

Coronavirus (Covid-19) Policy

Introduction

This virus is most contagious when the first symptoms show and for two or three days afterwards, so it's important that you follow this policy and [NHS guidelines](#) in order to protect ourselves and our service users.

Although people of all ages can get coronavirus, those of us who are elderly or have pre-existing medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes, or heart disease are at higher risk of becoming severely ill if we contract the infection. More information regarding people at higher risk is available [here](#). Since these categories will include many of our service users, please ensure you follow this policy fully.

Policy Statement

Caritas Care Solutions Ltd believes that adherence to strict guidelines on infection control is of paramount importance in ensuring the safety of both service users and staff. It also believes that good, basic hygiene is the most powerful weapon against infection, particularly with respect to hand washing.

We want to ensure that all our employees and service users remain as safe as is possible during the ongoing Covid-19 outbreak

It is the responsibility of all staff to follow this policy. If you are exempt from any of the guidelines in this document, **YOU MUST INFORM YOUR MANAGER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.**

Aim

- ⦿ To reduce the risk and prevent the spread of infection amongst staff, service users and the local community.
- ⦿ All staff are aware of and always work in accordance to the infection control policies and procedures.
- ⦿ To comply with all relevant legislation such as:
 - ⇒ The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
 - ⇒ The Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 1988
 - ⇒ The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013
 - ⇒ Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002

Procedure

If you experience any of the symptoms listed below, you will need to stay at home for 7 days.

If you live with someone who shows these symptoms, you will need to stay at home for 14 days from the day the first person in your home started showing symptoms:

- ⦿ A high temperature – This means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature).
- ⦿ A new, continuous cough – This means coughing a lot for more than an hour or experiencing 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual).
- ⦿ A loss or change to sense of taste or smell – This means that your taste and/or smell has changed or gone completely.

How to minimise and avoid catching and spreading the coronavirus (social distancing)

- ⦿ [Guidance on social distancing for everyone in the UK](#). Wash your hands and wrists according to the UK government's recommendations. A video can be found [here](#). It must be the first thing you do every time you visit a customer and the last thing you do when you leave. And also the 5 moments of hand hygiene:
 - ⇒ before touching a patient
 - ⇒ before performing any clean or aseptic tasks
 - ⇒ after body fluid exposure/risk
 - ⇒ after touching a service user
 - ⇒ after touching patient surroundings and environment
- ⦿ Do not share cups or water bottles.
- ⦿ check your temperature as soon as you start to feel unwell.
- ⦿ Do not share cutlery or crockery without thorough cleaning first.
- ⦿ Do not share food and drink which may have come into contact with other individuals first.
- ⦿ Clean the rim of beverage cans/bottles before decanting.
- ⦿ wear new disposable gloves and a plastic apron every time you visit a service user.
- ⦿ Dispose of all used Protective Equipment appropriately
- ⦿ Please wash your uniform every day. This again will reduce the chance of cross infection. If you do not wear a uniform, wear clothing that can be easily and frequently washed.
- ⦿ Avoid touching your face, nose and eyes as far as is reasonably practical.
- ⦿ Clean working surfaces as frequently as possible with the correct anti-bacterial solutions.
- ⦿ Avoid using other peoples' mobiles or phones and clean your own phone regularly.

Staff are still required to report any absence in accordance with the sickness and absence policies and procedures. These can be viewed on Relias.

Service user with symptoms of Covid-19

All staff who come into contact with the service user must adhere to the following:

- ⦿ Wash your hands upon arrival, as our instructions state, for a minimum of 20 seconds in accordance to government guidance.
- ⦿ Wear disposable gloves.
- ⦿ Wear a disposable apron.
- ⦿ Wear a surgical mask and face shield to reduce the risk of you contracting the infection. If you do not have these in your possession, contact the office.
- ⦿ When your tasks are completed, discard all PPE into a tied bag, then into another tied bag, and place outside for 72 hours. After this time period has elapsed, you can then dispose of into a general rubbish bin.
- ⦿ Wash your hands as instructed as the final action before leaving the property, for a minimum of 20 seconds.

- ⦿ Your uniform must be changed at the earliest convenience and washed at 60°C. If you require an additional uniform, contact the office. In the event that you do not have enough uniforms you will be allowed to wear your own clothes. These must be changed and washed daily.
- ⦿ Ensure your line manager is informed of the customer's health so that they can be monitored.

