



**31<sup>st</sup> December 2020**

## **CORONAVIRUS UPDATED POLICY & GUIDANCE**

Following on from further Government guidance, in relation to Care Home visits during the change of Tiers and lockdown criteria, we are acting in accordance with the restrictions being 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.

COVID-19 cases appear to be rising again and in addition a second strain identified, all our Homes are now in Tier 4 areas, except for St Nicholas, which comes under a separate Welsh jurisdiction. Therefore, RDCP Care Homes will be following all the restrictive actions required to assist in this, which will mean a continuation of changes made to the external visiting arrangements.

From Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020, where we had 'visitor pods' completed ready for use, these were opened for external visits. Each Home involved so far, will be contacting visitors for resident's who have been Risk Assessed as being in a lower risk category to have these 'external pod' visits. Others who fall into the Medium and High-Risk categories will be 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 and have ascertained if feasible to carry out external 'pod' or 'window' visits; this information can be given to relatives from the direct Care Home. 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 outlined that 'internal' visits "MAY BE POSSIBLE" this can only 'possibly' be facilitated going forward when we commence use of the Lateral Flow Tests (fast result testing kits for relatives/ visitors). We will not be commencing these kits in any TIER 4 area currently and we ask that unless it is essential that you travel for an external visit, that you restrict yourselves as much as possible to maintain your own safety and that of your loved one and our staff – we all need to minimise the transmission risk as much as possible.

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 any one 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 TIER 4 restrictions that apply to them also and will maintain strict restrictive measures whilst inside and outside of the working environment. They will continue to be swabbed weekly ( 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 lockdown 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.

**10<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

### **CORONAVIRUS VACCINATION ROLL OUT**

Following on from the Government guidance in place for the roll out of COVID-19 Vaccinations for Residents over the age of 80 and Care Staff, in the first instance, we are collating Consent Information in line with Government/ Local Authority requests, awaiting further updates on time frames for our Residents and Staff within each Home in our Group.

Staff will be discussing the Vaccination programme with Residents and Relatives over the next week and those that may require 'consent' under Best Interests or for those with LPoA for Health and Welfare, will be fully confirmed prior to any Vaccine being given.

We have Guidance and Information from the Government that is available to you by email, post or direct collection at each Home via the Managers.

If you have any concerns or questions in relation to this Vaccination Programme, please do not hesitate to contact the Home direct and discuss with the Manager, Deputy or Nurse in Charge at the time of your call.

We will endeavour to give you time frames as soon as possible when we have received same from Gov/ CCG/ Local Authority involved in the rollout.

Many thanks for all your understanding, patience and cooperation in making the Vaccination Programme a reality for all concerned.

Take care and stay safe!

Kind regards

Rosie Howell, Managing Director RDCP Care.