

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Updated 7/8/20 Information/Protocols for All Staff

This is the 5th of these updates to staff and **supersedes** all previous versions. Please take the advice below seriously. This is a guidance document for all staff. Aspire sent guidance for supported individuals and their families/informal supports on 17/3/20 via e-mail and letter. Aspire will make every effort to maintain an optimum level of communication with staff and those supported/their families at all times. It remains the responsibility of each of us to do the right thing with the most current advice available.

Updates regarding spread within the UK and internationally are changing rapidly. We expect all staff to keep aware of what is happening and identify what they can do to reduce risk to themselves, their families and the people we support. As additional information becomes available where it changes, or adds to the advice below, we will send out updates to reflect these.

Question	Guidance	Further Info
What is Coronavirus?	Coronavirus is a new strain of virus first identified in Wuhan City, China in January 2020. There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus. A webinar on COVID19 from Health Protection Scotland, NHS and NHS Education for Scotland can be found below, the webinar is approximately 19 minutes long and is very informative.	Stay aware of up to date information from trusted sources –e.g., national news, government websites and internal Aspire updates
	https://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/web-resources-container/covid-19-infection-prevention-and-control-in-health-and-social-care-settings-an-overview/ https://vimeo.com/408878587	Please click on the link to watch the COVID29 Webinar.
What does the delay phase mean?	During the 1 st phase in managing the virus – the focus was placed on containing the virus. This phase had now passed and we have entered the delay phase.	We all need to take the issues relating to coronavirus seriously and manage these risks in a considered, sensible manner
How is it spread?	This advice has not changed. Respiratory secretions are most common means of transmission which occurs when an infected person coughs or sneezes, in the same way colds spread between people. There are 2 main routes the virus can spread From respiratory secretions to people who are nearby, (within 2 metres). Could be inhaled into the lungs from coughing, sneezing. From hard surfaces. Touching a surface, object or the hand of an infected person that has been contaminated with respiratory secretions and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes (such as touching door knob or shaking hands then touching own face). Current understanding is that the virus doesn't survive on surfaces for longer than 72 hours.	Stay aware of how the virus is spread in order to protect yourself and others.



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How do I prevent becoming infected?	Wash your hands often – this is still one of the most important interventions you can carry out. Wash with soap and warm water. Only use alcohol sanitisers that contain at least 60% alcohol if handwashing facilities are not available. Wash your hands for the amount of time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" twice (around 20 seconds)	Select or click on the words "hand hygiene" for further information.
	Dry your hands completely with a disposable towel Use the disposable towel to turn off the tap Wash your hands as frequently as possible and certainly after: • taking public transport • before leaving home • on arrival at work • after using the toilet • after breaks and sporting activities • before food preparation • before eating any food, including snacks	
	 before leaving work on arrival at home after using supermarket trolleys etc. Wear appropriate PPE, including face coverings inside shops, and ensure you are following government 	
	guidelines at all times. Avoid touching your face, eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in a bin. Catch It, Bin It, Kill It	
	Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces at least x2 (and as needed) daily with domestic/anti-bacterial cleaning products in work or domestic settings Remove rings from your hands and bracelets to minimise the possibility of germs on your hands and wrists	
Why is this important?	 The Chief Medical Officer has stated the virus could affect up to 80% of the population Some studies have suggested up to 250,000 people could die in the UK as a result of this outbreak. This is a huge amount of people and risk to the general population that we have not seen in 100 years It is important that all staff know what is expected of them during this outbreak. Individually and collectively, we need to take care of each other and those we support. If staff do not follow guidelines, they could expose themselves, their families, their colleagues and supported individuals to risk. We provide support to a lot of frail, vulnerable people who are at higher risk of becoming very unwell from this virus It could also mean that a lot of staff are either in self-isolation/or are infected which could create problems in our ability to providing support, leaving those we support at risk. 	It's important we all take responsibility to minimise the impact this has on ourselves, our families, the people we support and our employee owned business. The virus remains active across the UK and the world and clusters of increasing infection rates are becoming evident. We must all remain vigilant in ensuring that no action or omission on our part gives the virus a chance to spread.