Service user in self-isolation with no symptoms of Covid-19.

If the service user does not have symptoms but someone in the household is isolating, the following applies:

- ⦿ The service user must remain at a safe distance from other members of the household – a minimum of 2 metres.
- ⦿ If the service user cannot be fully isolated from infected family members, then follow as for [Service user with symptoms of Covid-19](#)

If a carer has symptoms of COVID-19

You must report to your line manager immediately. You should also:

- ⦿ Self-isolate for at least seven days and until the symptoms have passed/recovery is evident.
- ⦿ All care calls for the carer must cease until your recovery is evident and you have self-isolated for 10 days.
- ⦿ You should keep your line manager fully up to date.

If a carer has no symptoms but lives in a household where someone does have symptoms:

- ⦿ The carer must self-isolate for 14 days. If you show no symptoms after the 14 days, you may stop self-isolating and return to work.
- ⦿ If the carer shows symptoms at any time within the 14 days, you must continue to self-isolate for seven days after the symptoms first display. This might be more or less time than the original 14 days.
- ⦿ Wear disposable gloves, a disposable apron and face mask.

If a carer has no symptoms

If a carer lives with someone who is in self-isolation for 14 days because they had been in contact with someone who has showed symptoms:

- ⦿ The carer does not need to self-isolate unless any other member of the household starts to display symptoms. If this happens, follow the advice [here](#).

If both the carer and service user have no symptoms:

- ⦿ Follow normal hand washing protocols and wash hands when arriving and leaving the property.
- ⦿ PPE – wear disposable gloves, disposable aprons and a face mask.

Self-isolation and sick pay

- ⦿ Staff who are required to self-isolate will be paid SSP, they do not need to attend a GP and they no longer have to delay for the usual 3 waiting days before claiming.
- ⦿ For the first seven days off work, you can self-certify by completing a self-certification [here](#).
- ⦿ If you are unable to work for more than seven days because of coronavirus (COVID-19), an [isolation note](#) should be completed and sent to the office.
- ⦿ Staff who are unwilling to work but do not fall into any of the vulnerable categories, this is likely to be able to treat this as unauthorised absence. Accordingly, there would be no entitlement to pay.

- ⦿ If you do not qualify for SSP, you may be able to claim [Universal Credit and or Contributory Employment and Support Allowance](#).
- ⦿ If you have been notified by the NHS or public health authorities that you've been in contact with someone with coronavirus
- ⦿ someone in your 'support bubble' has coronavirus symptoms or has tested positive for coronavirus
- ⦿ if you have been advised by a doctor or healthcare professional to self-isolate before going into hospital for surgery
- ⦿ If the service user cannot be fully isolated from infected family members, the customer must be cared for in the same manner as above.

You can also get SSP if **BOTH** of the following apply:

- ⦿ you live or work in an area with local restrictions in place, including advice to 'shield' (take extra precautions to reduce contact with others)
- ⦿ you've been advised to shield because you're at very high risk of severe illness from coronavirus
- ⦿ You cannot get SSP if you're self-isolating after entering or returning to the UK and do not need to self-isolate for any other reason.

If your illness is not related to coronavirus

- ⦿ If your illness is not related to coronavirus, you can get SSP from the fourth day you are off work sick.

References

1. [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): adult social care guidance](#)
2. [Recommendations for the use of personal protective equipment \(PPE\) for care workers delivering homecare \(domiciliary care\) in a client's home during sustained COVID-19 transmission in England](#)
3. [COVID-19 PPE: recommendations for domiciliary care workers within 2 metres of a client and providing close personal care \(for example, touching\) OR within 2 metres of anyone in the household who is coughing](#)
4. [COVID-19 PPE: recommendations for domiciliary care workers within 2 metres of a client or household members but not delivering personal care or needing to touch them, and there is no one within 2 metres who has a cough](#)
5. [COVID-19 PPE: recommendations for any other work situation when in a client's home; or in your work premises; or with other staff members](#)
6. [Case scenarios for care workers delivering homecare \(domiciliary care\)](#) Information for health care staff and patients on washing your hands to prevent the spread of infection. Barts Health NHS Trust Mar 13, 2020
7. [Statutory Sick Pay \(SSP\)](#) gov.uk