

COVID-19 coronavirus and our care services

People that use our services and members of their families are naturally very concerned about the current coronavirus pandemic. We have received many calls and emails on the subject and have updated the following information to offer you and your loved ones reassurance about the things we are doing to keep our vulnerable service users safe.

Firstly, we wanted to tell you that we are monitoring the situation on a daily basis and that we are working with official agencies to both inform and act on the latest scientific and clinical advice.

As an experienced home care provider, we are well versed in putting in place contingency arrangements. We have to do so most years to combat unseasonable weather, transport difficulties etc. and the disruptions this can cause in our staffing levels and inaccessibility to areas badly affected as well as dealing with winter pressures on hospital beds and other care services.

Our main arrangements for preventing transmission of the virus are as follows:

- Frequent and good handwashing technique by staff, using soap and warm running water. This is singularly the best way to avoid contamination and to prevent the spread of infection. Alcohol gels do not offer as much protection and should therefore only be used in circumstances where water and soap are not available.
- Further to recent public health advice, all staff delivering personal care are instructed to wear a fluid-repellent surgical facemask.
- Staff wear disposable gloves and aprons (as they always have done for personal care).

The most important way you can help is by ensuring that the staff who come to visit you have ready access to wash their hands in your home with soap and warm water and clean towels to dry their hands.

Staff will be expected to continue to use gloves, aprons etc. for delivering personal care in the same way as usual.

How might your care be affected?

If we have not done so already, we may need to enact our normal contingency arrangements for care delivery and this means that we may be required to reorganise our available staff from their normal routines to redirect care on a priority needs basis. This means that we may have to;

- Alter the time of your care so that the most critical medical care services are met first for those without any support networks and who are wholly dependent on the care that we provide.
- Make a temporary change to your regular care worker.
- Make arrangements with you to combine some care calls we normally provide to you, depending on your particular circumstances.
- Contact you, your family or informal carers to make specific arrangements to support us to meet your care needs.
- Use extra safety equipment and precautions if you should be unfortunate enough to contract the virus.

We are continuing to monitor the situation daily and in any event we will remain in contact with you to keep you informed of any actions that we may need to take. Our primary concern is making sure that your care is delivered safely. We hope that you will understand that where changes are required to maintain safety we will make these decisions with you in mind and in line with the very best advice.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us office numbers at 0330 010 0244 and ask to speak to the manager.