

Visiting Guidance – December 2020

To All Families and Carers

The Government announced on 1st December 2020 plans to support the reinstatement of visiting arrangements at Care Homes. We welcome this guidance and the commitment by the Government to support Care Homes with this. The emotional and physical benefits from the resumption of in person visiting is something that we all want to see back in place as our Residents and staff have greatly missed this.

To enable this to happen there is a lot of work each home needs to do in advance and a lot of equipment and test kits, promised by the Government, needs to be received. We will do our very best to put all necessary systems and procedures in place to enable this to happen as soon as possible but please be aware that we are hearing these Government announcements at a very similar time to yourselves.

Our primary responsibility remains the safety of our Residents and our Staff team and this will guide the timings of when visiting in person will resume and the number of visits we will be able to accommodate at any point in time. Please be assured that we will commit whatever resources we can to enable visits to happen and for you and your families to be reunited with your loved ones at this very special time of year.

Further details will follow as our planning develops and as we organise the scheduling of visits with you. For now though I would like to be clear on some of the key principles of the Visiting arrangements that the Government has set in place:

- If any of our homes are managing an outbreak of Covid-19 that home will **not** be able to accommodate any in person visits until the Local Authority has given us the all clear
- Testing arrangements will involve real-time on site testing **only**. Visitors cannot secure independent testing and then bring these results to site.
- Visiting will be via **prior appointment only**.
- The Government stated ambition of two visits per week is not realistic at this early stage but we hope it will be achievable as our systems and procedures develop

After battling the challenges of Covid-19 over the last year there is nothing we want more than to see families reunited and the joy and emotional well-being that this will bring to everyone. We are committed to seeing this in place and are grateful for your support and patience as we establish the appropriate safety procedures to enable this to happen.

Thank you

Mark Tomalin
Chief Executive Officer