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What are the symptoms?	 A high temperature – over 37.8 degrees or your chest or back feels hot to touch A new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than 1 hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you normally have a cough, it may be worse than usual) Loss of or change in your normal taste or smell Difficulty in breathing / feeling breathless. 	Stay alert to the symptoms of the virus and respond appropriately of they become evident reporting to your line manager. You will be required to book for a test at the first sign of any symptoms.
What do I do if I feel unwell?	 For most people, COVID-19 will be a mild illness. However, if you have any of the symptoms above you must stay at home and arrange to have a test to see if you have COVID-19 – go to testing to arrange. Contact either your line manager or the on-call manager advising them of your concerns as soon as you are able to. Your line manager will where possible advise you to make arrangements for you to be tested for COVID-19 We are aware that a market has developed for the sale of "COVID19 at home testing kits" we strongly advise against the purchase and use of these kits as they may not produce accurate results. Please liaise with your line manager in relation to the NHS testing process for key workers. If a member of staff is concerned they have COVID-19 they should follow NHS advice. If they are advised to self-isolate at home they should follow the stay at home guidance. If advised to self-isolate at home, they should not visit and care for any individuals until safe to do so. If staff are worried about their symptoms or those of a family member or colleague, Do not go to your GP or other healthcare environment. Only call 111 if you cannot get help online. 	Aspire may ask staff to work from home (if this is possible within their normal duties) to reduce people's exposure to risk or to support the self-isolation of staff. Click or Select NHS advice for more information Click or Select stay at home guidance for more information
What happens if I need to stay off work?	If you are required to shield due to underlying medical concerns or as a result of symptoms or self isolation you should report this to your line manager or HR Manager as soon as possible. Statutory sick pay will be paid from day 1 of your absence. We realise that this will be less than you will normally earn and discussions are ongoing at national level to try to minimise the financial impact for people. For those employees who earn less than the lower earnings limit of £118 you may be eligible to claim universal credit or other benefits to assist you financially over this time. Aspire's Finance Manager is available to signpost the team to the appropriate places where they may receive financial support or guidance.	As employee owners, this is your company. We all need to do the right thing by the company to ensure it remains financially viable and support genuine staff need. We do not intend to support anyone who may see an opportunity to take advantage this current situation. Some decisions will be determined at the manager's discretion. Any such situations will be taken fairly and with all relevant information to ensure fairness for all staff.
Working from Home	The government has urged people who could work from home, should work from home. This was implemented to reduce the amount of people circulating in the general population and in turn decrease the opportunity for the virus to spread	We all need to think about how we can work differently, working smart to maintain as much business continuity as possible.
	We have set up systems to ensure only essential personnel for essential reasons will attend any of Aspire's bases. We have been operating Aspires support hub services remotely, keeping in contact via phone and	



