

This guidance was withdrawn on 1 April 2022

The information in this guidance has been superseded by [Infection prevention and control in adult social care: COVID-19 supplement.](#)

Changes made to the COVID-19 guidance for supported living from 24 February 2022



Easy read booklet

About the guidance



Some people work or live in **supported living**. Supported living means extra support so you don't have to move into a care home.



This booklet says what we can do to help keep people safe from viruses like COVID-19 and flu.

This information is for



- People who provide supported living, managers and staff. We call these people **providers**
- Care and support workers
- Local authorities and people who set up NHS services
- People who work in extra care housing.



You can find more guidance on the Government website

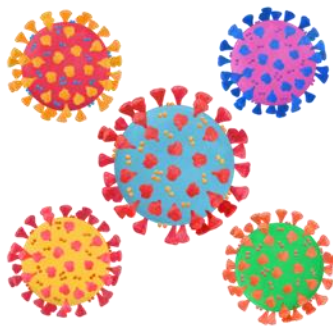
www.gov.uk

More about the guidance



Supported living settings should

- Put together plans to deal with COVID-19 in their setting
- Make plans with the people who live there. These people are called **residents**
- Make sure residents have a personal plan to help keep them safe from the virus



The resident, their families and the people who support them must be happy with the plan.

Providers should follow rules. This is to protect people's rights.

They must follow laws like

- ✓ The Care Act 2014
- ✓ The Ethical Framework for Adult Social Care
- ✓ The Human Rights Act 1998.



What should providers do to keep their service running?



People in supported living should have a personal plan of what to do if they get COVID-19 or flu. For example, keeping away from other people.

Self-isolate for 14 days

I understand



This plan should be shared with everyone who cares for them.

Providers should write down how they will look after residents and keep the service running in an emergency.



They should think about things like

- ✓ How best to communicate with the person
- ✓ How the person will cope with any changes to their routine.



Providers should give residents access to local support groups. This is known as **Mutual Aid**.

Providers should make care and support plans.

More about keeping the service running

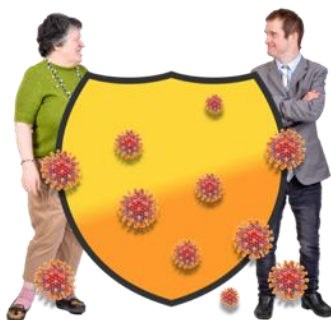


Providers should work with local councils to find out how to plan care for residents who

- Use direct payments or pay for their own support.
- Get paid money for individual services
- Get NHS continuing healthcare and who need help to find other support.



Care workers should not move between services. This will help stop the spread of infections.



Anyone at high risk from COVID-19 no longer has to keep away from others. They will only need to self-isolate if they have COVID-19.

People should be able to get support from volunteers or social workers.

Managing risks



Providers of supported living settings should look at all the things that could go wrong. This is called a **risk assessment**.



There is lots of COVID-19 guidance to follow. This will give them answers to their questions.



Vaccination is an injection which gives protection against viruses. A vaccination won't kill the virus, but it can stop people getting very ill.

Providers can help and encourage people to have the vaccine.

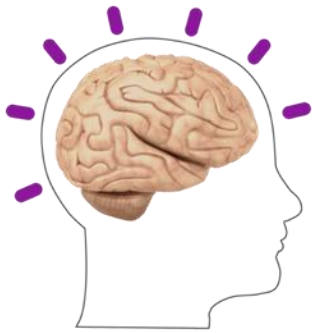
Advice for providers can be found on the government website at

www.gov.uk/coronavirus



Providers can use these documents to help protect people's health and wellbeing.

Helping people who find it hard to make decisions



Some people find it hard to look after themselves or say what care they need.

These are people who have conditions like dementia, some types of autism, learning difficulties or mental health conditions.



Staff should do all they can to make sure the person understands how to keep safe.



Staff should follow laws like the **Mental Capacity Act 2005** and **The Care Act 2014**.

Health professionals and social workers can help staff do what is best for the person.



Staff who are in higher risk groups



Healthcare workers and social care staff may be at a higher risk of getting COVID-19.

Some things can make COVID-19 more harmful to people. For example



- Age
- Gender
- Ethnic group
- Health problems
- Pregnancy.

Managers should speak to any of their staff who are at greater risk of harm from COVID-19.



Staff from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds may be worried about COVID-19.

Employers should make sure staff are supported.



Many staff will be able to work normally. They can find more information on working safely if they are worried.

About the vaccination programme



All social care staff who have not had the COVID-19 vaccine can book a vaccine online, or they can talk to their GP.



Staff can find more information on the vaccine and booster on the NHS website

www.nhs.co.uk



The Government want all staff who work with people in supported living services to have had at least **2 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine.**

Advice on flu

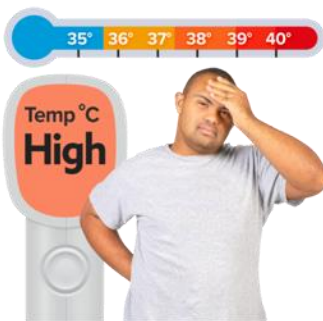


Supported living providers should do things to stop people getting flu and other infections.

Providers should



- Know that COVID-19 and flu symptoms are similar
- Encourage staff and residents to have a flu vaccination and find out more about flu

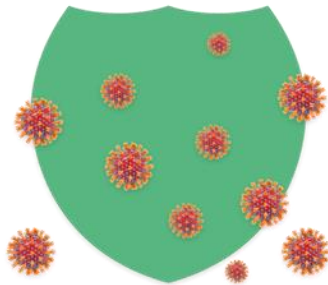


- Know what to do if someone has symptoms
- Tell visitors to stay away from supported living if they have flu or any other **symptoms** like a cough, fever, loss of taste or smell or sickness.



