

Care Home Visitor Policy & Guide

(Pandemic Version)

As you will be aware, new guidance has been published with further changes made from the 19th July 2021.

Please note for all visits, with the exception of garden and window visits, a rapid covid-19 test (LFT), indicating a negative result, will be required before every visit.

All visits will continue to be arranged by appointment only.

All visitors to the home have an important role to play in helping to keep your loved ones safe by carefully following the procedures described in this guidance. In the face of new variants of the virus, we still need to be cautious to ensure we protect those most at risk in care homes while ensuring indoor visits can go ahead, therefore we are asking visitors to recognise that the home will need to share out visiting appointments in order that everyone has the opportunity to have one.

Whilst it is not a condition of visiting, it is strongly recommended that all visitors receive two doses of the Covid-19 vaccination before visiting their loved ones.

IMPORTANT

Please **do not make an appointment** to visit if you have been feeling unwell recently or any of the following symptoms:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature (37.8°C or greater)
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)
- Had recent contact (in the last 14 days) with anyone with COVID-19 symptoms, or someone who has been confirmed COVID-19 positive
- Have returned from an overseas visit recently and are still in the quarantined period

We do understand that with increased infections in the community these remain extremely difficult times and would like to thank you all for your understanding and patience – together we will continue do our utmost to keep everyone safe and well.

We would appreciate your visit feedback, which is always very much welcomed and gives other visitors insight into our homes and services. If you would like to provide feedback for us on the [carehome.co.uk](https://www.carehome.co.uk) website, please ask for a card or go directly to the website and select 'submit a review' from the task bar.

Thank you for reading and agreeing to this visiting guidance.

We do hope you enjoy your visit

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Safe Visiting Area Visits (Screened Visits), supported by testing

1. **Two visitors will be permitted in the screened area.** Visitors to this area do not have to be named visitors
2. From the 19th July we will continue to permit children to visit in our safe screened areas. Visitors can bring
 - i). up to 2 babies or toddlers into the safe screened area. They will not be counted as one of the two visitors as seen in point 1. Note babies and toddlers are children aged from 0 – 2 years.
 - ii). Children aged from 3 – 18 can also visit the safe screen area, however they will be counted as one of the two visitors currently permitted.
 - iii). All children visitors must be added to the booking system when requesting a visit
 - iv). All children aged 11 and over will require a negative lateral flow test before visiting
3. You **must** book an appointment before coming to the home. We can only agree to a visit if you have booked a time slot and we ask you to adhere to this procedure please.
4. Appointments will be available from 10am – 4pm every day with the exception of lunch time and 30 minutes after each visit to sanitise the area
5. The time slots are a maximum of **one hour**, as other visitors will have also booked visit appointments. Please let the staff know, when booking your appointment, if you would like less than one hour as this will allow for more bookings in the day.
6. You may be able to visit your loved more than once per week if booking slots are available and infection control measures are followed
7. We ask that any gifts you bring in for the resident must be able to be sanitised, this is to ensure that any potential viruses are not brought into the care home. When you book your call please let the staff member know if you are bringing a gift for your loved one, this can be left in the screened area when you leave and can be sanitised and taken to your relative's room to assist.
8. You must call at the front door to advise the home that you have arrived for your appointment.
9. You (and any children over the age of 11 years) will then be asked to go to our testing area and take a Lateral Flow Device test (LFD). Alternatively, you can self-test at home before you come for your visit. If you feel confident testing yourself, please ask the home, and they will provide you with a 7 test kit pack. You **must** test on the day of the visit and show proof of the result which can either be an email or text from NHS test and Trace OR a date stamped photo of the test cartridge.
10. If your test (or any children tested) returns a **positive** result you will be asked to go home immediately and self-isolate. You will be provided with a confirmatory PCR (swab test) by a

member of staff, this will be used to confirm your Covid status once you are at home. Unfortunately you will not be permitted to visit your loved one until you have a negative result on the PCR.

11. If your test returns a **negative** result, you will be directed to the external door to the safe screened visiting area.
12. A **face covering** in our safe screened area is not mandatory, however please bear in mind this is a small space and others visiting with you may need to sit close.
13. Unfortunately, due to the safe screened area system physical contact with your relative will not be possible.
14. If you need to alert the staff please use your mobile phone and a member of staff will come to your assistance as soon as possible. If the resident has fallen please tell the staff on the phone that urgent attention is required.
15. A disposable cup of drinking water will be provided on the table for you before your visit. Please dispose of the cup in the bin provided before you leave.
16. We will unfortunately NOT be able to provide you with any toilet facilities due to infection control measures in place.
17. Following your visit you will be asked again to sanitise your hands as you are leaving. Please exit the care home premises without approaching any residents or staff.
18. A member of staff will clean the safe visiting area after every visit to ensure infection control procedures are followed. In addition they will sanitise any gifts left and pass them to your loved ones.
19. If we do not already hold your details you will be asked for your address and telephone number, alternatively, please scan the QR (quick response) code with your phone.
20. In the event of an outbreak of Covid-19 all visiting will be cancelled with the exception of essential care givers and end of life visiting.

