

### **Coronavirus: Resident & Staff Testing (including outbreak procedure)**

To be read in conjunction with the Coronavirus, Business Contingency and Emergency Planning, Good Governance, Infection Control & Cooperating with other Providers policies.

The Coronavirus disease named COVID-19 (or COVID), has now been classed by the World Health Organisation as a Pandemic. As the virus has the potential to spread extensively, it's likely to pose a significant challenge to many organisations. Providers must work in a collaborative and multiagency way to mitigate the spread and contain the risk of the virus.

The government, Public Health England and all Local Authorities will be responsible for the advice and guidance disseminated to their Local Providers.

As a provider there are several things that need to be in place and that are continually monitored as the spread and breadth of the virus increases.

This policy sets out the procedures Park House Residential Care Home are currently following in relation to the guidance provided. The policy will be reviewed at least annually or as required.

The policy may be altered only with the permission of the Registered or Assistant Manager if deemed within the Residents Best Interests.

The Registered Manager and Assistant Manager are responsible for Resident and Staff Testing, including any follow up actions as required. This includes completing any statutory notifications as set out within government and Care Quality Commission guidance/ regulation.

Any issues encountered with staff and resident testing must be communicated to the local authority and Care Quality Commission within a timely manner. Further guidance can be obtained from both websites and also Public Health England.

### **Staff Testing**

In relation to government and Care Quality Commission guidance received week commencing the 06<sup>th</sup> July 2020. All staff members/ regular self employed workers

who are currently actively working within Park House Residential Care Home should be COVID tested at least weekly.

All results should be forwarded directly by e-mail or via a printed copy to a member of the management team, usually the Registered Manager. Any delays or problems in counted whilst attempting to book a test or whilst having a test conducted, should be reported to the Registered Manager or Assistant Manager with a matter of urgency.

Where possible members of the team should ensure the test is conducted at approximately weekly intervals. Therefore, keeping the amount of time between tests equally spaced.

Members of staff who may not be working within a one-week period (based Monday to Sunday) or those who may be on annual leave/ sick leave do not need to be tested unless they wish to. However, Park House does encourage staff to be tested for their own personal safety and benefit. Staff members returning from an absence of one week or more, should ensure they receive a COVID test and result before returning to work. Where this is not possible a member of management should be made aware, and will risk assess the situation.

Park House also actively encourages those staff living with other individuals within their households, to ask that they also accompany them to the weekly test. This is especially encouraged where another member of the household may have been travelling to or from work/ other engagements. Park House does not need to know their results, but do ask that they make Park House or the staff member aware if their result is positive. Park House in this event would ask that the staff member living with this person follows the self-isolating guidance as per the government/ NHS website(s), and also repeats the test after seven days/ a return to work. Park House would then ask all staff members continuing to work to be retested immediately.

Failure to attend a 'weekly COVID test' without prior management consent may lead to an investigatory/ disciplinary procedure being opened. Weekly testing is deemed as a 'reasonable management request' which is defined in both staff members handbooks and job descriptions.

Management reserve the right to make alternate arrangements for any allocated shifts to be covered, for those staff members who may not have been tested for over one week. No formal or informal notice may be severed depending on the situation. Any shifts which are covered by the company must be taken by the staff member as unpaid whilst an investigation/ disciplinary investigation is commenced.

The management team will review COVID tests results daily between Monday to Friday, with a full update to the COVID results file being completed on a Monday for the previous week.

In addition to this COVID test requests will be issued/ renewed on a Monday of each week via the employers government testing portal. Staff members nominated for a

COVID test will then receive a text message or e-mail from '.gov' to book a test with a verification code.

If staff apply for a home testing kit, staff should be mindful that it is recommended to do so on a Monday to allow for postage and return postage times to ensure their tests remain within the 'one week window'.

Staff who do not have symptoms or any concerns that they may have the virus -do not need to 'self-isolate' between the test and results. In addition, to not having to inform management of a negative test result other than submitting the results via e-mail or printed copy.

However, staff who may be self-isolating due to symptoms or concerns should inform management as soon as possible of their test result. This should ideally be done by telephone.

In the event a staff member tests positive without prior symptoms or concerns. The staff member should immediately self-isolate and take support from the government/ NHS website(s). In addition to telephoning a member of the management team who will advise of the relevant workplace actions and potential return to work dates. After actioning the above, a copy of the test result should then be forwarded to the management team as explained above.

Any test results not received within five days of the test, should be immediately actioned following the guidance on the testing kit receipt card obtained at the time of the test.

Any test returned inconclusive should be repeated as soon as possible and the management informed.

## **Resident Testing**

In relation to government and Care Quality Commission guidance received week commencing the 06<sup>th</sup> July 2020. All residents who are currently actively residing within Park House Residential Care Home should be COVID tested at least every twenty-eight days.

The management are responsible for coordinating the care home testing kits and explaining what the test will involve. Before administering the test, Park House must complete a MCA and COVID testing care plan as well as gaining consent at each test interval. Park House also will seek consent from the residents Next of Kin for further clarification and support.

The management will apply for care home test kits as available through the government website and results will be forwarded to the care home manager directly. The management team will then disclose to each resident their result.

Park House is aware some residents do not feel the need to be COVID tested as many have been shielding or have chosen not to leave the premises. Park House

should respect the resident's decision. However, some residents may indicate they only wish to be tested if there is a concern that COVID is present within the building or that another staff member or resident has tested positive. Park House must action resident testing within a timely matter if this is the circumstance.

