

# COVID-19 secure visiting in Gloucestershire care homes

There is no doubt how important visiting is to care homes residents and their family and friends. Since the start of the pandemic, care homes have had to change the way they allow visiting, to make sure they are doing all they can to keep the risk to residents and staff as low as possible.

New national guidance on care home visiting was published on 5 November and local advice and guidance has been updated as a result and shared with all care homes, to help them plan for and manage visiting.

No two plans will, or should be, the same; they must be individual to the home and their residents.

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Please talk to your care home about your personal visiting plan.



**Gloucestershire**  
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## Evaluating the risk

- The circumstances of one visit will be different to the next. It is therefore important that each visit is considered individually, to decide if it can take place or not.
- To make sure all factors have been considered, where possible, the resident and their visitor should be involved in the decision-making process.
- The situation is changing all the time, so it may be necessary to cancel a planned visit, for example, if a resident or their visitor catches COVID-19, someone else in the home catches COVID-19 or the number of cases in the county goes up a lot.

## What measures help make a visit Covid secure?

- Outdoor visits with one other person – visitors can meet outside with a loved one, in an area which can be accessed without anyone needing to go through the home to get there.
- Virtual visits – although no replacement for face to face contact, if used as well as face-to-face visiting, it may help people stay in touch more often.
- A single, constant visitor (close family contact or somebody else important to the person) to keep the number of people coming and going as low as possible. With a homes agreement, in certain circumstances, it may be possible for two constant visitors to be allowed.

## Before a visit

- To help manage the number of visitors in a home at any one time, all visits must be booked in advance.
- Visitors should avoid using public transport, wherever possible.
- On arrival, visitors will be asked if they have any of the main COVID-19 symptoms, confirm they have not been asked to self-isolate or have recently tested positive themselves for COVID-19 or are awaiting the results of a test.
- Visitors will be given practical advice by the care home on how to help keep everyone safe during the visit.

## At all times

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Cover any coughs or sneezes with a tissue and then throw it in the bin and wash your hands.
- Where possible, stay at least two metres away from others and avoid touching surfaces as much as possible.
- Wear a face covering. The care home team will tell you if additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is needed.

## After a visit

- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before leaving the home and again, as soon as you get home.
- Follow the national guidance if you start to feel unwell.

## Compassionate, end-of-life visiting arrangements

A greater number of family or friends who wish to visit loved ones at the end of their life should be able to do so if they follow all of the appropriate measures (this includes visits from faith leaders).