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Care at home service providers
Supported housing providers
Copied to: Chief Executives NHS Boards and Local Authorities
Chief Officers Health and Social Care Partnerships
Chief Social Work Officers
Directors of Public Health
Nurse and Medical Directors

06 August 2021

Dear Colleagues

COVID-19 regulations / restrictions - 9th August
Associated updates to care at home and supported housing guidance

The First Minister this week announced further, cautious relaxations of COVID-19 regulations and a retention of a range of protections, for beyond level zero, effective from 9th August. We are writing to update you on associated impact of moving to beyond level 0 on care at home and supported housing settings.

Individuals who access care at home services or supports and/ or live in sheltered housing or supported living arrangements, sometimes known collectively as 'supported housing' settings, currently follow the Covid-19 Lockdown Regulations and associated national guidance. From 9th August they will continue to follow the national guidance, which will be updated to remove physical distancing requirements and limits on numbers people that can gather within individuals homes and in public places.

As we continue to navigate through the pandemic it is important to keep implementing the basic measures we know keep ourselves and those that may still be vulnerable to COVID-19 safe. When providing care and support, in the community, individuals' homes or supported housing settings, social care workers and visiting professionals should therefore continue to follow the [Scottish COVID-19 Community Health and Care Settings Infection Prevention and Control Addendum](#), [Scottish Government guidance on mask wearing](#), and Public Health Scotland [COVID-19 - information and guidance for social, community and residential care settings](#). This includes maintaining distance from those you are providing care to where practical, and where it will not impact on the individual's wellbeing or care provided, wearing fluid resistant surgical masks (FRSM) as per the guidance, and

following other relevant infection prevention and control practices. Staff should also continue to follow Scottish government guidance for COVID-19 testing and isolation.

In addition to the above guidance, supported housing settings which have communal areas that were previously considered “public”, should continue to consider the functionality of the space, including who can access it and how it is being accessed, to inform any specific sector guidance that should apply when using the space beyond level zero. For example where a communal space was previously used to provide food and beverages, the service provider should continue to following hospitality sector guidance when using that space for that purpose. The specific sector guidance is likely to be updated in the coming days with the changes to any legal requirements and best practice/ baseline measures that should continue to be followed. Links to specific sector guidance, such as hospitality are available via the [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): clinical guidance for the management of clients accessing care at home, housing support and supported housing - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot). As the requirement on the limit to individuals meeting indoors and outdoors has been removed, this may enable the re-opening of communal spaces which were previous considered “private” and remained closed throughout the COVID-19 protection levels. Service providers and individuals using these communal spaces should consider the basic actions that can be taken to minimise risk and use these spaces safely, including ventilation, distancing, hand hygiene and cleaning.

We will be updating the information and links in the guidance on the [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): clinical guidance for the management of clients accessing care at home, housing support and supported housing - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot) to reflect the movement to beyond level zero. We will also continue to work in partnership with Public Health Scotland and Antimicrobial Resistance and Healthcare Associated Infection Scotland to review evidence and update guidance, where appropriate. Any future updates will be communicated to the sector and reflected in our guidance.

Thank you once again for your continued efforts and please also pass on our sincere thanks to your staff who we know are continuing to go the extra mile for those they support in challenging circumstances.



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