

NEXT 10 DAYS - KEY DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Upcoming events can be viewed in the '[EVENTS CALENDAR](#)' within the Provider Zone.

COVID-19 OMICRON VARIANT

The Omicron variant of Covid 19 is a recently discovered variant of the virus which was first identified in South Africa last week. All viruses mutate over time as we already know from the flu virus and from other variants of Covid however the mutations on the Omicron variant have gone much further than those seen previously.

Because the discovery of this variant is so recent the knowledge and understanding virologists have about it is still in the early stages. Questions about how easily it can spread (transmission) and about if it is any worse than other variants of Covid cannot be answered just yet. The evidence from South Africa and other Southern African countries seems to be that this variant is more easily transmitted although it is difficult to say how much more currently because vaccination rates across Africa are generally lower than those in this country.

As to whether the variant causes more severe illness, that is something else that is still not yet known. Information from South Africa is that most cases they have seen are mild but with different symptoms to those we see currently. The main symptom seems to be fatigue with less evidence of loss of taste and smell or a persistent cough. As we are seeing with the Delta variant it is those who are not vaccinated or who have had only one vaccine who are the most severely affected, but it is too soon to be sure if this will be the same in the future.

As to whether vaccinations work on this variant once again it is too early to tell but the thinking is that being fully vaccinated including having the booster vaccine will provide a good level of protection against the Omicron variant. This doesn't mean that people will not be unwell but they will probably have a level of acquired immunity from being vaccinated and therefore may be less unwell.

At present, measures being put in place by the government are to slow down the potential spread of the Omicron Variant to buy more time. The emphasis is back on the infection control measures of **HANDS-FACE-SPACE** along with isolation of known or suspected cases and their contacts for 10 days no matter what their vaccination status. Guidance is set to change and will continue to do so as we learn more but that's something we have all been used to over the past two years with Covid.

THE NEW 'OMICRON' VARIANT - KEEPING STAFF AND RESIDENTS SAFE

The newest variant of concern is the Omicron variant with vaccines continuing to remain our best line of defence. The safety of care home residents and staff is a priority, here you can find some information on how to keep safe if there is a suspected case within your home. There is some guidance surrounding the new variant linked [HERE](#)

Continue to maintain and promote infection, prevention control principles with your residents, including the recommended social distancing, hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene (catching sneezes/coughs) and use of face masks in certain situations: Further guidance is available at <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>. Please choose the most appropriate guidance for your setting and check regularly for updates. Producing a risk assessment for your environment is advised.

The importance of PPE - Effective and appropriate use of PPE is one of several actions to reduce the transmission of COVID-19. The prevention and control of COVID-19 requires other measures including source control, enhanced cleaning, ventilation, keeping a safe distance and hand hygiene. Please continue using the portal to order PPE.

Testing procedures - The safety of care home residents and staff is a priority, and testing is a crucial part of protecting them, by helping to prevent and control outbreaks. Please continue with regular testing procedures, you can find more information [HERE](#):

The impact of staff having to isolate from close contacts of the Omicron variant (regardless of vaccination status) - All contacts of suspected Omicron cases must self-isolate, regardless of their age or vaccination status. It is worth noting that if staff members do need to isolate for this reason, it may impact staffing and service levels so please make sure there is cover readily available. You can access our Care Agency Register if you need help with staffing on the Provider Zone.

Visiting and family members that may have recently returned from abroad: The new guidance states that all international arrivals must take a PCR test by the end of the second day after arrival and **self-isolate until they receive a negative result**. To keep residents and staff safe, try your best to make sure this is enforced and ask if any family members who wish to visit have been abroad recently to help prevent the spread of the virus.

PCR test results: It is also important to make sure you are testing/sending tests off on time so that results are returned on time as well. This prevents the spread of infection and helps to keep both residents and staff safe, especially if there is a suspected case within the home.

[CARE HOME RESOURCE PACK:](#)

BCA UPDATES

WEEKLY UPDATES FROM BCA

QUALITY WORKSHOP RESOURCE PACK

'Winter is coming, but Social Care will carry on'

Bradford Care Association, in partnership with Brightening Minds hosted the fifth Quality Workshop of the year on Wednesday 17th November. It was very successful with over 50 providers joining.

The Workshop focused on working together to manage winter pressures across the Health & Care Sector, compliance + regulations over the winter period Q+A with CQC, an introduction to BCA/BMDC Winter Planning Assessment Tool, local and national resources to support providers with challenging workforce issues & emotional wellbeing, and resources to help you complete your CQC PIR.

Dont worry if you missed it, [CLICK HERE](#) for the Quality Workshop Resource Pack including slides, key notes, full Zoom recording and presenter contact details.

RESOURCES ADDED!

