

Coronavirus Care Homes Admissions Guidance

Background

When someone who has been admitted to hospital with COVID-19 symptoms no longer requires hospital care, they will be discharged. This means they will either not have COVID-19 or will be recovering from it.

Due to the pressures the NHS is facing, the individual being released doesn't have a choice in being discharged, but the NHS will ensure they end up in a safe and appropriate setting, which may be a care home.

Strategic Coordination Groups across the NHS, community and social care settings are creating and maintaining acute bed capacity to assist with the rise in hospital care for the foreseeable future.

More information on the hospital discharge process can be found here:

www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/publication/covid-19-hospital-discharge-service-requirements/

What is the risk?

Even though any individuals entering your home will have met the criteria to be discharged there is still a chance they could infect carers, residents or visitors inside the care home, or maybe susceptible to infection themselves. They should remain isolated for up to seven days after their symptoms go away.

What is the procedure?

If an individual has either tested positive for COVID-19 but is no longer showing symptoms, or simply has no COVID-19 symptoms after completing their isolation period, then care should be provided as normal. Full details can be read here:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-admission-and-care-of-people-in-care-homes

Preparation

All staff should be familiar with the latest COVID-19 guidance here.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-residential-care-supported-living-and-home-care-guidance/covid-19-guidance-on-home-care-provision

Free online COVID-19 training for Health and Social Care staff can also be undertaken. Here are a few options:

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/training/online-training>

<https://www.e-lfh.org.uk/programmes/coronavirus/>

<https://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/covid-19-course>

The Resident's Room

The room should be picked in advance and cleaned thoroughly before the resident arrives. Ideally it will be a single en-suite room with a dedicated toilet or commode facility, and a window that can provide a view and airflow will make the resident more comfortable.

Their room will need to be clearly signposted from the outside so staff and residents passing by can identify somebody with potential COVID-19 symptoms is residing inside. Only authorised personnel should be allowed inside.

Staffing rotas should then be organised in such a way that as few different staff members as possible provide care, both to limit infection and to make the individual comfortable.

Ordering of PPE

Although personal protective equipment is in high demand and difficult to get hold of, you should try to ensure your home has more than enough to deal with potential outbreaks and to reduce the risk of infection to all residents. If you have immediate concerns over your PPE stock, contact the National Supply Disruption Line.

Phone: 0880 915 9964

Email: supplydisruptionservice@nhsbsa.nhs.uk

During the Stay

Cleaning - Follow NHS guidance for preventing infection and clean the room frequently and any objects that enter or leave, including clothing, laundry, furniture, crockery and cutlery. Items touched by the individual and clothing worn by staff must be placed in a bag and disposed of or washed each time.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) - PPE must be worn at all times when entering an individual's room, and full PPE must be worn when providing personal care. PPE must be bagged and disposed of safely after each use as like clinical waste.

Visitors should only be allowed to enter the home in the most urgent of circumstances and should limit their interactions within the home.

Any **food or drink** should be delivered by staff wearing PPE, and the PPE should be bagged and disposed of after each use. Any cutlery or crockery used by an infected person should be washed separately from other implements in a dishwasher using the highest possible temperatures. The infected person should use only the clean, separated items for their meals.

Isolation

The newly admitted resident will have to be isolated until they have fully recovered and for seven days after their symptoms disappear. It's a frustrating situation to be in, so they should be made as comfortable as possible and if they are confused have patience and explain why this is happening delicately.

Deaths

In the event that an admitted resident sadly dies from COVID-19, see the official guidance from the government here:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-care-of-the-deceased/guidance-for-care-of-the-deceased-with-suspected-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19