Indoor Visits (Supported by Testing)

1. **Only six named constant visitors will be permitted.** Please discuss with your loved one and family members who your named visitors will be. The six named visitors will be able to visit separately or two can visit together according to the preference of the resident and only a maximum of two visitors on the same day, unless further booking slots are available.
2. From the 21st June all residents have been able to choose or nominate an **essential care giver** who may visit the home in all circumstances, including if the home is in an outbreak (unless the resident or care giver has tested positive for Covid-19). An essential care giver is someone who provides a greater degree of personal care to maintain their loved ones immediate health and wellbeing. If you are nominated as an essential care giver you will be required to undertake the same testing regime as all care staff in the care homes (3 x tests per week) and will be required to wear the same PPE as care staff.
3. We will continue to allow children to visit indoors. The following procedure for children visitors will be required to be followed:
 - i). Visitors can bring up to **two** babies or toddlers into the care home. They will **not** be counted as one of the two visitors as seen in point 1. **Note** babies and toddlers are children aged from 0 – 2 years.
 - ii). Children aged from 3 – 18 can also visit indoors, however they **will** have to be considered as **one of the six named visitors** currently permitted.
 - iii). All children visitors must be added to the booking system when requesting a visit
 - iv). All children aged 4 and over must wear the same PPE as required by adults
 - v). All children aged 11 and over will require a negative lateral flow test before visiting
 - vi). It is important that any children visiting are able to follow infection control measures carefully. This will include social distancing, PPE and advice on minimising contact as well as being able to follow other advice or instructions given by the care home.
 - vii). There must be no close contact between babies or preschool aged children and the residents they are visiting. We understand this is very hard however Covid-19 does not discriminate between ages and can be transferred regardless.
4. As with screened area visits, you **must** book a time slot appointment before coming to the home. We will only be able to agree a visit if you have booked a slot.
5. Appointments will be available from 10am – 4pm every day with the exception of lunchtime when visiting will cease.
6. As we have increased the number of named visitors, your visit must only last a maximum of **45 minutes** to limit the number of indoor visitors, and to continue to protect the residents and staff. If you would like to stay for any additional time, please contact the care home who will be able to advise you whether this is possible or not. If you would like less than 45 mins please contact the home as this will free appointments for others.

7. You will be able to visit your loved one as many times you wish per week as long as there are appointments available for you to book.
8. Additional visits can still take place outside or in our safe screened areas, garden and window visits.
- 8 You must call at the front door to advise the home that you have arrived for your appointment. If you have come in your car to the care home you will be asked to remain in your car, or be taken to our testing pod where a member of staff will, wearing full PPE, ask you a series of questions regarding your health, and the health of any children visitors. The staff member will also take your (and any visiting children aged 11 and over) temperature and take your test with an LFD swab. They will then ask you to remain in your car, or in the testing pod until the results are through. Alternatively, you can self -test at home before you come for your visit. If you feel confident testing yourself, please ask the home, and they will provide you with a 7 test kit pack. You **must** test on the day of the visit and show proof of the result which can either be an email or text from NHS test and Trace OR a date stamped photo of the test cartridge.
- 9 If you have come by public transport or have walked to the home you will be asked to go directly to the testing pod, where your test will be taken by a member of staff wearing full PPE, you will also be asked several questions regarding your health and have your temperature taken. You will also be asked to wait in this area until the test results come through.
- 10 If the test is **negative** you will be provided with, and asked to wear a fluid repellent mask, apron and gloves. If you are exempt from wearing a face mask please notify the home before your arrival and a visor will be provided. You will also be asked to sanitise your hands thoroughly. You can then visit your relative in their own room. Please make your way directly to the room, do not stop to talk with staff and other residents. This also applies to any visiting children.
- 11 If your test returns as **positive** you will be advised to go home immediately and self isolate. You will be given a confirmatory PCR (swab test) by a staff member for you to confirm your Covid status once you are home.
12. The government advice following the lifting of restrictions, is that named visitors and residents are advised to keep physical contact to a minimum (excluding essential care givers). Physical contact like handholding is acceptable if hand washing protocols are followed. Close personal contact such as hugging presents higher risks but will be safer if it is between people who are double vaccinated, without face-to-face contact, and there is brief contact only
13. We ask that any gifts you bring in for your loved one must be able to be sanitised with disinfecting wipes, this is to ensure that any potential viruses are not brought into the care home, please let the home know, when you are booking your appointment, if you are

intending to bring in gifts that require sanitising. Our staff will be able to do this for you when you leave.

