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THIS IS A WEB VERSION OF THE LETTER. IF YU REQUIRE ANY OF THE DOCUMENTS MENTIONED, PLEASE EMAIL Jayne.vincent@sefton.gov.uk

Date: 14th January 2022

Dear Care and Community Support Provider,

As always thank you to you and your staff for everything you are doing to help protect our most vulnerable residents.

The safety of staff, patients and visitors remains the highest priority for the NHS and the Local Authority. Everyone accessing or visiting health and care settings must continue to wear a face covering (unless they are exempt) and follow social distancing rules. The infection prevention and control guidelines are set to remain in place for all staff and visitors, and across all health and care settings and services, including hospitals, GP practices, dentists, optometrists and pharmacies to ensure patients and staff are protected. [Read the full infection prevention control guidance.](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-and-control)

Please continue to report any confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19 to Sefton’s Community Infection Control Team (in hours) or Public Health England (out of hours/weekends and bank holidays).

* For Monday to Friday between 0900 and 1700, please contact the community infection control team on 0151 295 3036
* For out of hours, weekends and bank holidays please contact Public Health England’s Health Protection on call support on 0151 434 4819

We are very keen to encourage people to have their vaccines and booster to have protection from the first 2 doses of the vaccine. It helps give you longer-term protection against getting seriously ill from COVID-19.

You can find out who is currently eligible on the NHS website [here.](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/coronavirus-booster-vaccine/)

There are several places in Sefton where people can get their vaccines:

### Book an appointment using the National Booking Service

Use the National Booking Service to book a COVID-19 booster vaccine at your nearest available site.

You can find out more about who is currently eligible for which dose of vaccine and book an appointment [here.](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/book-or-manage-a-1st-or-2nd-dose-of-the-coronavirus-covid-19-vaccination/)

**Book an appointment at a GP-led vaccination site**

If you are a resident living in Southport and Formby, you can contact Southport Centre for Health and Wellbeing Centre by calling 01704 395830 to book an appointment for a booster vaccine if eligible.

If you are a resident living in south Sefton, you can contact Seaforth Village Surgery by calling 07979938229, or Netherton Health Centre on 0151 247 6413, to book an appointment for a booster vaccine if eligible.

**Guidance for people without NHS number to access COVID-19 vaccinations, testing and treatment without charge**

Every adult is entitled to their first, second (third if immunosuppressed) and booster dose of the COVID-19 vaccination. This includes people who aren’t registered with a GP or without leave to remain in the UK. You can access a letter with more information, translated in a range of languages, [here.](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccine-information-for-people-without-an-nhs-number)

**Cancelling your COVID-19 vaccine appointment**

If you/staff member are unable to attend the COVID-19 vaccination appointment, please cancel so the slot can be opened to somebody else. Another slot can be booked for a later date.

Remember, people over 18 can get their vaccine (first, second or booster) 28 days after a COVID-19 infection. [Read more here.](https://bit.ly/2Z8qurw)

**Updated UK Health Security Agency guidance – PCR tests**

Please find below a letter/updated guidance with respect to confirmatory PCR tests to be suspended for positive lateral flow test results.

This letter provides a summary and applies to all staff including substantive clinical and non-clinical roles, bank staff, contractors, and suppliers; students working in all facilities, settings and organisations delivering NHS care and volunteers working in settings with patients.

**Overseas recruitment**

The Covid-19 pandemic has put unprecedented pressures on the UK social care system. In response to the pandemic, the Government introduced measures to maximise the available workforce, which included increasing the number of staff from overseas. Many employers value workers from overseas due to the knowledge and skills they can contribute to the organisation.

Recruitment is one of the biggest challenges facing the sector now and employers need to make sure they are looking at all options to maximise recruitment opportunities, this includes considering workers from outside of the UK.

To support you with the of undertaking overseas recruitment, please find below a guide to the process.

**External Grant Funding**

There are currently 5 areas of grant funding that you may be aware of and potentially a 6th coming shortly (Omicron Support). Below is an outline of these, where decisions have not yet been made regarding allocations - we will keep you updated.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Grant Name** | **Period grant covers** | **Next grant return due** | **Comments** |
| Infection Control Fund | 1st Oct 21 – 31 Mar 22 | 11 Feb 22 | 2nd allocation released after Feb return |
| Testing Grant | 1st Oct 21 – 31 Mar 22 | 11 Feb 22 | As above |
| Vaccine Grant | 1st Oct 21 – 31 Mar 22 | 11 Feb 22 | As above |
| Workforce Recruitment & Retention Fund  | 21st Oct 21 – 31 Mar 22 | 14 April 22 | Payments to be made after 20 Jan |
| Workforce Recruitment & Retention Fund 2  | 10th Dec 21 – 31 Mar 22 | TBC (possibly April) | No allocations made yet |
| Adult Social Care Omicron Support fund | January TBC | TBC | No allocations as limited information known  |

Training / Advice session

If any providers feel that they would benefit from a drop in session to ask questions about completion of returns please contact paulagibson@sefton.gov.uk

**Safeguarding Portal**

We are keen to get Provider views on the portal, for example ease of use etc.  If you have any comments on the portal then please email Safeguarding.Adults@sefton.gov.uk.

**Escalation Policy / Business Continuity Plans and Mutual Aid**

We would like to remind Providers of the importance of ensuring that they have their Business Continuity Plans regularly updated and that they also refer to the previously issued Escalation Policy.

