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THIS IS A WEB VERSION OF THE LETTER. IF YOU WOULD LIKE ANY INFORMATION MENTIONED IN THE LETTER, PLEASE EMAIL Jayne.vincent@sefton.gov.uk

Date: 5th November 2021

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 are pleased to be able to share that The Cheshire & Merseyside Resilience Hub have 3 further workshops running for November that are **FREE** for all staff to attend.

* Team Self Care - Tuesday 9th November 13:00 – 14:00 [**Book here**](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/192342771407)
The Perfect Storm – Covid19 & Burnout Tuesday 16th November 12:00 – 13:00 [**Book here**](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/192363272727)
* Psychological Self Care for Staff – Thursday 18th November 12:00 – 13:00 [**Book here**](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/187538862787)

Participants can also book a place via the [**website**](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/187538862787). All the workshops are run via zoom. Participants don’t need to have zoom installed on their system. You can run the meeting through a web browser by entering the joining information they receive via email.

Please find attached information on recall of Obisk Blue Tree Face Type IIR mask - MKTIIR0214 (tie back) and MKTIIR0199 (ear looped). The mask has been on the PPE portal and is likely to have been ordered by ASC and other providers. If you have these masks, as detailed in the attachment they should inform the NHS Product Enquiries Team by emailing productqueries@ppeenquiries.com, quoting Ref: Obisk Blue Tree Face Type IIR mask and confirm the volume of product in stock by 15/11/21

The [guidance on covid-19 testing for adult social care settings](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-testing-for-adult-social-care-settings?_cldee=cmltaS5tYXRoYXJ1QHNraWxsc2ZvcmNhcmUub3JnLnVr&recipientid=contact-cd0c68958c42ea1180e0005056877cb9-019e543156e449d88d1404e9c054985d&esid=fcaf99b1-2f37-ec11-8c64-002248008e5b#history) was updated on the 1st November.

The Guidance also includes several resources in connection to on-site testing, self-testing and visitor testing and has different testing guidance for a range of specific adult social care settings as well as self-test information in easy read and other languages.

Information for Care Homes

We would like to remind you of the guidance in connection to NHS professionals visiting care homes who are part of regular staff testing. This includes all patient-facing NHS staff entering care homes, including for example community services, ambulance services and GPs.

Given the risks, the default position is that a visiting professional should not be allowed entry to a care home without proof of a negative test within the last 72 hours – demonstrating they are following the testing regime for NHS staff.

In emergency visits such as a 999 response, it is not appropriate to ask for or provide proof before entry to a care home, given the potential delay this could cause and the implications for prompt management of the emergency. Further guidance is given below. However, all NHS professionals visiting care homes must follow the NHS testing regime and be testing twice a week.

Care homes must ask the NHS professional when they were last tested and see proof of the result and date of the relevant professional’s test. Proof may include:

• an email or text from NHS Test and Trace

• a screenshot of where the professional has to upload their test result

• a date-stamped photo of the test cartridge itself

• signed confirmation from their manager

• the NHS signed log included with the test kits provided to NHS staff

If it has been more than 72 hours since the NHS professional was tested, the care home should test the individual before entry to the care home.

If the individual has not been tested (or is unable to provide proof) and it is not possible to test prior to entry, the care home will need to make a risk-based decision regarding whether to permit entry, taking into account the reason and urgency of the visit. The default position is that without proof of a recent negative test or a negative rapid LFT on the door of the care home, the professional should not be admitted. Visiting professionals can, of course, conduct a test at home prior to visiting a care home if this would make better use of their time in the working day.

As detailed above, testing is only one part of the approach to reduce risk. Where the manager makes a risk-based decision to allow entry of someone without evidence of a negative test, all infection prevention and control (IPC) measures must continue to be followed in order to mitigate the risk, including correct use of PPE, cleaning, ventilation and distancing.

Many NHS professionals will be using rapid LFT testing for their regular testing regime. However, if a professional fall under a different NHS testing regime which uses PCR or LAMP testing, the individual will also need to demonstrate that they are testing in line with NHS policy for that testing technology. Given the importance of NHS staff testing regularly to ensure the safety of their patients, and the role of care home managers to keep their care homes safe, if care homes have any problems with NHS staff not following this policy, they should contact their clinical commissioning group (CCG) chief nurse.

More information can be found in this link: Testing for professionals visiting care homes - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Please find attached the UK Health Security Agency’s Care Home Acute Respiratory Resource Pack, which includes key messages and contact numbers as well as information on prevention of Acute respiratory infection, management of respiratory infection cases and outbreaks, testing and PPE.

**Joint Care Home Strategy 2021-24**

The joint strategy has recently been approved and will be more formally publicised and disseminated soon.  One workstream outlined in the strategy is around the conducting of a new cost of care exercise and Providers will receive a separate letter regarding this. We would like to thank Homes for working so well together over the last 20 months this has contributed to a richer Strategy and joint understanding of the challenges we collectively face.

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