



Friday 17th April 2020

Frequently Asked Questions

Thank you for your questions and comments. We have focussed on questions which summarise a key theme from stakeholders. If you do not think we have answered your question, or if we have missed anything, please do come back to us at: england.learning.disability@nhs.net

We will provide an update on questions and answers each Friday for the next few weeks.

To support collaborative working across the voluntary and independent sector, health and social care there is a weekly webinar to raise and discuss key issues for people with a learning disability and autistic people with representatives from NHS England and Improvement, the Department for Health and Social Care, Public Health England and voluntary and independent sector organisations taking part.

To receive details about the webinar or to suggest agenda items please contact: england.learning.disability@nhs.net

We have set up a [Future NHS Collaboration workspace](#) to support the work of NHS England and Improvement Mental Health, Learning Disability and Autism Covid-19 Response Cell. We use this platform to share guidance and information, and encourage mental health, learning disability and autism leads and providers to share advice and feedback on how best to look after patients and staff during these difficult times. The resources on this workspace are open to those working in mental health, learning disability and autism services and will include the voluntary and independent sector.

If you currently have a FutureNHS account, you can access the workspace directly through the homepage (<https://future.nhs.uk/MHLDAcovid19/grouphome>). Those without a FutureNHS account can either self-register to the platform if they have an nhs.net or nhs.uk email account, or directly request access by emailing our generic mailbox if they are from other organisations at: MHLDAcovid19-manager@future.nhs.uk

Key topics this week

- Data
- Guidance
 - Visiting
 - DNACPR
- Personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Action Plan for Adult Social Care

Links to all resources mentioned in the FAQs can be found at the end in Links to published guidance and resources.

DNACPR

We are re-sending the following letters to GPs via our primary care bulletin to reinforce our position on DNACPR:

- [Signed by Claire Murdoch, Dr Roger Banks and Dr Nikki Kinani](#)
[Signed by Ruth May and Professor Steve Powis](#)

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

The guidance on PPE in health and social care has been updated and includes a new explanatory table about the use of PPE. Direct care involves activities where there will be close contact with the person (such as feeding or bathing) but activities where social distancing could be applied (such as placing a drink in front of the person) would not be.

Direct Payment employers can approach their Local Resilience Forum (LRFs) for PPE supplies. LRFs are prioritising delivery to key frontline workers according to local need.

Action Plan for Adult Social Care

The Covid-19 action plan for adult social care was published on 15 April and the link is below.

The Covid-19 action plan for adult social care provides guidance to Local Authorities on their legal obligations to provide advocacy services and the application of mental capacity legislation in the context of Covid-19.

Resources by the National Autistic Society

The National Autistic Society have been commissioned by DHSC to work with PHE and NHS England to produce COVID-19 resources for autistic people. The resources include;

- Advice on staying at home
- Guidance on protecting people most likely to get very ill from coronavirus (shielding)
- Keeping away from other people

Data

Donna Glover of Public Health England provided an outline of the approach PHE are planning to develop to look at all available data that gives insights into the impact of COVID-19 on the health of people with learning disabilities. This work will be across organisations and will be done in close collaboration with NHS England and Improvement.

Staff Sickness

Skills for Care have produced a summary about the impact of COVID-19 on the adult social care workforce. Key findings;

- On average, the providers reported **25% of their workforce was currently unable to work due to covid related issues**. The most common reason being self-isolation due to symptoms or living with someone with symptoms (10%). Other workers were absent due to concerns about catching the virus (6%), shielding (4%) or due to childcare issues (5%).
- **34% of providers reported they urgently needed more staff** with a further 42% anticipating they'd need more staff in the coming months
- The majority of providers reported that most of their staff (but not all) were receiving key worker exemption allowing them to keep their children at school.
- 39% of providers noted an increase in applications and 54% were taking on temporary staff. There was little evidence of a reduction in the quality of applicants yet.
- 36% of providers also noted volunteers coming forward – although many (49%) were not sure how best to utilise them yet.

Is there anything that could be done to make it easier for those caring for loved ones at home who aren't on the shielded list? Eg getting shopping slots, meds delivered.

The Government has launched an online service to help people who feel vulnerable because of coronavirus. It will make it quicker and easier for people to find guidance and information relevant to them, and signpost onto services that may be relevant. This can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/find-coronavirus-support>.

The NHS Volunteer Responders programme is available to help support people who are not shielding but are vulnerable for wider reasons including frailty, disability, pregnancy or social vulnerability. Community response volunteers provide help with collecting shopping, medication or other essential supplies for someone who is self-isolating, and delivering these supplies to their home.

As outlined in the Covid-19 action plan for adult social care, we will also be asking local commissioners and providers to provide letters enabling unpaid carers to identify themselves and their needs so these can be more easily met by retailers and others.

Hot topics for future webinars

- Practical support for unpaid carers
- Concerns about alleged increase use of restrictive practice and medication
- The role of learning disability liaison nurses
- Maintaining physical health during COVID-19

- Clarification about what can reasonably be expected from social care at this time
- Understanding the impact COVID-19 is having on key services for people with a learning disability, autistic people and their families.

Resources in development with publication expected shortly

- Parent and Carer engagement
- Supporting patients of all ages who are unwell with COVID-19 in mental health, learning disabilities and autism, and specialist inpatient facilities
- Care (Education) and Treatment Reviews during the coronavirus outbreak
- Hospital 2 page grab and go guide (developed in collaboration with partners)
- Demand and Capacity guidance (version 2)

Links to published guidance and resources

[NHS Visitor guidance version 2 \(subject to Trust Infection control requirements\)](#)

[Care Act easement guidance for Local Authorities](#)

[Learning Disability Senate guidance for families](#)

[Admission and Care of people in Care Homes](#)

[Adult Social Care action plan](#)

[NMC statement about Advance Care planning including DNACPR](#)

[National Autistic Society resources commissioned by DHSC](#)

[Updated PPE guidance.](#)

[Skills for Care workforce intelligence](#)

Additional information

Public Health England weekly updates [sign up here](#)