14. We ask that you follow all infection control and prevention measures when walking through the home, this includes social distancing.
15. If you need to alert the staff please use the call bell system in the room. Please do not come out of the room to try and find a staff member, they will be with you as soon as possible.
16. We will unfortunately NOT be able to provide you with any toilet facilities due to infection control measures in place, unless your relative has an ensuite facility.
17. Following your visit you will be asked again to disinfect your hands as you are leaving, dispose of your PPE (gloves, mask and apron) in the bin provided in the foyer and to discard your visor into a bag that will be provided. Please exit the care home without approaching any residents or staff.
18. A member of staff will clean your loved ones room after every visit to ensure infection control measures are followed.
19. If you need to speak with the manager or staff members please telephone the home when you get home.
20. For the test and trace service you will be asked for your contact details, including address and telephone number, if we do not already hold this information. Alternatively, please scan the QR (quick response) code with your phone.
21. In the event of an outbreak of Covid-19 all visiting will be cancelled with the exception of end of life visiting and essential care givers.

Garden/Outdoor/Window Visits

These visits will be made available to visitors in order to provide opportunities for more visitors and a greater frequency of visits than our available testing capacity might enable.

1. A maximum of 2 people are able to visit the resident at any one time and all visits will take place in the garden, either in a gazebo or a window visit.
2. We will be continuing to permit children to visit out of doors. The following procedure for children visitors will be required to be followed:
 - i). Visitors can bring up to 2 babies or toddlers into the outside area. They will not be counted as one of the two visitors as seen in point 1. **Note** babies and toddlers are children aged from 0 – 2 years.
 - ii). Children aged from 3 – 18 can also visit outdoors, however they **will** be counted as one of the two visitors currently permitted.
 - iii). All children visitors must be added to the booking system when requesting a visit
3. You **must book an appointment before coming to the home**. We will only agree a visit if you have booked a slot.
4. Appointments will be available from 10am – 4pm every day with the exception of lunch time and 30 minutes after each visit to sanitise the area
5. Your visit must only last a maximum of **45 minutes** due to others wanting to visit and booking slots available. Please do contact the home if you would like a longer or shorter visit, as they may be able to extend your visit however, only if a slot is available.
6. You may visit your loved one **up to twice per week**, however if there are additional booking slots available you will be able to visit more often. Once a week will enable everyone to have the opportunity to visit, again please enquire in the office if you would like additional visits outside.
7. We ask that any gifts you bring in for your loved one must be able to be sanitised, this is to ensure that any potential viruses are not brought into the care home.
8. You must call at the front door to advise the home that you have arrived for your appointment. We will ask to take your temperature (and the temperature of any children over the age of 4 years), to ensure you have no high temperature, which could indicate a sign of infection, and provide you with hand gel to disinfect your hands. Note: if your temperature is 37.8°C or greater you will not be able to visit and will be advised to go home.
9. Unlike our indoor or screened visits, you will **not be required to take a test**, which will mean we need to take additional precautions therefore ask that you follow the government guidance which states: 'Physical contact like handholding is acceptable if hand washing protocols are followed. Close personal contact such as hugging presents higher risks but will be safer if it is between people who are double vaccinated, without face-to-face contact, and there is **brief contact only**.

10. Wearing a face covering in our garden areas are no longer mandatory, however, as we must ensure that we protect the residents in our care and our staff we ask that if you sit closer than 2 m to your loved one, we will expect a face covering to be worn. Including any visiting children over the age of 4 years. Please bring your face coverings and visors with you to your visit.
11. When you arrive at the designated visitor area, please take a seat at the visitor table or at the allotted window, if a window visit has been arranged.
12. Please ensure you bring a mobile phone with you in case you need to alert a member of staff to a problem. A member of staff will then come to your aid, if the resident has fallen please do not attempt to move the resident, please wait for help to arrive.
13. A disposable cup of drinking water will be provided on the table for you before your visit. Please dispose of the cup in the bin provided before you leave.
14. We will unfortunately NOT be able to provide you with any toilet facilities due to infection control measures.
15. Following your visit you will be asked again to sanitise your hands as you are leaving. Please exit the visitor area without approaching any residents or staff.
16. A member of staff will sanitise the table and chairs after every visit to ensure everything is ready for the next visit.
17. For the test and trace service you will be asked for your contact details, including address and telephone number, if we do not already hold this information. Alternatively, please scan the QR (quick response) Poster with your phone.
18. In the event of an outbreak of Covid-19 all visiting will be cancelled with the exception of end of life visiting and essential care givers.

