Date: 11th June 2021

Dear Care and Community Support Provider,

Thank you for everything you are doing to help prevent transmission of COVID-19. We are starting to see an increase in COVID cases in Sefton and would encourage all to have a PCR test if showing symptoms and having a Lateral Flow Test if symptom free. Please continue to report any outbreaks to the Community Infection Control Team on 0151 295 3036.

As well as preventing COVID-19 transmission, there is also a need to prevent any diarrhoea and vomiting (D&V) outbreaks, which can be caused by infectious or non-infectious agents; however, all cases of gastroenteritis or D&V should be regarded as infectious.

As you are aware, the important parts of controlling a D&V outbreak are the prevention of the spread of the infectious disease and protection of the unaffected residents, children, staff and visitors. Infectious disease can be introduced to any setting by people being in close contact with a person who is ill with symptoms and can be spread between people within all settings due to poor infection control practices. Please remember to check that residents, staff and visitors have no symptoms of COVID, but also, they haven’t had sickness and diarrhoea before visiting any setting – care homes, day centres, supported living, people’s own homes.

We advise using an alcohol-based hand rub for decontamination of hands before and after direct patient contact and clinical/ personal care, except in the following situations when only soap and water must be used:

• After contact with bodily fluids (for example – after toileting, pad changing, clearing up spills of vomit or diarrhoea).

• when hands are visibly soiled or potentially contaminated with body fluids;

• when caring for patients with vomiting or diarrhoeal illness

• remember the 48-hour rule

There have been some updates to the following guidance regarding PPE.

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/992266/20210609_PPE_guide_for_community_and_social_care_settings.pdf>

The changes relate to the putting on and taking off PPE infographics for both [domiciliary care](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-how-to-work-safely-in-domiciliary-care?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=a1f06639-ecbb-4672-94fc-d51dbdc55744&utm_content=daily) and [care homes.](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-how-to-work-safely-in-care-homes?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=9de00ea7-5bce-458d-adb9-c67b348ffa6b&utm_content=daily)

As we enter summer, we wanted to share some guidance with you about preparing for heatwaves. The full Heatwave Plan and accompanying documents can be accessed on the Public Health England website at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/heatwave-plan-for-england>.

The full guidance outlines the responsibilities of health and social care organisations at different stages during a heatwave. All social care providers are advised to plan to ensure that care and support for people at risk can be accessed in the event of a heatwave.

It is providers responsibility to ensure that their settings plans and risk assessments are updated.

The Heatwave Plan for England remains unchanged for summer 2021. Additional actions may be needed due to COVID-19 and specific resources are available below:

[Heatwave-Advice\_for\_Health\_Professionals.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/429627/Heatwave-Advice_for_Health_Professionals.pdf)

[Beat the Heat (publishing.service.gov.uk)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/980943/Beat_the_Heat_2021.pdf)

[Print (publishing.service.gov.uk)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/888249/Heat_flier_Residents_2020.pdf)

[Heatwave-Care\_Home\_Managers.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/429600/Heatwave-Care_Home_Managers.pdf)

We have been in contact with you this week to tell you of the dedicated Microsoft Teams Q&A vaccine session, being led by Dr Leonard. Dr Leonard worked as a GP for many years in Sefton before his retirement in 2019.

During the pandemic, Dr Leonard has continued to  supported the rollout and delivery of vaccinations for staff and residents in care homes and until recently has been a valued member of the Strategic Care Home Group and Care Home Cell and in the past  delivered a well-attended Q&A sessions  to support staff in understanding the benefits of the vaccination programme and help alleviate any concerns they may have.

We are aware that some of your staff are still reluctant to take up the offer of the COVID19 vaccination for various reasons.  We have arranged a Q&A session to be delivered by Dr Leonard for you and your staff on, 23 June 2021 at 2.00pm.

If you and your staff would like to participate in the above session could you please register your interest by emailing margi.moffit@southseftonccg.nhs.uk and let us know of any questions or concerns you would like addressed.

We would also like to encourage staff to have their second vaccine to have full protection for themselves and others.