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	video conferences, however in recent weeks there has been a rota in place to safely return to the office.	
	We are also speaking to staff who normally work directly supporting people to see if telephone and or video support can be given to maintain supports for supported individuals as best we can.	
When do I have to isolate myself and/or my family?	As of the 4 th of August If you have <u>symptoms</u> of COVID-19 however mild, you must self-isolate for at least 10 days from when your symptoms started. You should arrange to have a test to see if you have COVID-19 – go to <u>testing</u> to arrange. Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital.	We need to be continually assessing the people we support to determine whether they have any of the signs or symptoms listed and report this immediately to your line
	If you are not experiencing symptoms but have tested positive for COVID-19 you also must self-isolate for at least 10 days, starting from the day the test was taken. If you develop symptoms during this isolation period, you must restart your 10-day isolation from the day you develop symptoms.	manager.
	After 10 days, if you still have a temperature you should continue to self-isolate and seek medical advice. You do not need to self-isolate after 10 days if you only have a cough or loss of sense of smell or taste, as these symptoms can last for several weeks after the infection has gone. See the ending isolation section below for more information.	
	If you live with others, all other household members must stay at home and not leave the house for 14 days. The 14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the household became ill or if they do not have symptoms, from the day their test was taken. If anyone else in the household starts displaying symptoms, they must stay at home for at least 10 days from when their symptoms appear, regardless of what day they are on in their original 14-day isolation period. The ending isolation section below has more information.	
	If you have <u>symptoms</u> , try and stay as far away from other members of your household as possible. It is especially important to stay away from anyone who is clinically vulnerable or clinically extremely vulnerable with whom you share a household.	
	Reduce the spread of infection in your home by washing your hands regularly for 20 seconds using soap and water, or use hand sanitizer with a minimum of 70% alcohol content (unless you have an allergy to alcohol and then soap and water must be used), and always cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue which must be binned afterwards.	
	Consider alerting people who you do not live with and have had close contact within the last 48 hours to let them know you have <u>symptoms</u> of COVID-19.	
	Following a positive test result, you will receive a request by text, email or phone to log into the NHS Test and Trace service website and provide information about recent close contacts.	



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	If you feel you cannot cope with your symptoms at home, or your condition gets worse, then use the NHS 111 . For a medical emergency dial 999. If you develop COVID-19 symptoms again at any point after ending your first period of isolation (self or household) then you must follow the guidance on self-isolation again. People who are self-isolating and have no symptoms do not pose a risk to others. They are self-isolating to allow closer monitoring in order to identify early symptoms, and to enable prompt medical action if required. Where you have a family member who lives in the same household as you are displaying symptoms, please notify your line manager as soon as possible and arrange a COVID Test. There may be an opportunity for your family member to be tested to ascertain whether or not your family member has contracted COVID19 and whether or not isolation is necessary for your household.	unrecipited Zeroces
I have a chronic health condition – what should I do?	Guidance on social distancing was released 16/3/20. There is an extensive list (on Govt websites) specifying who this covers. Namely, over 70's, people with chronic disease, people with cancer, pregnant women and various other health issues. Please read the Govt list if unsure if you fit into any of the categories listed. If this is the case and you have not yet received a phone call from Debbie Elrick, HR Manager, please contact her via email delrick@aspireinc.co.uk and she will arrange a call with you. The latest guidance is that the NHS will contact you from Monday 23 March 2020 if you are at particularly high risk of getting seriously ill with coronavirus. You'll be given specific advice about what to do. Do not contact your GP or healthcare team at this stage — wait to be contacted. Please ensure that if you are contacted by your GP or healthcare team that you notify Debbie Elrick, HR Manager on delrick@aspireinc.co.uk as well as your line manager. The shielding period ended on the 31st of July however those who are at higher risk should be extra vigilant, should you have any concerns regarding your safety in the workplace please contact your line manager or a member of HR to discuss.	This has been implemented to try to reduce transmission of the virus. Please pay heed to not meeting in groups and stick to the government guidelines. This guidance is intended to help protect you, your family and supported individuals and should be taken seriously Access Self-help guide: Coronavirus (COVID-19) at https://www.nhsinform.scot/self-help-guides/self-help-guide-coronavirus-covid-19
What if an individual I care for has symptoms of COVID-19?	If the individual receiving care and support has symptoms of COVID-19, then you should contact your line manager immediately to report this whilst keeping a safe distance. The risk of transmission should be minimised through the following safe working procedures.	Follow guidelines at all times to ensure the safety of yourself and others.



