



9th April 2021

CORONAVIRUS UPDATED VISITING POLICY & GUIDANCE

Following on from further Government guidance, in relation to Care Home visits during the changes of the 'unlocking' of the country – stages set out by ['COVID-19 Response - Spring 2021'](#) in which the Government have outlined their 'roadmap' of lockdown restrictions - we are acting in accordance with the restrictions put in place, alongside our Individual and Group Dynamic Risk Assessments and development of a New COVID-19 Visitors Policy. This action is required to save lives, reduce transmission and prevent the NHS from becoming overwhelmed.

Visitor Pods have been in use in our group of Homes since Monday 14th December 2020, where visitors for resident's who have been Risk Assessed as being in a lower risk category to have these 'external pod' visits, have been utilised (and will continue to be used). The others who fell into the Medium and High-Risk categories were able to have window visits or Skype/ WhatsApp video calls as normal. As a Group of Homes, we have developed our Dynamic Risk Assessment inclusive of each Individual Residents' Personal Risk to ascertain if feasible to carry out external 'pod' or 'window' visits; we have now developed a further Individual Risk Assessment for all residents and these are being completed in line with the 'close contact, hand hold' visits discussed by Government – now with additional 2nd 'nominated' visitor per resident.

In line with these Risk Assessments, relatives who have been 'nominated' as the 2 visitors for their loved one, will be asked to complete a short questionnaire, perform an LFD Test and complete any follow-up PCR Test (if required) prior to a 'close contact, hand hold' visit. Full guidance and updated information are available direct from each Manager/ Care Home within the Group; this information can be given to relatives from the direct Care Home.

All of the above types of visits will be maintained by booking systems ONLY at the Care Homes.

The only other exclusion to this will be for exceptional circumstances i.e. End of Life visits, that are booked and controlled for entry by the Home's Manager. We are trying to minimise the risk of contact and/or transmission, that may occur, with these external window visits, potential contact with staff members and to prevent visitors from outside each Care Home facility, travelling into the area and exposing higher risk to everyone, including those of you who would have travelled.

Although the Government has maintained that 'internal' visits are possible, at the discretion of the Provider, this can only 'possibly' be facilitated going forward with all Risk Assessments being completed, visitor compliance with testing and understanding of the risk of transmission still despite these tests in place. At RDCP Care we commenced 'close contact, hand hold' visits for 1 nominated visitor from 15th March 2021, through booking systems ONLY at the Care Homes and we will aim to fulfil the next phase of an additional 1 visitor per resident, by adding them directly to their loved one's RA and continuing the above processes from week commencing 12th April 2021.

Please be aware, should there be an 'outbreak' at your loved ones' Care Home, all visits will be ceased immediately, in line with official ruling from PHE, Government and Local Authority.

We appreciate this is frustrating and we apologise for any distress this may cause you or your loved one. Our priority is to keep your loved one safe and we hope you can understand this. Should there

be a situation that may require a non-routine visit in extenuating circumstances such as End of Life, the Manager at the Home will work with you to ensure that the appropriate precautionary measures are taken to minimise any potential risks. You can be assured that anyone displaying symptoms or any member of their household who is displaying symptoms will not be allowed to enter the home (disclaimers may be required to be signed) all visitors temperatures will be checked; handwashing & sanitising facilities will be utilised and appropriate PPE will be provided.

Staff are fully aware of the restrictions that apply to them also and will maintain strict restrictive measures whilst inside and outside of the working environment. They will continue to have PCR tests weekly (also LFT'S twice weekly for staff only) and residents will continue to be swabbed every 28 days, to ensure we are fully aware of any potential outbreaks during this period.

We will continue to maintain the highest standards of care and activities for your loved ones throughout. We will maintain as much contact with yourselves as possible, through phone calls, Skype, email, Facebook and Facetime calls, if applicable, through this trying time.

We will endeavour to update you with any changes to restrictions, National and/or Local lockdowns from the Government as soon as we are informed.

Thank you again for your understanding, patience and cooperation. Take care and stay safe!

Kind regards

Rosie Howell
Managing Director, RDCP Care