- Encourage all visitors to have the flu vaccine. Visitors may get a letter saying they can have the vaccine for free.

How to stop and control infections like COVID-19 and flu



There are things we can do to help stop people getting sick. These things are called **Infection Prevention and Control** or **IPC** for short.

Examples of **IPC** are



- Sneezing or coughing in a tissue and washing our hands

- Making sure we don't get too close to other people



- Using **Personal Protective Equipment** like face masks and overalls

- Keeping away from others if we have COVID-19 symptoms

- Testing to see if we have a virus.



Some supported living settings are more like care homes. There is advice for care homes on the government website at

www.gov.uk

More about how to control infections



Other things we can do to control infections are

- Not getting too close to the person they are supporting
- Helping people to keep themselves safe
- Making sure rooms have fresh air
- Keeping hands clean with soap and water or alcohol hand rub
- Making sure PPE is used in the right way
- Making sure that the home is kept clean
- Washing clothing worn by an infected person in a separate wash, away from clothing that belongs to someone else.



COVID-19 testing



People may not have symptoms but still have the virus. Find out more about testing on this website.

www.gov.uk



Anyone who has symptoms of COVID-19 should self isolate and [get a PCR test](#). You can get a test by calling **119**.



Someone with symptoms may not have COVID-19, but they may have flu. They should try to keep others safe from infection.

If 2 or more people have symptoms, then lots of people may be ill. This is called an **outbreak**.



If staff think there is an outbreak, they should contact their local health protection team.

Staff should only test a resident if they or their family have agreed to the test.

Getting sent home from hospital



If a person is sent home from hospital they may have to self-isolate when they get home. This may happen if the supported living setting is similar to a care home.



Managers should undertake a risk assessment.

If a person needs to self-isolate this should start on the day they go to their home.

It is important that people with learning difficulties, autism, mental health conditions or dementia understand



- Why self-isolation is needed
- What this will be like and how long this will last.



Staff should find out how the person feels about this and what could make it easier for them.

Staff should follow the law called **The Mental Capacity Act 2005.**

Visits in and out



People in supported living settings should be allowed to have visitors. Staff should support them to stay safe.

Staff should carry out a risk assessment. This should look at the



- Care and support needs of the person
- Person's rights
- Risk of infection



The manager should look at ways to keep people safe during visits.

Residents may also go out to other places to visit friends or public places.



If a person tests positive after a visit, they should self-isolate.

No one can visit a person who is self-isolating unless they provide an important service.

Testing visitors



Managers should only stop visitors coming into the home if they have symptoms. Visitors should not visit if they are self-isolating.



Staff who are allowed to test for COVID-19 can order lateral flow tests to test visitors.

People can test themselves when they are away from their setting.



Testing by staff at the setting is better because visitors may do the test wrong or have trouble finding out the result.

A test should be done on the day of the visit. Visitors should show proof of their result by text or email.



The visitor should self-isolate if their test is positive. They may need to do a different test up to **90** days after testing positive.

Testing for visits outside supported living



Managers can use some of their rapid flow tests to test the people they support. This will help people to be kept safe during activities.



The person should agree to having the test. The test should be done as well as regular PCR tests.



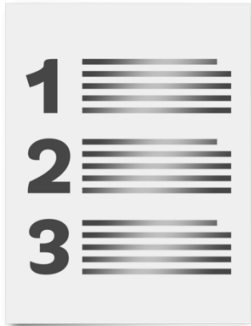
If the person tests positive they must self-isolate.

The manager should contact the local health protection team.



Some residents in the supported living setting may go out to meet others a lot. Managers may wish to test these people **2** times a week.

What to do in a COVID-19 outbreak



An outbreak of COVID-19 is when

- **2** or more people test positive in the same place
- Symptoms appear less than **14 days** after the first case.



An outbreak of flu is when

- At least **1** positive case of flu in residents or staff and
- 1 or more people with flu like symptoms in **48 hours**.



The outbreak should be reported to the local Health Protection Team straight away. They will give advice and do a risk assessment.



The HPT may stop visits to the home unless the visitor is really needed. This will be until the outbreak is over.

What to do when a worker has symptoms or tests positive



If a supported living worker has COVID-19 symptoms they should follow rules about self-isolation.



If **anyone** working in supported living tests positive, then all staff should use a Lateral Flow Test for **7 days**.

If the person is **fully vaccinated**, they should order a PCR test to do at home.



They should still do Lateral Flow Tests every day for 10 days until they get a negative PCR test result.

If they are not vaccinated, they must stay in isolation away from other people for 10 days.

They should follow the government [stay at home guidance](#).

What happens if staff come into contact with COVID-19?



Staff who come into contact with COVID-19 should tell their manager if they weren't wearing PPE or their PPE didn't cover them properly.

Vaccinated staff



- **Do not** need to isolate if they have had **2 doses** of the vaccine
- They should follow advice and find ways to deliver safe care for **10 days**.



Unvaccinated staff

- Must self isolate. They should not attend work or do a different job until the end of isolation
- Do not have to self-isolate if the law says they don't have to be vaccinated.



Self-isolation can end after **6** days if a staff member tests negative in **2** lateral flow tests on **2** separate days.

What happens if someone in supported living has symptoms?



Staff need to make a plan to help someone with COVID-19.

Some people may find it hard to say what their symptoms are.



They may find it frightening to see a care worker in PPE or to self-isolate.

Support workers can help by working with family members to:

- Make sure the person's rights are respected
- Look at all the symptoms and give extra support to find out why the person is ill
- Follow hand washing hygiene
- Make sure the person feels safe and secure.
- Find alternatives to self-isolation if needed.
- Follow the government [stay at home guidance](#) as isolation is not as long as it used to be.