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	Personal protective equipment Care workers should use personal protective equipment (PPE) for activities that bring them into close personal contact, such as washing and bathing, personal hygiene and contact with bodily fluids. Aprons, gloves and fluid repellent surgical masks should be used in these situations. If there is a risk of splashing, then eye protection will minimise risk.	
	New personal protective equipment must be used for each episode of care. It is essential that personal protective equipment is stored securely within disposable rubbish bags.	
	These bags should be placed into another bag, tied securely and kept separate from other waste within the room. This should be put aside for at least 72 hours before being put in the usual household waste bin.	
	It is very important that all staff who use PPE understand what PPE to use and how it should be used safely, the resource provided below will assist you in doing this.	
	Please see table 2 and table 4 which is the recommended PPE for community and social care setting, you can view these by clicking the link below:	
	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-and-control	
	For information and videos on how to safely put on and take off PPE to avoid cross contamination risks, please follow the link below which will take you to step by step instructions as how to do this safely:	
	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-use-for-non-aerosol-generating-procedures	
What if a supported person has no symptoms but is part of a household that is isolating?	If the individual being cared for and their worker can remain at a safe protected distance from the symptomatic member of the household, whilst wearing the appropriate PPE this will mitigate against the risk of infection. This would apply, for example, where the symptomatic family member can remain in their own room, is using	Follow guidelines Select or Click on guidance for households with possible coronavirus (COVID-19) infection. For further information
	separate bathroom facilities and is observing robust isolation procedures, staying 2 metres away from other family members.	
	Where this is not possible – and this will vary on a case-by-case basis – the same procedures should be adopted as if the person being cared for did have symptoms of COVID-19 (see above). Care should continue to be taken to limit contact with any household member that has symptoms.	



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	See guidance for households with possible coronavirus (COVID-19) infection.	
What if neither the individual nor the care worker have symptoms of COVID – 19?	General interventions may include increased cleaning activity and keeping property properly ventilated by opening windows whenever safe and appropriate. Care workers must always follow advice on <a <="" handless-to-tal-always-name="https://paper.org/handless-to-tal-always-name=" href="https://paper.org/handless-to-tal-always-name=" https:="" paper.org="" td=""><td>Select or click on the words "hand hygiene" for further information.</td>	Select or click on the words "hand hygiene" for further information.
What areas should be cleaned?	 All surfaces and objects which are visibly contaminated with body fluids All potentially contaminated high-contact areas such as toilets, taps, door handles, light switches, telephones, keyboards, desks, tables, TV remote controls etc 	Clean surfaces with disposable disinfectant cloths and sprays at least x 2 daily
	In Service Cleaning If care workers undertake cleaning duties, then they should use usual household products, such as detergents and bleach as these will be very effective at getting rid of the virus on surfaces. Frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned regularly.	In areas where staff share keyboards, clean keyboards x 2 per day and use gloves to type Please not that where we support people in
	should be cleaned regularly. Personal waste (for example, used tissues, continence pads and other items soiled with bodily fluids) and disposable cleaning cloths can be stored securely within disposable rubbish bags.	carrying out there shopping that we should be ensuring that they have adequate cleaning supplies in order that this can be undertaken effectively.
	These bags should be placed into another bag, tied securely and kept separate from other waste within the person's designated private space. This should be put aside for at least 72 hours before being put in the usual household waste bin for disposal as normal.	
	Laundry If care workers support the individual with laundry, then they should not shake dirty laundry before washing. This minimises the possibility of dispersing virus through the air. Wash items as appropriate, in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.	
	Dirty laundry that has been in contact with an ill person can be washed with other people's items. If the individual does not have a washing machine, wait a further 72 hours after the 7-day isolation period has ended; the laundry can then be taken to a public Laundromat.	
	Items heavily soiled with body fluids, for example, vomit or diarrhoea, or items that cannot be washed, should be disposed of, with the owner's consent.	
	Public areas where a symptomatic individual has passed through and spent minimal time in (such as corridors) but which are not visibly contaminated with body fluids do not need to be specially cleaned and disinfected.	
How do I dispose of Rubbish	All waste that has been in contact with the at risk individual, including used tissues, continence pads and other items soiled with bodily fluids, should be put in a plastic rubbish bag and tied.	Follow the guidance as stated



