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Date: 24th September 2021

THIS IS A WEB VERSION OF THE LETTER. IF YOU WOULD LIKE ANY DOCUMENTS REFERENCED, PLEASE CONTACT Jayne.vincent@sefton.gov.uk

Dear Care and Community Support Provider,

As always, we want to thank you for everything you are doing to continue to keep our vulnerable residents safe and well.

We would be grateful if you could please continue to promote to your staff teams how they can be vaccinated, if they still haven’t had a vaccine and wish to do so. The Seaforth Vaccination site is open for drop in vaccinations Tuesday -Saturday 10.00am till 6.00pm and they are using both the Astra Zeneca and Pfizer vaccines. You can find times and locations for other walk-in sites across Sefton and beyond on the [NHS website.](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/find-a-walk-in-coronavirus-covid-19-vaccination-site/)

We understand that you may have been contacted directly by the Department of Health and Social Care this week in connection to expired tests. Expired tests that are sent to the lab will be returned as void. Please:

* Check the box the tests were delivered in to see the expiry date
* Check the exterior plastic bag in each test kit and look out for the egg-timer symbol
* Check the vial to see if there is an expiry date, again look out for the egg-timer

Embedded within the email sent with this letter are some photos of what you should be looking out for, but if you think you have been sent kits that have already expired please send an email with **a photo attached of the expiry dates** on the **box**, the **packet** and the **vial** to carehometesting@dhsc.gov.uk.

We would like to remind you that the DHSC consultation on making vaccination a condition of deployment in the health and wider social care sector within England only is still live. The consultation proposes that, if introduced, requirements would apply to frontline health and care workers– those with face-to face contact with patients and clients though the delivery of services as part of a CQC regulated activity. It would mean only those workers that are vaccinated could be deployed (or those with a legitimate medical exemption) to deliver those services. To take part in the survey, please click on this link: [the survey](https://consultations.dhsc.gov.uk/612f51cbbf327c44607a7bb9)

The Association of British Insurers and The British Insurance Brokers' Association, working together with care providers, Local Government Association and the Department of Health and Social Care, have published [guidance for care providers](https://clicktime.symantec.com/3RhQcXCPGL54YYJ1DLqQteE6H2?u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.abi.org.uk%2Fglobalassets%2Ffiles%2Fsubject%2Fpublic%2Fcare-homes%2Fcare-sector-steps-to-access-el-and-pl-cover.pdf) to help explain why there are challenges in providing employers liability and public liability insurance for communicable diseases, and what steps can be taken to improve access to insurance cover.

This week we received some information to share with you from the **House of Memories.** They have built a 30 sqm mobile space that opens into an immersive cinema and exhibition space, designed to bring digital arts, music and heritage experiences into local communities. The aim is to create social connections for older people living with dementia and with local older people networks and groups. The space welcomes Covid secure groups (max 6 people) and individuals to experience an immersive interaction of their choice, that last around 10-15 minutes. The current programme options include a trip on Liverpool’s overhead railway, a visit to a 1950s grocery store, and a virtual day out at the seaside or forest. To view ***On the Road*** in action, please see short film [linked here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TAnp4wxkiPQ) (2mins).

On the Road can enable greater community engagement across the North West, to support the growing number of isolated elders diagnosed with dementia and the wider community of older people experiencing loneliness and social isolation.

Please find attached The House of Memories 2021 booklet with provides a unique insight into the award-winning project.

Information for Care Homes

Outbreaks in care homes are still rising and both staff and residents are being infected. Please continue to report any outbreaks to the Infection Control Team by ringing them on 0151 295 3036 or email infection.controlteam@merseycare.nhs.uk during normal Monday to Friday working hours 9am-5pm or outside of these hours at weekends/ evenings and Bank Holidays – please contact PHE on 0344 225 0562 – Option 1

**Dose 2 Staff Vaccination**

We have achieved a high proportion of staff who have received their first COVID vaccination by 16th September. Thank you for all your hard work in supporting this programme. We have seen a herculean effort on behalf of all organisations and providers involved and have seen significant increase in uptake. Please do remember that vaccination dose two is equally as important as getting the first doses done – all staff must have received their second dose by the 11th November, and this will continue to be monitored at regional and national level.

It’s important for staff working in and being deployed to care homes, looking after the most vulnerable people, to be fully vaccinated to protect themselves, their colleagues and the people they look after from Covid-19. The virus can be extremely serious for vulnerable people so it’s important we protect them.

NHS North West has created a toolkit (attached) with useful information and resources to support care homes to have conversations with staff about the benefits of the vaccine and why it’s important for staff in care homes to be fully vaccinated against the virus.

**COVID Boosters & Flu Vaccinations**

Work is taking place on the booster programme and seasonal flu vaccinations. For Southport & Formby care homes this has encompassed homes being sent the attached word document to complete and return to mcn-tr.schwb-vacc@nhs.net.

To date, there is a significant number of care homes that have not returned the document, in line with the originally requested deadline of 17th September, so those care homes are asked to complete and return the document as a matter of urgency to avoid any further impact on the planning activity. Where an NHS number isn't available to include in the document then please supply the person's registered GP Practice.

This week we wrote to you directly to stress the importance of still updating the Capacity Tracker about vaccine uptake and vacancies. The data is being used for the planning of booster vaccinations and to identify any issues as we move towards the 11th November 2021 deadline for all care home staff to be vaccinated and as part of our ongoing work on viability and business continuity planning, should it be identified that a home has a significant level of un-vaccinated staff, which could then impact on service delivery and the ability of the home to accept new placements. If you did not receive a letter, please email contractsandcommisiong@sefton.gov.uk and one will be sent to you.

Dr Lamden has agreed to provide a COVID Q&A session for the care home managers at your meeting on the 28th September. We do hope you are able to join us.

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.

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