End of life In-house visits

1. Up to **two** visitors at any one time, will be permitted in these exceptional circumstances.
1. From the 19th July we will continue to permit children to visit in our safe screened areas. Visitors can bring
 - i). up to 2 babies or toddlers into the safe screened area. They will not be counted as one of the two visitors as seen in point 1. Note babies and toddlers are children aged from 0 – 2 years.
 - ii). Children aged from 3 – 18 can also visit the safe screen area, however they will be counted as one of the two visitors currently permitted.
 - iii). All children visitors must be added to the booking system when requesting a visit
 - iv). All children aged 11 and over will require a negative lateral flow test before visiting
- 3 As with all other visits, you **must** book an appointment before coming to the home. We will only be able to agree a visit if you have booked a slot, this means we can limit the number of people in the home at any one time. This will ensure that we can maintain infection control precautions.
- 4 Timings for visits can be fluid, however we do ask you to let us know approximately how long you will be visiting for.
- 5 We ask that any gifts you bring in for the resident must be able to be sanitised, if you are bringing in gifts for your loved ones please let the office know when you book your appointment and we will arrange for the gifts to be sanitised for you.
- 6 You must call at the front door to advise the home that you have arrived for your appointment.
- 7 We will ask to take your temperature, to ensure you have no high temperature which could indicate a sign of infection, and provide you with hand gel to disinfect your hands. Note: if your temperature is 37.8°C or greater you will be advised to go home.
- 8 You will also be asked to go to our testing area and take a Lateral Flow Device test (LFD). This test takes approximately 30 minutes to receive a result, in this time you have the choice to remain in your car or to wait in our testing pod. Alternatively, you can self test at home before you come for your visit. If you feel confident testing yourself, please ask the home, and they will provide you with a 7 test kit pack. You **must** test on the day of the visit and show proof of the result which can either be an email or text from NHS test and Trace OR a date stamped photo of the test cartridge.
- 9 If your test returns a **positive** result you will be asked to go home immediately and self-isolate. You will be provided with a confirmatory PCR (swab test) by a member of staff to confirm your Covid status once at home. Unfortunately you will not be permitted to visit your loved one.

- 10 If your test returns a **negative** result, you will be provided with a fluid resistant facemask, gloves and a disposable apron. You will be asked to wear the full PPE throughout your visit, which the care home will provide. If you are exempt from wearing a facemask please advise the office when you book and a visor will be provided.
- 11 You will then be directed to your relatives room by the shortest possible route, you should not make any physical contact with staff on the route to your loved ones room or arrange to speak with the manager (note: the manager will be happy to discuss any concerns you have via the telephone or by email after your visit).
- 12 Once you are in your relative's room, please close the door and please ensure you wear your PPE throughout your visit.
- 13 Please maintain current government guidance which states: 'Physical contact like handholding is acceptable if hand washing protocols are followed. Close personal contact such as hugging presents higher risks but will be safer if it is between people who are double vaccinated, without face-to-face contact, and there is **brief contact only**.
- 14 If you need to alert the staff please use the call bell in the resident's room, please do not come out of the room to try and find a member of staff. A staff member will come to your assistance as soon as possible. If the resident has fallen please do not attempt to move the resident, please wait for help to arrive.
- 15 A disposable cup of cold water will be provided on the table for you before your visit. Please dispose of the cup in the bin provided before you leave.
- 16 If you need to use the toilet facilities please use the ensuite in your relative's room or alternatively please ask before you go to your relative's room, the location of the nearest facilities.
- 17 Following your visit you will be asked again to sanitise your hands as you are leaving, dispose of your PPE (gloves, mask and apron) in the foyer and to discard your visor into a bag that will be provided. Please exit the care home without approaching any residents or staff.
- 18 A member of staff will clean your relative's room after every visit to ensure infection control procedures are followed.
- 19 For the test and trace service you will be asked for your contact details, including address and telephone number, if we do not already hold this information. Alternatively, please scan the QR (quick response) code with your phone.

Further Information

If the care home makes a decision you disagree with, please, in the first instance speak to the care home manager and ask to discuss the situation.

If you think the care home is not following visiting guidance, please raise the matter with the home. If you are not satisfied that the issue is resolved, you can contact the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

The CQC is responsible for inspecting the safety and quality of care provided in care homes, and they will consider if they need to investigate.

Contact CQC National Customer Services Centre by:

- emailing enquiries@cqc.org.uk
- calling 03000 61 61 61