



14<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Customer,

We hope that you and your families are keeping safe and well during the pandemic. Please find below the latest updates in relation to the response to Covid-19(Coronavirus).

### COVID 19 update

As you will be aware, the country is in it's third lockdown with numerous restrictions in place. If you need any advice about the measures in place, please do not hesitate to contact the office.

For further information on the local alert level and what this means you can check online at

<https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/local-covid-19-alert-level-and-restrictions>

As the pandemic continues, we have a wide range of measures in place to protect our customers and staff from the virus, including:-

- All care staff have full PPE (Ilr masks, gloves aprons, eye protection) plus 70% alcohol hand sanitiser, also visors if required. Staff issued with bag to protect their PPE.

- We do not accept hospital discharges without a negative COVID test
- Individual risk assessments completed for all staff who may be vulnerable
- All care staff have had refresher training including infection control
- No staff sharing vehicles
- Full office risk assessment in place as per HSE requirements
- No sharing of office equipment including pens
- Care staff attending office wear masks and socially distance, all carers and other visitors to site must book appointments to minimise footfall
- Supervisions, reviews etc done remotely where possible
- Office staff split into A and B teams to assist social distancing – half team work from home on alternate days
- If office staff tested positive, the group would need to self isolate
- Glass screens in place for all office staff and in training room
- Increased ventilation – windows door open if practicable
- No hot desking
- Use of outdoor space for breaks wherever possible
- Touch free Hand sanitiser stations x 3 in office
- Signage and mats in place regarding social distancing, hand washing, hand sanitiser
- Increased cleaning regime

- Professional waste disposal
- Temperature checking at office entrance
- Increased hand washing facilities - antibacterial hand wash no touch dispenser paper towels
- Appropriate disinfectant spray and disposal cloths in line with COSHH
- PPE stock managed by Directors to ensure adequate supplies
- Any staff testing positive need negative test before RTW
- All staff aware of need to self isolate if have symptoms / positive test
- Regular monitoring of guidelines via Gov.uk and webinars with Head office, Local Authority

### **Important Update – Weekly COVID testing for staff**

**We have been issuing weekly COVID 19 PCR testing kits to our staff for the last few weeks. Whilst we can not force staff to carry out weekly testing, it is our expectation that they do carry out the tests.**

### **Important Update – Vaccinations COVID 19**

**The government has stated its intention to vaccinate the first four groups of the population by mid February, the groups are as follows**

- 1) Residents in care homes and care home staff**
- 2) All those over 80 and all front line health and social care staff**

**3) All those 75 and over**

**4) All those over 70 and all those classed as extremely clinically vulnerable**

**Vaccinations are being carried out at GP's, in hospitals, some pharmacies and in large regional centres, our nearest being Newcastle at present.**

**I am happy to say that several of our customers have now received vaccinations. If you receive an invitation to receive a vaccination and need any kind of assistance please do not hesitate to contact the office.**

**NB GP's surgeries have asked us to pass on a request NOT to call them to ask about the vaccination programme as they are being inundated at what is already a very busy time of year. All patients will be contacted in due course.**

**Our staff have not yet been offered vaccinations but we will inform you when this is rolled out.**

### **PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) – Bluebird Care Update**

Official guidance on the use of face masks and other PPE in social care settings has **not** changed since our last letter to you. Therefore, our Carers will continue to wear all other PPE as per last letter. Please be aware that carers need soap and hot water available when they visit you, in order to thoroughly wash their hands before using their gel. This is in line with government advice, and we have issued specific guidance to our staff on handwashing.

We have ample stocks of PPE and have established reliable supply lines however we remain vigilant and all stocks of PPE are reviewed on a weekly basis.

We will send updates on a regular basis but in the meantime, please call us if you have any concerns. Our telephone number is 01845 440271. Our offices remain open as usual.

Kind Regards,

Heather Price, Director

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