Healthwatch Sefton have launched a short survey for 18 – 30-year olds about taking up the offer of the COVID-19 vaccine. The covid-19 vaccine rollout is now reaching younger adultsand in anticipation of our younger residents being offered the covid-19 vaccine they want to hear from them directly**,** whether they will take up the covid-19 vaccine when offered.

We would be grateful if you could please share this with your staff for them to share with their friends and family members to encourage as many young people to share their views:

[https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/HWS\_18-30\_Covid-19\_survey](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/HWS_18-30_Covid-19_survey?fbclid=IwAR2hXNcgjVgCs6IGnJoGL8VPAZVvmUGo7fYhRgjgnd-LF4Uzzn_EMyGX2w0%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)

Following on from feedback from Provider Representative groups and wider Capacity Tracker users, there is currently a review of all questions and data items in Capacity Tracker and more information is provided in the email. Please also continue to complete the Capacity Tracker daily as this helps us to understand the current levels of staff and resident vaccine uptake, vacancies and absence from work. If you have staff who have had the vaccine elsewhere, can you please still record that they have had the vaccine and where this has taken place, so we collect an accurate record of vaccine uptake. Please find attached a NECS Home Care Daily Update poster.

Information for Care Homes

We are very pleased to share that the Queenscourt Hospice has received the Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service, the highest award a voluntary group can receive in the UK. For over 30 years they have been delivering exceptional compassionate care for local people with life-limiting illnesses and none of this would be possible without the thousands of volunteers who have become valued members of the team over the years. We are sure that you would want to congratulate them on this impressive achievement.

The Innovation Agency (North West Coast Patient Safety Collaborative) South Sefton, Southport and Formby Commissioning Groups and Sefton Local Authority are working together to enhance the confidence of care home staff in detecting and appropriately escalating deteriorating residents with the implementation of RESTORE2, a physical deterioration and escalation tool specifically designed for care/nursing homes. A briefing is attached for more information on how it can be used to support practice and you can find out more by registering for educational sessions using the link below:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/restore-2-online-training-session-tickets-103421153454>

We know how much pressure you have been under meeting the challenges of the pandemic. We also know how hard you have worked to continue providing excellent services to your residents and families during this time. Aqua have developed a programme specifically designed to celebrate the successes you have achieved and build on them to further improve your residents' experiences.

During their carefully curated programme, you will be invited to reflect on your experiences of working in the Care Home sector during the pandemic, and how your creativity enabled you to continue delivering excellence. Aqua will then use your experiences to consider how services can be improved by building on what has gone before. The programme will consist of several different delivery methods, designed to ensure ease of engagement. Aqua will share videos and articles to introduce key concepts, exploring each in more detail as a group. They will share the learning in a strengths-based environment, and work in small groups to support real life improvement projects related to the theme of ‘living well in the Care Home.’

This programme will be delivered as 6 half day sessions over 6 months (one half day every month) with the opportunity for 1-1 coaching at the request of participants. The dates are below and further details of this programme and how to register can be found [here:](https://aqua.nhs.uk/programmes/care-homes-avoiding-hospital/)

Day 1 Thursday 15th July 2021, 9.30-12.30

Day 2 Thursday 12th August 2021, 9.30-12.30

Day 3 Thursday 2nd September 2021, 9.30-12.30

Day 4 Thursday 30th September, 9.30-12.30

Day 5 Thursday 14th October 2021, 9.30-12.30

Day 6 Thursday 4th November 2021, 9.30-12.30

We would like to remind you that the North West Directors of Adult Social Services are organising ten webinars from July onwards focusing on care homes and quality. They have worked with providers, NHSEI, CQC, NICE and local authority quality teams to develop this programme which will be:

• Free

• Short, practical, provider-led

• An opportunity to hear from CQC about inspection and ask questions

The four webinars in July are:

• Pressure Ulcers and Tissue Viability

• Oral Health

• Medications Optimisation

• Grow Your Workforce / recruitment

To book on, please visit <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/nw-adass-care-home-quality-webinars-tickets-154842936391>.

Please find attached to this letter, a letter for care homes in connection to the enhanced care in care homes and flu vaccinations. It is important that we have a named contact/s to help with our coordination of the flu vaccine and the letter provides more information on what is required and how to forward the contact details for your care home.

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