



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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Health and Social Services Group

To: Service Providers and Responsible Individuals of
Domiciliary Support Services in Wales
Directors of Social Services

18th May 2020

Dear Colleagues

We greatly appreciate the challenges you are facing in continuing to manage and deliver high quality care to people in their own homes due to the impact of COVID-19. Some people are returning home from hospital and may be receiving care for the first time, while others have had care packages in place for some time. We are extremely grateful for the commitment and hard work shown by care workers and registered managers at this difficult time.

You will be aware the First Minister has recently announced a payment of £500 to social care workers to recognise their contribution. This can be viewed [here](#). The Minister for Health and Social Services has also announced a new scheme to provide financial support to the beneficiaries of frontline staff in health and social care should they die from Covid-19 as a result of performing their duties. This can be viewed [here](#). The details of both schemes are in the process of being finalised and more information will be available in due course.

We are very pleased about the uptake of identification cards for social care workers, which ensures recognition of care workers as key workers with priority access to supermarkets etc. Further information is available from [Social Care Wales](#). We are looking at what further benefits can be extended to those with this ID card.

We wish to draw your attention to the most up to date guidance relevant to domiciliary care, which can be accessed via the [Information for Health and Social Care professionals](#) page on the Public Health Wales website.



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This includes:-

- [PHW Advisory Note - PPE in Housing, Health, Social Care and supported settings](#)
- IP&C Guidance on PPE for non-aerosol generating procedures
- IP&C Guidance on PPE for aerosol generating procedures (AGPs)

Local Health Boards and Trusts have been asked to provide training and support in the use of enhanced PPE to any social care provider who is undertaking Aerosol Generating Procedures. If your organisation requires support for the provision and use of the specific PPE for AGPs (long sleeve gown, FFP2/3 respirators, visors) and to Fit Test staff to use these masks, you should contact your local health board or Trust, who can direct you to the appropriate person in the local team.

We understand social distancing cannot be maintained in the delivery of personal care and queries have been raised about care workers travelling and working in pairs. This new guidance from the UK Government on [Working in other people's homes](#) responds to these matters.

Further information as to expectations on domiciliary support services, for example how the Responsible Individual (RI) may carry out their monitoring responsibilities at this time are outlined in [FAQs](#) on Care Inspectorate Wales' website.

We have been asked if people who have been furloughed can work for care providers without losing the 80% of their salary, which they receive. Where an individual's contract allows, they may undertake other employment. Please refer to [Gov.UK guidance on furlough](#). Additionally, we have recently confirmed that all employers in the care sector are able to make use of the furlough scheme for their staff where appropriate. This is outlined [here](#).

In these unprecedented times, provider services in conjunction with health boards and local authorities are under extraordinary pressure to deliver care and support to vulnerable people living in their own homes. This may include increased flexibility in how providers deliver care while ensuring this meets people's needs. We know some people have reduced or refused their care packages due to having family members at home, which may change as people return to work outside the home.

Ministers fully realise the financial pressures providers will be under arising from COVID-19. As a result, an initial £40 million has been made available to local authorities to help meet the additional costs adult social care providers are incurring. This will be in areas such as increased staffing costs or enhanced infection control. An outline of this is available [here](#). Further information on this was recently sent to representatives of providers, advising providers to speak to their commissioning local authorities about any additional costs they were experiencing as a result of this pandemic. This can be viewed [here](#).

Some local authorities commission domiciliary support services to administer medication as part of their personal care duties. These are medications defined in the [National guiding principles for medicines support in the domiciliary care sector \(ADSS Cymru\)](#). We recognise there are a number of considerations for commissioners and providers when asking care workers to undertake these tasks.

Policies may be subject to review for the duration of this crisis and thereafter to maximise workforce capacity and reduce footfall into people's homes.

To support this, online training on medication administration is available via the Health Education and Improvement (Wales) Pharmacy website [here](#). This concise training is specifically designed for care workers who may be increasingly called upon to support or administer medication.

An administration checklist is available on the website to prompt safe administration by care workers and managers can use this to assure themselves of individual competence. Pharmacists can provide Medication Administration Records (MAR) sheets when dispensing medication in original packaging to promote robust recording by care workers and these are available on request.

To note, delegation of nursing tasks should only be done when care staff have received specific training and are deemed competent to undertake the task. Relevant information is outlined in the [delegation guidance developed for health and care staff](#). Such enhanced support requires a jointly agreed risk assessment and other assurances to be in place to protect the person and the care worker.

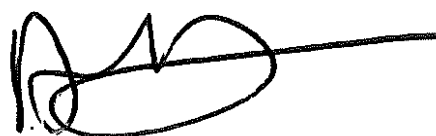
The relevant regulatory and professional bodies have issued advice recognising the extraordinary pressures on health and social care workers at this time and offer reassurance that account will be taken of context if errors or misjudgements are made and where individuals may be working without the normal levels of support. This includes Social Care Wales, Care Inspectorate Wales and a joint statement by the General Medical Council, the General Pharmaceutical Council and the Nursing and Midwifery Council. As we would all expect, suspicion of wilful neglect and deliberate harm will always be pursued by the relevant authorities to provide protection and assurance to people receiving services, employers and the public.

Once again, we wish to extend our thanks and appreciation to all of you who continue to arrange and deliver care to vulnerable people at home in these most pressing of times.

Yours sincerely



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CC: LHB Chief Executives