

Covid-19: Notice to our Customers

We are aware that the current Coronavirus situation is very concerning for our customers and would like to reassure you about how we are complying fully with government and NHS guidance to help prevent the spread of infection and to make sure we continue to provide your care services to you.

The safety and well-being of our customers and our employees is very important to us and is our primary consideration. As such, we are working closely with the health and social care sector, industry leaders and Government to understand what we need to do within national guidelines to minimise the spread of the infection. To that end we have a dedicated in-house team who are making sure that our local Branch Managers and staff have the most up to date information and guidance needed to ensure they can deliver our services in the safest possible manner.

Our local Managers are also working closely with their local authorities and health partners to coordinate our delivery of care to customers where Covid-19 places particular pressure on service, including priority care for clients with greatest need.

In line with Government guidance, we have for some weeks now been directing staff to stay at home if they should be self-isolating, whether due to having symptoms themselves or living in a household where someone has symptoms or are returning from travel in high risk areas, thus minimising risk to our customers.

Employees are not permitted to return to work until the recommended Government advice has been followed, which may mean that some of our employees are absent from work for one or two weeks. We appreciate that this may have an impact on service delivery but we are committed to ensuring that service disruption is minimised. If we have to change any aspects of care delivery we will do so in conjunction with our customers, their families and commissioners of care.

Our care staff are trained in infection control practices when they join us and their knowledge is updated and refreshed regularly – especially in recent times when good hygiene practice is more important than ever.

Washing your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds is the ‘gold standard’ in infection control and our care staff have always been expected to follow this good hand hygiene practices. We appreciate customers allowing care staff to use hand washing facilities whilst in their home, this really helps. Good hand washing means that using hand gel isn’t really necessary, though we are providing gel to our care staff whenever supplies are available to us.

Care workers also routinely wear gloves and aprons for many care tasks and will continue to do this. They will also wear a face mask if caring for a person who had been diagnosed with Covid-19 which is a protection for everyone involved. Care staff have training and guidance on how to properly wear and dispose of the protective equipment we provide.

Our office staff are equally vigilant in their good hygiene practices and are doing their utmost to keep office premises free from infection. This includes daily deep office cleaning, and not having unnecessary meetings or visitors to the premises in the meantime. It may also be necessary for staff to work from home at times, including if staff are self isolating for any reason.

Please be assured that we will be operating throughout this current situation as normally as possible. You will be able to contact us on the usual numbers included in your Customer Guide whether the staff are in the office or working elsewhere and they will continue to be happy to speak with you.

Thank you for your understanding during these unprecedented times.

Val Malley – Head of Quality and Compliance.