Date: 29th January 2021

Dear Care and Community Support Provider,

Once again thank you to you and your staff for helping to keep our residents safe and well during this time. Please continue to report any cases or outbreaks to the Community Infection Control Team on 0151 295 3036.

Thank you for your continued support with Capacity Tracker. It is mandatory that the Capacity Tracker is completed daily. Providers should also be entering vaccinated staff on the capacity tracker. The information you provide helps us to understand the latest position on vacancy and care processes and to help inform infection control payments and is within the grant conditions of the new national Rapid Testing Fund for care homes. If you need any support on the Capacity Tracker, please contact moria.harrison@southportandformbyccg.nhs.uk.

If you have experienced any difficulties or having any issues with the supply chain of equipment, medication, food or PPE as a result of Brexit, please contact commissioningandcontracts@sefton.gov.uk.

Please contact Jayne.vincent@sefton.gov.uk for an information leaflet which may help to reassure staff about the safety of the vaccine and answer any queries they may have.

Information for Care Homes

We are very pleased to be able to inform you that all care homes residents and staff have been offered the first dose of the vaccination as part of the rollout and learning disability care homes will be vaccinated by the end of next week.  Our thanks go to the Primary Care Networks, the CCGs and all involved in the vaccination roll out and to all of you for your commitment and dedication to enable 1000’s of people to be vaccinated in a short space of time.  We would like to remind you that there will be further ‘mop-ups’ for anyone who hasn’t received their vaccine to date, either because they have had COVID, or been in hospital or a new admission and staff can still book onto the Southport and Ormskirk Hospital Hub to receive their vaccine if they haven’t had it by using the links below:

Pfizer Vaccine - [Southport Vaccination Clinic | Scheduling and Booking Website (nhsbookings.com)](https://southportvaccinationclinic.nhsbookings.com/v2/)

Astra Zeneca Oxford Vaccine - <https://ormskirkvaccinationclinic.nhsbookings.com/v2/>

Please remind staff to bring their ID and the consent form and most importantly not to share the link with anyone.

We are also starting to plan for the second dose and please be reassured that whilst supply will dictate whether everyone will be vaccinated at the same time, the vaccine team will be doing everything they can to vaccinate staff. Please also be assured that if staff didn’t receive a vaccination card, they will still be invited for their second dose. We also appreciate that staff are excited about having their vaccine but in preparation for the second dose, can we ask you to mention to staff to refrain from taking selfies during vaccination as this can cause issues because consent hasn’t been sought from the vaccination team and resident’s relatives. We would also ask you to consider whether relatives should attend the vaccination of their family member, to help avoid overcrowding and possible infection transmission.

Whilst it is excellent news that residents and staff are being vaccinated, it is only the first dose and it will take a few weeks for the body to build up protection. No vaccine is completely effective so please continue to ask staff to maintain social distancing and to follow good hygiene and wear PPE. If you need support, please do not hesitate to contact commissioningandcontracts@sefton.gov.uk

**IMPORTANT TO NOTE**

Since March 19th, 2020, several care homes received new residents either by way of hospital admission avoidance or following hospital discharge. These residents will have been in receipt of funding from central government in one of two ways and will require assessment for either CHC or another funding stream. If the resident was admitted via either of the two routes to the home between 19th March and 31st August 2020, funding will have been for Scheme 1. If the resident was admitted via either of the two routes since the 1st September, funding will relate to scheme 2 which is funding for a six-week period only. We are led to believe currently that funding for these two schemes will cease centrally from the 31st March 2021.

Both Mersey Care Foundation Trust and Midlands & Lancashire Commissioning Support Unit MUST carry out some form of assessment on all these individuals and the funding stream determined by the 31st March. Both organisations are reporting difficulties with some homes in regard to either carrying out telephone care reviews or obtaining information to support the assessment process. Completion of these assessments and determination of the appropriate funding stream is a national requirement and not optional. We appreciate a number of care homes are under significant pressure for a range of reasons, but we do not want to see any home left at risk of no further funding due to the required assessments not having been facilitated by the home.

We are therefore strongly encouraging all homes to engage with both Mersey Care or the Commissioning Support Unit in order to facilitate all assessments as a matter of urgency. Both organisations are willing to work with you to facilitate this and find options that work in order to ensure assessments are completed. Please do not leave this to the last minute as this will only cause undue pressure on the care home financially and otherwise but also the resident, their family and/or carers.

It has been a few weeks now since the RESTORE 2 packs were distributed and some care homes have attended the training. Thank you for your feedback so far. We will resend the information to GP’s this week and training will recommence in the coming weeks, which we will keep you informed about. If you do have any concerns, please let us know and we can discuss in the Care Home Commissioning Support Cell and look to rectify the issues for you.

This week you would have received some information from the DHSC to inform you that approval has been granted for the self-testing of Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests. This means your staff are now able to take and register their twice weekly LFD tests at home, before they arrive at the care home to start work. The online replenishing portal will be launched week commencing 1st February and this is the preferred route for requesting more kits.

We have attached information on a fund announced by central government on the 23rd December to support the additional work the introduction of Lateral Flow tests has brought. This is applicable to Care Homes only.

Please find attached a flyer providing details on the NHS Mail Webinars to help you access and make the most out of the email account. The Adams System is making it a priority for homes to use their NHS email and if you want to use Proxy meds ordering, you will also need to use the NHS mail account. From the 19th February, the Entry Level Tool Kit will be longer version. There is also training available for the tool kit, which can be accessed by contacting England.dsptnorht@nhs.net.

The DHSC, Yorkshire and the Humber ADASS and the Better Care Fund will be hosting a series of webinars throughout February and March to support staff working in the care sector to deliver safe care to people in the community. The first webinar is:

*“Coping with Covid: IPC – Back to Basics”, Thursday 4th of Feb, 3:00-4:00pm.*

To book your place on the webinar, please use the link below:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/north-regional-webinar-coping-with-covid-ipc-back-to-basics-tickets-138425738109>

If you do have any concerns about PPE, infection prevention control or workforce issues, you can also contact commissioningandcontracts@sefton.gov.uk who need to know but can also signpost you to the support available.

From us, all the Health and Care partners and Councillor Paul Cummins, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, we would like to thank you and your staff once again for all your hard work and everything you are doing at this time.

Yours sincerely



Deborah Butcher

Executive Director for Adult Social Care and Health



Fiona Taylor

Chief Officer, NHS South Sefton and NHS Southport and Formby CCGs