Including CQC Q+A - Written Response

If you're having any trouble accessing any links on the resource pack, please email admin@bradfordcareassociation.org



OUR
MEMBERS
FACEBOOK
PAGE IS
LIVE!
CLICK
HERE TO
ACCESS
THE PAGE

REGISTERED MANAGERS WHATSAPP GROUP

It is an opportunity to link with others so we can learn from each other's experiences, share good practice and importantly contribute to shaping how the sector collectively responds to our new normal. The invitation is open to all Registered and Senior Managers.

SEND YOUR NUMBER, NAME
AND ORGANISATION TO
07807799456 TO JOIN!

BCA MEETINGS + ZOOM INFO

You can access all BCA's Meetings using the Zoom information below.

Meeting ID: 933 772 1608
Password: Bradford20

Provider Update - Tuesday 10:30-11:30

IPC Meeting - Tuesday 10:30 - 11:30

Please note the Provider Update and IPC run alternative to each other

VERIFY PLUS

How has your care home & staff been managing the new legislation requirements from 1 November 2021? Is your process taking up too much time & resources?

Why not try Verifyplus? It's a user friendly digital solution to support a robust system to comply with the new legislation

Care Homes across Bradford can access 12months of Verifyplus for FREE, if registered before 31/12/21. With the great support of Bradford Care Association (BCA) & Bradford Metropolitan District Council (BMDC). BMDC have confirmed that the Verifyplus subscription can be claimed from the Discretionary part of the IPC Grant, in addition to the Normal IPC Grant, making it FREE for the Care Home.

To get 12months FREE access, follow these simple steps –

- Email BCA on admin@bradfordcareassociation.org to request a form for FREE BCA membership (*if you are not already a member*)
- On receipt of the form, please complete the form & email back to BCA requesting a promotion code for Verifyplus. (*If you are already a BCA member, you will be receiving your unique promotion code shortly*)
- On receipt of the promotion code, please visit www.verifyplus.co.uk
- Click on “Register Now”.
- Enter your details & click “Save and Continue” – This will automatically generate your password to your email address. (*Please ensure you enter the email address that you wish for access to the admin portal, in most instances this will be the manager’s email address, which will become the manager’s username.*)
- Enter your unique promotion code in the “Coupon code” space. Press “Apply”, this will discount the price from £180 to £120 for the year. Press “Continue”
- Complete the payment details. Press “Pay”
- You are ready to start using Verifyplus.
- You will receive a welcome email with details of how to get started.
- Provide BMDC with a copy of the receipt for Verifyplus

Please note this needs to be done for each individual Bradford Care Home.

If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

ADVERTISE YOUR VACANCIES!

If you are an organisation within social care that would like to advertise their vacancy with us, please email the covid19supportteam@bradford.gov.uk, with the following information.

Subject Title: FAO Ben - Care Vacancy

You must complete the following documents (these will download and are not able to view online):

[Social Care Vacancies](#) (must be completed and returned)

[Jobs And Apprenticeships Template](#) (to be used if you do not have a live vacancy that can be linked to)


If you have any queries on this process, please call our duty number on 01274 431999.

INFECTION PREVENTION NETWORK LAUNCH

The launch of the [infection prevention network](#), hosted by the Queen's nursing Institute, is happening on 30 November 2021. Care home, extra care, supported living and home care representatives are invited to [register](#) and attend!

A new network of adult social care infection prevention and control champions will be launched on 30th November to help maintain and continuously improve standards across the care sector.

Run by the Queen's Nursing Institute, the scheme will be supported by Chief Nurse for Adult Social Care Deborah Sturdy OBE and backed by a £35,000 grant from the Department of Health and Social Care. Lessons learned from the pandemic will be rolled out through the network to help minimise the future spread of infections, including COVID-19 and flu, to protect people living in care homes and receiving home care. The champions will share best practice through a series of virtual meetings, a newsletter and discussion forum. The IPC Champions' Network will be made up of frontline social care staff from settings around England who are responsible for infection prevention and control in their specific areas or homes.



City of BRADFORD METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

THE DO'S AND DON'TS OF ENTRY TO A CARE HOME

YOU CAN ALLOW ENTRY INTO THE INDOOR PREMISES OF THE CARE HOME IF:

- They are a resident
- They can present their evidence using the NHS COVID Pass
- The Registered Manager has approved them for emergency assistance or maintenance (please ensure this is recorded and evidenced)
- They are a friend or relative of the resident they are visiting
- They are under the age of 18

AND THEY HAVE A NEGATIVE TEST

YOU MUST REFUSE ENTRY INTO THE INDOOR PREMISES OF THE CARE HOME IF:

- Someone who needs to evidence their vaccination is unable to do so. Professional visitors **MUST** evidence their COVID-19 vaccination status. **NO EVIDENCE, NO ENTRY!**

Anyone who tries entering a care home without evidencing their COVID-19 vaccination status will be reported to the Covid-19 Support Team who will liaise with the person's line manager and Public Health at Bradford Council. Please ensure all refusals to entry are reported the Covid-19 Support Team.

