

Orchard Vale Trust

Supporting Adults with Learning Disabilities to Live Life to the Full



10th August 2021

Dear Family and Friends,

I hope that this letter finds you all well. It has been lovely to see more people visiting, residents going for visits and in general everyone having the opportunity to do more, albeit carefully and with the appropriate precautions in place.

In addition to the update that we shared with you in our last letter, that residents are now able to have visits away from their care home without having to isolate on their return, the limit of 5 named visitors has now been lifted and named visitors are able to enter the home of the person they are visiting. It remains the responsibility of the Home Manager to ensure that visits are managed safely and that the risk of infection entering the home and spreading to residents and staff is minimised, so we do need to make sure that there are clear guidelines in place to keep everyone safe. A risk assessment still has to be undertaken by the manager prior to any visit away from the home and this will look at how to reduce the risk of COVID-19 infection as well as determining whether or not isolation is needed when the resident returns at the end of a visit. All visitors must wear PPE as directed by the Home Manager and provide evidence of a clear Lateral Flow Test on the same day as the visit takes place. Visitors who are coming into the home will need to go straight to their family member's room and remain there, currently visitors are not permitted into communal areas and are asked not to have contact with other residents. Should we have a positive infection in a care home then the home would have to close for 14 days from the last positive infection so great care has to be taken and we would be grateful if you would share as much information as possible with managers regarding visits.

We have outlined our guidance below and we would be grateful if you would take the time to familiarise yourself with it.

Visiting

Adults and young people of secondary school age wishing to have a visit are required to undertake a lateral flow test at the home that is being visited and receive a negative COVID-19 result.

Visits Inside or Outside at a Residential Care Home

- The number of visitors and the length of a visit at the residential home needs to be agreed in advance with the Home Manager so that the number of visitors on site and the infection prevention and control measures can be managed safely and effectively.
- Young people over the age of 3 can be a named visitor.
- Children under the age of 3 are not counted as visitors but can be brought to visits.

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- Children under the age of 3 should not be held or cuddled by the resident who is being visited or any staff who are supporting the visit.
- On arrival at the home all visitors, will be asked to complete a health questionnaire and have their temperature taken by a member of staff.
- Before a visit begins, adult visitors and young people of secondary school age will either need to undertake a COVID-19 lateral flow test or provide evidence of a negative lateral flow test that was completed on the same day as the visit and uploaded to the Government website using the residential home's UON (unique organisation number).
- If lateral flow tests are being administered on site, then adult visitors will be asked for written consent to administer a test and children under the age of 16 will need the written consent of a parent or guardian and will need to be supported to administer the test by the adult they are visiting with.
- If the result of the test is positive, then the individual will have to leave the site and self-isolate immediately without the visit taking place. The home will provide a PCR test (this is the test which is administered at COVID-19 testing centres) which will need to be completed following the government guidance.
- A negative test will mean that the visit can take place inside.
- Visitors will need to wear PPE which will be provided by the home and undertake appropriate hand hygiene.
- If a visitor is wearing PPE, has a negative COVID-19 test, as a result of the lateral flow test that has been administered at the home that day and has followed all other infection prevention and control measures required, then it should be possible for visitors to hold a loved one's hand.
- Close physical contact is important to everyone but even with PPE and a negative COVID-19 test, it does increase the risk of the transmission of infection. Visitors are asked to consider the balance between physical contact and limiting transmission. This will be different for everyone, and visitors are encouraged to discuss this with the home manager before visiting.
- Family and friends will need to stay in the area identified for visits or the person being visited's room. Visitors should not enter any communal areas of the residential home and should avoid contact with other residents.
- If food or drink is being consumed during a visit, then as PPE will be removed a minimum of 2 metres distance should be maintained.

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- Anyone who is self-isolating as a result of having COVID-19 symptoms, living with someone with COVID-19 symptoms, or who has been asked to self-isolate by the Track and Trace team will not attend any meeting with a resident.
- Visitors who are travelling from areas where there is a significant increase in cases or where there is a Variant of Concern identified, should discuss this with the manager prior to attending the residential care home site.
- Any gifts or items that family or friends wish to share should be given to the member of staff at the end of the visit so that these can meet the infection control requirements prior to entering a residential care home.
- If the home is experiencing an outbreak or a potential outbreak of COVID-19 then all indoor visits will be suspended for a period of 14 days after the last confirmed.
- Family and friends should follow the infection control guidance that staff follow. They should wear a fresh set of clothes as they leave their home and not to make any stops for fuel, shopping etc on the way to the visit.
- Young people should not attend a visit if they are coming straight from school or another supervised activity.

Visits Out of Residential Care Home

- Residents are now able to make visits away from the site of the residential care home. Visitors will need to arrange off site visits in advance with the care home manager so that an appropriate risk assessment can be completed.
- Visits will need to be arranged a minimum of 48 hours in advance with the home manager to allow time for a risk assessment to be completed.
- Where a visit is risk assessed as 'LOW', residents will not have to isolate on their return to their residential care home but may have to undertake additional testing
- Where a visit is risk assessed as 'MEDIUM', residents will have to isolate on their return to their residential care home and undertake additional testing
- Where a visit is risk assessed as 'HIGH' e.g an overnight stay in hospital, then residents will have to isolate for 14 days on their return
- Residents should be supported by one of their named visitors or a member of staff.
- In order to ensure that visits are managed safely please keep to the timings agreed.

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- On the day of a visit, visitors will be asked to complete a health questionnaire prior to the visit starting. The questionnaire can be completed electronically or by telephone.
- Before a visit begins, adult visitors and young people of secondary school age will either need to undertake a COVID-19 lateral flow test or provide evidence of a negative lateral flow test that was completed on the same day as the visit and uploaded to the Government website using the residential home's UON (unique organisation number).
- All visitors should wear masks for the duration of the visit.
- Outdoor venues that are likely to be crowded must be avoided at all times.
- Anyone who is self-isolating as a result of having COVID-19 symptoms, living with someone with COVID-19 symptoms, or who has been asked to self-isolate by the NHS Track and Trace team will not attend any meeting with a resident.
- Any gifts or items that family or friends wish to share should be given to the member of staff at the end of the visit so that these can meet the infection control requirements prior to entering a residential care home.
- If a new local or national lockdown is introduced, and the director of Public Health in the local area of the care home indicates that visits should not take place then the visit will need to be re-scheduled.
- Family and friends should follow the infection control guidance that staff follow. They should wear a fresh set of clothes as they leave their home and not to make any stops for fuel, shopping etc on the way to the visit.
- Young people should not attend a visit if they are coming straight from school or another supervised activity.

It is lovely to have more positive news to share but can I also ask that when you are discussing visits with the Home Manager that you share as much information as possible, so that we can keep everyone safe and continue to enjoy each other's company.

Kind regards

Liz Page
Chief Executive Officer

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