

## Latest guidance update for care homes

THERE have been important updates to the [national guidance](#) on infection prevention and control, specifically regarding acute respiratory infections (ARI) in adult social care.

These updates, effective immediately, reflect changes in testing policy and visiting regulations, as well as adjustments to accessing personal protective equipment (PPE).

Routine COVID-19 lateral flow device (LFD) testing of asymptomatic individuals prior to discharge from hospital into care homes is no longer required. Testing may still be undertaken, based on local risk assessment by the hospital together with the care home, for example during outbreaks.

The ordering portal for accessing LFD test kits for outbreak testing has now closed. During a suspected outbreak of acute respiratory infection (ARI), settings can access multiplex polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests through their local health protection team (HPT) to help

identify the infection responsible.

Care providers can continue to access tests on behalf of service users who are eligible for COVID-19 treatments and therefore, eligible for symptomatic testing. Tests for this purpose are supplied by the NHS and should be accessed from a local pharmacy. More details from the NHS about this



service can be viewed here, [NHS England » NHS Lateral Flow Device \(LFD\) Tests Supply Service: Advanced Service](#) and more information on availability of testing for treatments is available at [Who can get a free NHS COVID-19 rapid lateral flow test](#).

Guidance on visiting has been updated to reflect the new Care Quality Commission (CQC) fundamental standard on visiting and accompanying in health and care settings (Regulation 9A) which requires, among other things, that care home residents must be facilitated to receive visits, and not discouraged from taking visits out of the care home.

Information on ordering free PPE has been removed to reflect the scheme to provide free PPE for COVID-19 that has now come to an end. Providers should ensure that they have arrangements in place to access and order PPE for staff to use in line with guidance recommendations. Refer to the [PPE Transition web page](#) for further details.

Please do not hesitate in contacting us if you require advice or support regarding these updates.

## Dates for your diary

PLEASE do pop in to our **Virtual IPC support clinic**. It is planned for Wednesday 5 June between 2pm and 4pm. To join, please click on [this link](#).

## Gloves off!

**SOMERSET, TAKE YOUR GLOVES OFF!**



JOIN us in our campaign to support sustainability in Somerset. The Gloves Off! Campaign runs from April 29th to May 12th and more information can be found on our [web-site](#)

## Get in touch!

LET us know what you would like to see in future editions of the newsletter. Perhaps, you have some good news or quality improvement projects that have worked well and you want to share with other care homes. [Email us](#) with any ideas or contributions.

## Sustainability: What can I reuse?



### What is single use?

Single use means do not reuse. The medical item must only be used once and cannot be used again, even by the same person. Check packaging or device for the symbol on the left.

### Why can't items be reused?

Risk of cross contamination, inability to clean and decontaminate due to design and residues of chemical agents left behind, risk of patient injury, due to material alteration from reprocessing/reuse.

### Reusable items & cleaning advice



Plastic pots, oral syringes and spoons must be checked to make sure they are reusable, if the packaging or item has the symbol '2' printed on them, then these are not reusable items.



Reusable plastic pots, oral syringe and spoons should be ideally washed in designated dishwasher as per the manufacturer's guidelines.

Handwashing plastic pots, oral syringes and spoons should be completed in the kitchen sink and not in the medication room sink. The medication room sink should be used only for hand washing to avoid cross contamination

Reusable items that have been cleaned should be labelled e.g. 'I am clean' indicator tape or label/documentation. Reusable items must be disposed of and renewed when they show signs of wear and tear.