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	The plastic bag should then be placed in a second bin bag and tied. It should be put in a safe place, labelled with date and time and set aside for at least 72 hours before being put in the usual household waste bin.	Please ensure that supported persons have enough bags in their homes to allow for these measures to be taken. Should you have any concerns regarding the availability of bags please contact your line manager.
What should I do following the Prime Minister and First Ministers addresses?	As you will be aware the government have implemented a phased plan to support the country safely moving out of lockdown. Please familiarise yourself with the phase that we are in at any given time and act according to government guidelines.	Check government updates and briefings which are widely reported and follow guidelines.
	We must be prepared in the event that the country has restrictions increased again to mitigate against a potential second wave of Coronavirus. Employees delivering front line care and support are key workers delivering essential work and so you are permitted to attend work in order to fulfil your duties to those we support.	
	In order to be able to do this without obstruction you must ensure that you carry your Aspire ID with you at all times, along with the on call number and access to your rota. You may also wish as an additional measure to have a picture of your SSSC Registration Certificate to hand within your mobile. Should you have misplaced your ID card please contact Elaine Couplan on ecouplan@aspireinc.co.uk to request a new one.	
	Should you face enquiry from an official, for example the police as to where you are travelling to you should be able to show them your ID and explain that you are a care worker. Should they require additional verification then they could be provided with the on call telephone number to phone and enquire.	
	It is important that when not at work that you continue to follow government guidelines at all times to ensure your safety, the safety of your colleagues and the people we support.	
What do I do if I have to stay at home to take care of my children when their	The Scottish government have updated their published guidelines on 16 th June 2020 an excerpt is detailed below. Should you wish to read the full guidelines please select or click on this link:	We need to minimise the potential negative impact for supported individuals and also income to Aspire.
school is shut down? And	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-	
will I get paid?	provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision	Therefore, some decisions will be
	Where your children's school is closed as an Aspire worker in Health & Social care you can contact your local authority, who will seek to redirect you to a local school in your area that your child, or children, can attend.	determined at the manager's discretion. Any such situations will be taken fairly and with all relevant information to ensure fairness for all staff at all times.
	Should you have any questions or concerns please discuss those with your line manager.	
		Scottish government have implemented new



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	In addition to these guidelines Aspire would expect staff to work with their family and informal supports to minimise the impact of childcare issues. Please note there is no statutory payment available for taking time off to care for your children and so this new support will hopefully be of great assistance to you in these challenging circumstances.	supports for full info please follow the link: https://www.gov.uk/government/publication s/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-education/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision
I am going on Holiday; will I be able to go?	Aspire employees should not travel out with Scotland unless there is an urgent medical reason or some other substantial essential reason to do so. If you still intend on travelling during this time you should first speak with your line manager to understand how that may affect your return to work afterwards. Should you travel abroad during this time you must be prepared for sudden changes of guidance. You are responsible for checking quarantine rules at www.gov.scot for the latest guidance which may change in response to increases in COVID-19 infection in other countries. Travel abroad may result in you having to quarantine for a period of time upon your return to the country, and in such an event this time would likely be unpaid. You will need to contact your travel agent for advice also re refunds/different destinations etc. Please also note that we will require your flexibility when it comes to holiday requests, this is an unprecedented time and we must ensure that your colleagues have adequate support in the workplace and	Unlikely this is going to change soon. Internal holidays need to be assessed also given the recent clusters of infection resulting in local lockdowns in specific areas.
	that too many employees are not on holiday during this challenging time. Your line manager may also ask you to take annual leave for a particular period of time. It is important that annual leave is taken in a balanced way throughout the year to ensure you are well rested and to limit the liability of large annual leave balances accruing. Please co-operate with your line manager during any request for annual leave, whether initiated by the employee or manager.	
What to do if someone with confirmed COVID-19 has recently been in the office, workplace or support setting?	Guidance 19/3/20 from public health England states 'it is not necessary to close the business or workplace or send any staff home if someone has become unwell whilst in the workplace'. This is quite different from before — because we are in a different stage of the transmission of the virus. If an individual receiving care and support has symptoms of COVID-19, then the risk of transmission should be minimised through safe working procedures. Staff should use personal protective equipment (PPE) for activities that bring them into close personal contact, such as washing and bathing, personal hygiene and contact with bodily fluids. New personal protective equipment must be used for each episode of care and all used equipment disposed of by double bagging and setting aside for at least 72 hours before being put in the usual household waste bin.	Follow the updated guidance as stated