DOWNLOAD THESE POSTERS!

If you would like to download the poster above or below to display in your care home, simply just click on them!

THE DO'S AND DON'TS OF ENTRY TO A CARE HOME

Care Home Visiting and the Admission of Residents

FRIENDS AND RELATIVES

Friends or relatives who are visiting a resident should be allowed entry into a care home if:

- they provide evidence of a negative lateral flow test

For visitors that could self-test at home before a visit, you may wish to supervise some self-tests on site beforehand. Providing support to ensure visitors can carry out the tests correctly.

All testing must be done on the day of the visit. Once the visitor has reported the test, they will receive confirmation of their result by text message (SMS) and/or email to show proof of result. Visitors must show proof of a negative test result before every visit, such as:

- an email or text from NHS Test and Trace
- a date-stamped photo of the test cartridge itself

PROFESSIONALS

Professionals who are visiting a care home should be allowed entry if:

- they provide evidence of a negative lateral flow test
- they provide evidence of their vaccination status

Professional visitors **MUST** evidence their COVID-19 vaccination status unless the Senior staff on shift has approved them for emergency assistance or maintenance (please ensure this is recorded and evidenced).

Anyone who tries entering a care home without evidencing their COVID-19 vaccination status will be reported to the Covid-19 Support Team who will liaise with the person's line manager and Public Health at Bradford Council. Please ensure all refusals to entry are reported to the Covid-19 Support Team.

ADMISSION OF RESIDENTS

Newly admitted residents to a care home from an interim care facility or transferring from another care home do not need to self-isolate upon arrival if:

- the person admitted is fully vaccinated, wherever possible
- local guidance from the director of public health about community transmission of variants of concern is followed
- the person admitted has no known contact with a COVID-positive person
- the care home has taken into account the circumstances at the care home or interim care facility from which they are transferring, prior to admission
- the person is subject to an enhanced testing regime consisting of a PCR test before admission (within 72 hours), a PCR test on the day of admission (day 0) and a further PCR test 7 days following admission (day 7). Additionally, we recommend daily rapid lateral flow testing until the day 7 PCR result has been received

Care home residents returning from hospital following an overnight stay for elective (planned) care should avoid contact with highly vulnerable residents. They will not be asked to self-isolate provided if:

Care home residents returning from hospital following an overnight stay for elective (planned) care should avoid contact with highly vulnerable residents. They will not be asked to self-isolate provided if:

- the person admitted is fully vaccinated, wherever possible
- local guidance from the director of public health about community transmission of variants of concern is followed
- the person admitted has no known contact with a COVID-positive person
- the person receives a negative PCR test result following their return to the care home

Care home residents discharged from hospital following an admission for emergency care should self-isolate, upon arrival, for 14 days, within their own room.

NHSX IPADS SUPPORT EXTENSION

The year-long support package for NHSX iPads is coming to an end this November and December, depending on when the care home received the iPad. NHSX is pleased to let you know that we will be extending the device support package for care providers with NHSX iPads.

Extension of Support

So that there's not a sudden loss of support for care homes over the winter, we are extending the funding for the Mobile Device Management (MDM) and support until summer 2022. This is part of the Winter Plan to support social care, and the service will continue to be delivered by J24.

The extension is offered on an opt-out basis. This means that all iPads will be transferred to the extended MDM with no change to their set-up, unless a care home or provider chain gets in touch to opt-out of the extension. Care providers and staff who want to continue to have NHSX funded support, don't have to take any action. If you would like to opt-out of this extension, NHSX will be issuing a survey soon.

Ending the Sim Card Package

In addition, NHSX have evaluated the sim card packages for the iPads and won't be continuing to fund the sim card package over winter. This means that care homes will need to use their own Wi-Fi or purchase a data only sim themselves. We've already let care homes with iPads know about this, and if you have any questions, please email iPad.Offer@nhsx.nhs.uk.

With the MDM extension in place care homes with NHSX iPads won't lose access to a mobile device management service (MDM) over the winter period, and will be able to access NHSMail and other services that require a secure connection. We will still be able to send notifications and software to care homes' devices, and usage information local teams can offer targeted support.

Evaluation of the iPads project

NHSX has commissioned Revealing Reality to do an independent evaluation of the iPads project. We want to use the evaluation to help us better meet people's needs with future projects. To do this, we need to hear from a range of care staff and providers in the research.

If you'd like to take part, and share your views, please register via this [LINK](#).
Contact emma.donnelly@nhsx.nhs.uk for more information.

CAPACITY TRACKER SYSTEM UPDATE FOR THOSE EXPERIENCING PASSWORD ISSUES

Capacity Tracker have been made aware that some users are currently experiencing issues with logging on to the system following either a password expiry or after resetting their password.

The technical team are currently working on this as a priority and will update us again once this issue has been resolved. We thank you for your patience and apologise for any inconvenience caused.