

GUIDANCE FOR STAFF

BEST PRACTICE FOR COVID AND INFLUENZA MANAGEMENT OVER WINTER

With Winter fast approaching it is worth reminding ourselves of the measures that can be taken to keep our service users, colleagues, and ourselves healthy through the cold dark months to come.

BE PREPARED

Now is the time to make sure you are fully prepared for whatever the winter season may bring. With the potential for both flu and Covid 19 to be circulating as well as coughs and colds make sure you and your staff are fully up to speed with the most up to date guidance on managing both single cases and outbreaks of respiratory infections in your setting.

The latest guidance for managing Covid 19 in care homes is here:

[COVID-19 supplement to the infection prevention and control resource for adult social care - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-supplement-to-the-infection-prevention-and-control-resource-for-adult-social-care)

This includes;

- the latest testing and isolation advice for service users and staff,
- how to obtain covid 19 tests,
- advice on the management of service users (and staff) who may be at greater risk from respiratory illness and therefore may be offered anti-viral medication by the GP,
- advice on discharges to the care home from hospital
- advice on preventing the spread of respiratory illnesses through ventilation, managing waste, PPE etc

There is further advice for those who may be at greater risk from respiratory illness here:

[COVID-19: guidance for people whose immune system means they are at higher risk - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-guidance-for-people-whose-immune-system-means-they-are-at-higher-risk)

Guidance on managing flu outbreaks can be found here:

[Guidance on outbreaks of influenza \(flu\) in care homes \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/guidance/flu-outbreaks-in-care-homes)

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VACCINATIONS

Both Influenza and Covid 19 vaccinations are currently being rolled out across social care. Many of your service users will already have had their vaccinations or will be having them soon, but it is just as important for staff to have their vaccinations too. Frontline social care staff are eligible for free Flu and Covid 19 vaccinations which can be accessed through the link below:

[National Booking Service - NHS Digital](#)

Or by calling **119**

You may also be able to speak to your local pharmacy about undertaking flu vaccinations for staff on the premises or in other convenient locations although they may charge for the service.

This year several different Covid 19 vaccinations have been approved by the Joint Committee on Vaccinations and Immunisations. All of these are tried and tested vaccinations which add to those which have been used in previous years and work in similar ways.

Recent reports from care homes in our area which have had Covid 19 outbreaks in the last few months report that in most cases staff are much more poorly with Covid 19 than their service users. This is probably due to staff immunity having reduced over time therefore it is important to ensure you have a winter booster.

Similarly, each year the flu vaccination is designed to be effective against the flu strains which will be around during the winter, which is why it is important to ensure you have a flu vaccination every year as well.

Finally keeping well over winter isn't just about vaccinations and managing outbreaks. The leaflet below contains further information on keeping warm and healthy over winter which may be useful for you and your service users.

[502660 NHS HUYH STAYWELL 12PP LEAFLET AW 7 a Web.pdf \(assets.nhs.uk\)](#)