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	General interventions may include increased cleaning activity and keeping property properly ventilated by opening windows whenever safe and appropriate. Care workers should follow advice on hand hygiene and local service specific PPE guidance.	
What do I do if staff sickness levels are high and we have difficulty in	Service Managers have completed a Red, Amber, Green risk rating assessment of each service/individual supported. These will be managed in the same way that we would for adverse weather conditions.	We are in regular contact with each local authority. Working with them to minimise risks.
providing support?	Team members should be aware that should the need arise and in order that we continue to provide support to the most vulnerable people and ensure service continuity that you may be asked to deliver support in areas and for people that you do not normally work in / and with. This will be communicated with you and we ask that all employees co-operate with this reasonable request.	Conversely, we may be asked by the local authority to provide support to others for the same reasons.
	Should you be aware of any employees who have worked with Aspire in the past and who may consider returning to Aspire for additional income and to provide additional support please contact recruitment@aspireinc.co.uk who will progress this with the particular ex employee on an individual basis. Also should you be available to under take work in additional services across Aspire please contact your line manager as soon as possible.	
	Staff fit to work but unable to provide direct support because of their own underlying health risk issues should liaise with the Aspire team on how they could remotely support our efforts in delivering continuity of care and support.	
What should I do if I am contacted by the media, or someone who I suspect is the media but is posing as a	The Care Inspectorate have been advised that journalists have called some social care services, posing as the Care Inspectorate asking for statistical information but also for specific information about people being cared for.	Be aware and escalate to manager.
Cl inspector or other official?	If you have any doubts that who you are speaking to is not who they say they are then please ask for their full details for a call back and raise this with your manager.	
	If the media ask you to make comment on the current situation, please politely decline to comment and notify your line manager.	
What resources are available to me to support my wellbeing?	Please download and utilise the Health Assured App which has lots of helpful information and programs for you to follow to assist in your physical, mental health and wellbeing. The details are as follows:	Visit Health Assured for additional support.
	https://healthassuredeap.co.uk/home Username: Aspire Password: Housing	
	Alternatively, if you feel you would benefit from talking with the team at health assured, whether for a whole	



	range of advice, counselling or CBT then please contact them on telephone number 0800 030 5182.	
Do the current circumstances have any impact on my SSSC registration?	To keep fully up to date on how the SSSC are supporting the workforce during this time, please visit SSSC website via the following link: https://www.sssc.uk.com/covid-19	To enable you to fulfil your SSSC Registration Requirements

Sources

- GOV.UK Guidance for social or community care and residential settings on COVID-19. Published 19th March 2020, https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-residential-care-supported-living-and-home-care-guidance/covid-19-guidance-on-home-care-provision
- NHS Website at https://www.scot.nhs.uk
- NHS Inform at https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19
- ACAS at www.acas.org.uk
- Health Protection Scotland at https://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/a-to-z-of-topics/covid-19/
- Full Guidance on Staying at Home and Away from People Published 23/03/20

 <a href="https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/874742/Full_guidance_on_staying_at_home_and_away_from_others__1_.pdf