Park House will also gain consent from residents as required to communicate test planning and results to their representatives. However, Park House has a duty of candor to inform any 'involved others' of any potential or confirmed outbreak.

In the event a resident tested positive the resident must 'self-isolate' and follow all guidance as per the government and NHS website(s). The outbreak policy would then be activated/ prepared.

Any test results not received within five days of the test, should be immediately actioned following the guidance on the testing kit receipt card obtained at the time of the test.

Any test returned inconclusive should be repeated as soon as possible and the management informed/ will rearrange for a repeat test.

### **COVID Confirmed Result (Staff)**

In the even a staff member tests positive without prior symptoms or concerns. The staff member should immediately self-isolate and take support from the government/ NHS website(s). In addition to telephoning a member of the management team who will advise of the relevant workplace actions and potential return to work dates. After actioning the above, a copy of the test result should then be forwarded to the management team as explained above.

The management team should then make arrangement's for all staff members to be tested as soon as possible. Requesting tests again through the employer portal marking the request as 'high'.

In the meantime, Park House will then look to rearrange shift patterns to ensure that anyone who has worked with the 'positive individual' is kept working within the same 'team'. In addition to this Park House will consider asking the staff members awaiting tests to self isolate and make alternate shift cover arrangements.

Park House would also place a request in for repeats for Resident COVID tests, as well as informing all residents and representatives that there has been a confirmed case. In addition to advising of the actions taken/ planned actions.

More information can be found on the NHS website, which also contains the NHS Coronavirus helpline details.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-self-isolate-and-what-to-do/>

The management will also make the decision at the time as to whether it is advised that all residents begin to self-isolate regardless of test bookings/ results. This would be known as a best interest decision for the business and residents.

### **COVID Confirmed Result (Resident)**

In the event a resident tests positive without prior symptoms or concerns. The resident should immediately be supported to self-isolate and take support/ direction from the government/ NHS website(s) which will also be communicated through the management team.

The management team should then make arrangements for all staff members to be tested as soon as possible. Requesting tests again through the employer portal marking the request as 'high'.

In the meantime, Park House will then look to rearrange shift patterns to ensure that anyone who has worked with the 'positive individual' is kept working within the same 'team' to minimise infection transfer risk. In addition to this Park House will consider asking the staff members awaiting tests to self isolate and make alternate shift cover arrangements if deemed within the companies and residents best interests.

Park House would also place a request in for repeats for Resident COVID tests, as well as informing all residents and representatives that there has been a confirmed case. In addition to advising of the actions taken/ planned actions.

More information can be found on the NHS website, which also contains the NHS Coronavirus helpline details.

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### **Outbreak Procedures Within Park House (Confirmed & Unconfirmed)**

The management of Park House are responsible for leading and managing the team during a suspected or confirmed outbreak of COVID within Park House. Management check the government guidance daily and informally discuss any amendments to current practices and precautions in situ.

More detailed guidance information (than listed below in this policy) can be found from the link below, to which Park House are promoting and have put into/ are ready to put into working practice:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/909610/admission-and-care-of-residents-in-a-care-home-during-covid-19.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/909610/admission-and-care-of-residents-in-a-care-home-during-covid-19.pdf)

In the event of a suspected or confirmed outbreak the Care Home Management team will meet within six hours to formally discuss the plan of action. During this time Management will instruct all residents to begin self-isolation within their rooms, and request all staff wear

full PPE. This will include gloves, face masks, aprons, and face shields when entering residents bedrooms or/ and moving around the building.

During the Management Meeting the most recent set of guidance from the government, NHS, PHE, and CQC websites shall be viewed (usually formulated into easy access notes from partners in care). Management will then devise an action plan which will be reviewed at least daily.

Updates and changes will be communicated to staff using e-mail, memo, and handover updates.

In the event of an outbreak there are a number of staff members as listed within the Registered Manager's COVID file who are willing to 'move in' to Park House for approximately fourteen (14) days. Staff members include care and support staff. There is already contingency planning in place for the deliveries of goods from our suppliers, so that deliveries can remain contactless.

Park House also has a full contingency plan for staffing through Nurse Plus Dorchester and New Cross Staffing Agency. Both agencies are able to supply COVID and NON COVID care and support staff.

Any suspected or confirmed residents with COVID will have a red square displayed on their door to discreetly notify staff to enter with added caution.

All PPE must be changed between residents and placed into waste bins outside of each resident's bedroom. All used PPE should be double bagged before being placed into the waste bins. After the allotted amount of time, waste bins maybe emptied into the main clinical waste bin before being placed in the main bin.

All laundry should be handled with caution and bagged for transportation to the laundry. Where possible, laundry should be stored in the resident's room for at least thirty-six (36) hours before being moved to the laundry room for washing.

No staff except Kitchen staff will be permitted to enter the kitchen. Kitchen staff must remain where possible within the kitchen. Park House has additional supplies of crockery and cutlery, which means that any used items may be left in a secure area to decontaminate if required. Disposable cups and plates are also available.

This policy is only intended to be summary guidance only and full guidance for Management consideration/ action should be taken directly from the above websites. In addition to any communications from the local authority and the Care Quality Commission.

This policy will be reviewed monthly or/ and in line with government guidance.