

Wessex Care 9th Briefing [10/07/20]

July has seen a number of changes and preparation for the implementation of weekly testing for all staff and monthly testing for all residents, consent permitting.

Please do revert to the 8th Briefing that provides some facts about central government guidance and statements regarding hospital discharge to care homes and Wessex Care position in relation to Mr Johnsons apparent accidental remark about it all being the care homes fault as they didn't follow guidance. This statement, accidental or not, is factually untrue for us at Wessex Care and actually fundamentally untrue for the vast majority of Providers in this country.

The challenge we have faced is literally thousands of pages of central government guidance which often changed almost as soon as it is issued and for the majority it was too late. Basically, we have implemented special measures almost always ahead of the guidance in some cases weeks ahead of the guidance based on our monitoring and professional judgement of what was happening to colleagues in other countries. The most significant challenge for us has been the developing knowledge that the virus was being passed by asymptomatic individuals which is why we at an early stage moved our staff into permanent use of masks and heightened levels of PPE, cleaning and decontamination. The best support we have received has come from the local NHS and Council COVID-19 Care Home support teams who in partnership with Providers and the Wiltshire Care Partnership have shared developing knowledge and operational practice with key input from local Consultant Geriatricians and local Public Health and other specialists. We have locally learned together and by doing so maintained resilience in the face of an unprecedented challenge despite the central government involvement and not instead of. The funding we have all received has been welcomed but it was very late in arriving with many Providers like ourselves having already spent significant sums to protect our residents, community customers and staff which cannot be recouped.

Other information and moving forward

Staff & PPE at work: we thought a small extract from our detailed COVID-19 Infection Control and Management, including use of PPE, policies and procedure would be insightful.

Risk levels and actions within Residential [Traffic light system] This is mirrored in the Community.

RED: The service is currently managing a confirmed or suspected outbreak of COVID -19. [Defined as one or more]

- Residents identified or confirmed as COVID-19 positive must be barrier nursed immediately in their room with the door closed. Only nursing and healthcare assistant staff to attend for care and room clean. PPE for confirmed or suspected COVID-19 must include gown, apron, gloves, IIR mask and face shield. Urgent referral to the HDSU via the GP must be made

Amber: The service is currently clear of any confirmed or suspected COVID -19 infections but nationally we remain at a 'Sustained Transmission' level as defined by PHE & WHO.

- Bedroom doors can remain open other than for new or returning from hospital residents who must self-isolate for a minimum of 14 days with door closed and Amber level barrier nursing in place which includes PPE apron, gloves, and IIR mask.

Green: The service is clear from COVID-19 and vaccination has taken place for all residents and staff.

- Return to standard operational protocols policies and procedures as defined within the Wessex Care Registered Nursing Home Association standard 'Towards Excellence in Care' policies and procedures.

As you will see we are likely to remain at **Amber** level for sometime so even when visiting returns all staff and visitors will be required to wear IIR facemasks and other required PPE depending on the individual situation.

Visiting

There have been no changes to current guidance therefore we will remain focused at providing palliative care visits only, using Malcolm and the welfare team to support and assist virtual visits. We continue to make preparations for when this guidance changes in line with our resident & relative views that we have been gathering.

Ultra V UV-C Decontamination

Slight delay in operationalising this outside of Kimberly West & East as the special fitted flight case that protects it while being transported on a regular bases has been delayed but is arriving next week. Please see our Wessex Care blog on the website and in our social media for the launch information. www.wessexcare.com

COVID-19 Testing of all staff and residents

You will be aware that the government has relented and agreed to start regular testing of all staff and residents. However, this will begin on a priority base and as we have tested clear for all staff and residents in the blanket testing conducted in June and with subsequent individual testing of some residents and staff, we have been informed that we are not a priority. In the meantime, while we wait for the test kits to arrive, we are taking advantage of the time to train more staff in conducting the swabbing so this can be managed on a regular basis inline with the guidance. We continue to insist that all staff SATS and temperatures are taken every day and any sign of any unwellness of any kind they have all been instructed to either not attend work or they are immediately sent home, Jodie Scott Operations Director to be immediately informed, and they are sent for a test. We are particularly looking at changes in oxygen saturation levels as this appears to be a significant indicator. Once this regular testing is up and running all staff will also be subject to the Track & Tracy system.

Although the general public restriction are easing we would remind you and all our amazing staff that they are required to remain very cautious about any contact, to keep this to a minimum wearing the out of work masks we have provided for them when there is other people around particularly in any enclosed space, public transport or busy area like the market.

Please be assured we have and will continue to do everything in our power to care and protect our residents, community customers and employees while supporting the NHS and Social Care colleagues.

Pauline, Matthew, Jodie & Christian [Directors]