e-Learning for Healthcare (e-LfH)** in response to COVID-19. The wellbeing programme includes key topics such as mindfulness, mental health and wellbeing, the worried child, loss and grief and many more. The [wellbeing programme can be accessed here](#) (click on "Staff Wellbeing and Resilience" link) and does not require a login.

Free wellbeing apps

Sleepio - a clinically evidenced sleep improvement programme that helps improve poor sleep. Available to any adult living, working, or studying in the Thames Valley (Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Milton Keynes), free-of-charge, via www.sleepio.com/nhs
All that's required is the first half of a relevant postcode (e.g. OX1) and a laptop/desktop computer. Use your workplace postcode if you live outside of Thames Valley.

[Free access for more apps to anyone holding an nhs.net](#) email address [as if you needed anymore persuading that NHSmail is a good thing], including:

Unmind - a mental health platform that empowers staff to proactively improve their mental wellbeing.

Headspace - a science-backed app in mindfulness and meditation, providing unique tools and resources to help reduce stress, build resilience, and aid better sleep.

Daylight - an app that provides help to people experiencing symptoms of worry and anxiety, using evidence-based cognitive behavioural techniques, voice, and animation.

Infection Prevention Control

Some of you may be aware that Skills for Care have supported colleagues in NHSI and Public Health England to run a WebEx sessions focussing on PPE, correct usage, the PHE guidance, and care of residents / clients with and without symptoms, such as the one that took place today for Care at Home.

During discussions it was recognised that every care service will have an infection prevention control lead, or a lead nurse, or an IPC champion. This group of staff are vital at the moment in supporting the whole staff team with all matters relating to IPC. To support these leads, Skills for Care colleagues are setting up an **Infection Prevention Control Leads community of practice**, including a WhatsApp group and regular webinars covering practice for colleagues in the South East.

We are inviting anyone who has an **IPC lead** to join the WhatsApp group, we ask that this is kept strictly for IPC leads, if you are the Registered Manager and the IPC lead then it applies to you as well. We want to use this WhatsApp group to share concerns, seek guidance and support from each other and raise questions. Our colleagues at NHSI and PHE have agreed that they will collate all of the questions asked by members of the group and run a weekly 30 minute webinar to respond and deal with all of the queries. This will be an enormous support to all services and to you. The dates are already set for these and will be shared with colleagues who join this group.

If you would like your organisation to join please send the name of your IPC lead, their role, their mobile number and email address to Rachel.Reid@skillsforcare.org.uk Please make sure you read [the terms of reference](#) and that WhatsApp is set up on the mobile number that you send.

Following last week's webinar - [Coronavirus and the Social Sector: The Long View](#) - Laing Buisson are hosting their next webinar on 28 April: **Social Care: Coronavirus and Workforce** - the challenge of the moment in partnership with Bevan Brittan

TIME: 10:00 am - 11:00 am

Attendance is free to all participants.

Coronavirus affects the workforce as well as residents. Join us on 28 April as in partnership with Partner and Head of Employment Jodie Sinclair from law firm Bevan Brittan we examine the key commercial, legal and practical challenges that coronavirus poses to providers of health and care. Joining Jodie is a great panel including Mike Parish, Chair, Care UK and Achieve Together, Sam Leighton-Smith, Founding Partner and Director of the leading health and social care recruiter Compass Associates, and Suhail Mirza, author of the upcoming LaingBuisson Healthcare Staffing Market Report.

The focus will be on:

Delivery - how to continue delivering a quality service

- Protecting your staff (PPE, testing, PTSD)
- Navigating the regulations (shielding, self-isolation policy, health and safety, sick pay, furloughing)
- Finding the staff (volunteers, agency, recruitment)

- Using technology (e-learning, online DBS checks, virtual recruitment)

Funding

- How are Local Authorities responding?
- Paying for increased PPE costs and National Minimum Wage
- Who will pay up?

The Future

- Potential liability for care providers and their Directors and the Duty of Care
- The likely Public Enquiry into what went right and what did not:
 - Better care integration and co-ordination
 - Carer career structure, training and progression
 - Role of the regulator
 - Impact of failed providers

Just in...

Skills for Health bring you [a free online resource](#), as a key worker in the care sector, to learn about coronavirus symptoms, infection prevention, investigation and guidance to support you in your role.

In these unprecedented times, it is clear, now more than ever, the vital part we all must play in putting the most vulnerable first to save lives. With the recent concerns about the rapid and under-reported spread of the virus within care homes, we've developed this free resource to help all key workers meet the needs of their service users.

We are committed to maintaining and providing up to date training for care providers throughout the UK. As developers of [the Care Certificate Standards](#), we understand the unique training needs to develop a sustainable workforce, with everyone's safety, health and well-being in mind.

We are the leading online learning provider for Statutory/Mandatory training for care workers and by working closely with our wide range of experts, we have developed this new, free online COVID-19 resource, which we can now offer to key workers across the care sector. The regularly updated content ensures that you have only the most current and best possible advice, information and training on infection prevention, PPE, hand and respiratory hygiene, management and assessment, sampling and testing, patient transfers/managing patients and much more to support you in your role.

Plus, we provide a complete [Care Certificate elearning bundle](#), aligned to the Care Certificate to help you train existing and new care workers, or those returning to work.

Please, access this valuable resource today and ensure you and your staff are well prepared to recognise and prevent the spread of the virus, and help save the most vulnerable members of the public.

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.

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