As part of our obligations to the Provider market we are also looking at the above issues and the development of Mutual Aid arrangements between Providers. We appreciated that Providers have already been pro-active in communicating with each other to provide potential assistance to each other, but we would be grateful if you could email Neil.Watson@sefton.gov.uk with any information on;

* Agencies you use that you think may have availability of staff for other Providers to use, should they experience significant staffing issues and as part of their Business Continuity Planning activities
* Whether you think that your service would be able to provide mutual assistance to other Providers (principally staff at short notice) and if so, the types/roles of staff that you could offer.

**Views of Social Care Workers wanted!**

The Royal Society for Public Health are conducting research into the views of social care workers in the North West about the flu vaccine, and how easy they find it to get one each winter. To do so, they are inviting your views in a [survey](https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=https%3a%2f%2fwww.surveymonkey.co.uk%2fr%2fNY8L3LF&c=E,1,unRs1AdmnsXtCx7mORrYAPKHTgiAsajnM1Q-Ny50KixIIE02hF9PS8Ed73dPoKEqScuZXCSN20t1fLbcuuVDMvQRHxccuTsBfXvm5U9KPosGAEroLNcoW8fEiw,,&typo=1) and in online focus groups.

Whether you've had the vaccine or not, they would love to hear from you. The survey takes just 5 minutes to complete, your answers will be completely anonymous, and everyone who completes it will be in a chance of receiving a £20 Amazon voucher. You can find it here: [https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/NY8L3LF](https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=https%3a%2f%2fwww.surveymonkey.co.uk%2fr%2fNY8L3LF&c=E,1,pB9XPau8Pwxwe6QzNKUdAVT3wcSRg7TwP-OBhHfvc48XiYfN-ijaXJxI1YU6mDKaPU1RweZ3mO5wJoqnFBnpXiZRVXVyJqzZW6M5bK3EdTYHBZfX&typo=1).

The focus groups for social care workers will take place online on:

·      Monday 31 January, 6pm

·      Friday 4 February, 12pm

Social care workers who take part will receive a £10 voucher for their time, with places allocated on a first come first served basis.

The focus groups for managers and supervisors in social care will take place online on:

·      Tuesday 1 February, 4pm

·      Friday 4 February 3pm

If you would like to take part or would like more information about the project, please contact Florence Gildea, Programmes Executive at RSPH, on fgildea@rsph.org.uk

**Education and Training Programmes for Care Providers**

Sefton Council and South Sefton and Southport and Formby CCGs want to support you in whatever way we can during this crisis period and one of the ways was to develop the Education and Training Programme for Care Providers.  The document below highlights the key areas where there are free education and supporting resources available for you and your staff not only on a national level but what’s available locally here in Sefton.

The resources contained within this document are also available can be accessed via Sefton Council’s Learner Management System.

Please find attached the latest versions. These documents and the electronic version will be regularly reviewed to include updates as we receive them and will be shaped to meet your need. If you have any suggestions as to what else needs to be included please let us know by emailing Louise Kearney, Learning and Development Officer at louise.kearney@sefton.gov.uk

**New service for Sefton Parents and Families with babies**

Mersey Care has secured funding from Sefton Council for a 12-month pilot of the Building Attachments and Bonds Service (BABS) to enhance its early years support for children and families.

BABS is a new Parent Infant Mental Health Service in Sefton supporting vulnerable families while mum is pregnant and in the early weeks after the baby is born. It will offer specialist, therapeutic support to families in Sefton to help them build good bonds and attachment with their baby.

[More information about the service here.](https://intranet.smbc.loc/intranet-features/news/new-service-for-sefton-parents-and-families-with-babies.aspx) We would be grateful if you could please share this information with your staff teams.

**Specific Information for Care Homes**

**Care Home Strategic Partnership**

The next meeting of the Care Home Strategic Partnership is Tuesday 8th February, 4.00 – 5.00pm. We do hope you are able to join us.

We would like to express our thanks to Heather Weekes for both chairing the Partnership meeting and working with us on its ongoing development.

**Cost of Care Exercise**

We wrote to care homes earlier this week regarding the extension to the timescales for the project and to outline further how this exercise links to wider national work.

A copy of the letter is embedded here.

**Restore2 Mini e-learning**

We would like to make you aware of the recent launch of a free Restore2 **Mini** e-learningmodule, developed by colleagues from the South West AHSN. The module is free to access at the following link: <https://www.bluestreamacademy.com/enquiry/index>

Please be aware this is for **Restore2 Mini** and therefore Nursing Homes / homes that take routine observations may be better placed undertaking the full Restore2 Education offers available (we are still running a weekly Restore2 session, bookable at the following link <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/restore-2-online-training-session-tickets-103421153454>  in addition to local activity underway).

For any queries on the e-learning module, including whether Homes from your area have accessed, please contact Natalie Lofthouse - NURSING & CARE SUITE MANAGER, Blue Stream Academy (natalie.lofthouse@bluestreamacademy.com) who should be able to assist.

We hope that this will support those Homes who want to adopt Restore2 Mini, enabling staff to complete at a time and location convenient for them.

From us, all the Health and Care partners and Councillor Paul Cummins, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, we would like to take the opportunity to thank you and your staff teams for everything you are doing to support our most vulnerable residents. Your dedication, support and hard work is very much appreciated by us all.

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