



Learning Disability and Autism Programme

15th January 2021

Frequently Asked Questions

Thank you for your questions and comments. We have focussed on questions which summarise a key theme from stakeholders. If you do not think we have answered your question, or if we have missed anything, please do come back to us at: england.learning.disability@nhs.net

All webinar materials will be uploaded to the Future NHS Collaboration workspace. We use this platform to share resources; if you currently have a FutureNHS account, you can access the workspace directly through the homepage (<https://future.nhs.uk/MHLDAcovid19/grouphome>). Those without a FutureNHS account can either self-register to the platform if they have an nhs.net or nhs.uk email account, or directly request access by emailing our generic mailbox if they are from other organisations at: MHLDAcovid19-manager@future.nhs.uk.

Key topics this week

- **Data on people dying**
- **COVID-19 Vaccination**
- **Guidance update**
- **Testing and adult social care**
- **Saliva tests**
- **Updates from CQC**

Data on people dying

Response provided by NHS England and NHS Improvement

This Government webpage has information about the different uses of figures on deaths related to COVID-19 published by Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and the Office of National Statistics.

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/news/statementsandletters/thedathsfrcovid19publishedbydhscandtheons>

Here is the link to daily data published by DHSC <https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/>

Here is the link to weekly data published by ONS:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/bulletins/deathsregisteredweeklyinenglandandwalesprovisional/latest>

NHS England continues to publish daily data on people who have died in hospital in England and had either tested positive for Covid-19 or where Covid-19 was mentioned on the death certification [COVID deaths in hospitals in England](#), A weekly

report contains a breakdown of this data including by ethnicity, gender, age group and by pre-existing condition including learning disability and autism.

Covid-19 Vaccination:

Vaccine rollout and prioritisation details are developing at pace and we are very closely engaged with all parts of the system working on these. Some of the questions raised, particularly about prioritisation will require some further time for us to be able to provide an answer either directly or through signposting to developing guidance.

Guidance update:

Response provided by Department of Health and Social Care

The letter to clinically extremely vulnerable individuals outlining advice during the national lockdown will be made available in an easy read format. It will be uploaded to the following webpage: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-letters-to-clinically-extremely-vulnerable-people>.

Easy Read versions for the national lockdown guidance have been commissioned and is likely to take 4 or 5 days to be published.

If you (or a person in your care) have a health condition that routinely requires you to leave home to maintain your health - including if that involves travel beyond your local area or exercising several times a day - then you can do so. A link to the national lockdown exercise guidance reflecting this exemption can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-lockdown-stay-at-home#exercising>

Testing and Adult Social Care:

Response provided by Department of Health and Social Care

Currently, lateral flow devices are only available for care homes, however we are reviewing this and looking at how we expand this as capacity expands.

Unfortunately, at this stage, Shared Lives services cannot apply for regular testing, however we are continuously keeping our testing strategy in adult social care under review. Our testing strategy is guided by Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) and we will continue to work closely with SAGE and PHE to identify priority areas for testing.

Saliva tests:

Response provided by Department of Health and Social Care

A pilot for saliva based testing is being developed for adult social care, particularly for groups of people who cannot tolerate swabbing for a variety of reasons. These groups will be the priority for saliva based tests once the required clinical and regulatory approvals have been obtained.

During this period of national lockdown special schools should continue to welcome and encourage pupils to attend full-time where the parent/carer wishes for their child to be able to attend. Special post-16 settings should continue to welcome and encourage students to attend as per their usual timetable where the young person wishes to attend.

The saliva-based tests used in a number of school based research studies have not been approved by the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) for use in mass testing.

Updates from Care Quality Commission [following Provider Collaboration Reviews presentation]:

Response provided by Care Quality Commission

Question: Who is leading on the work for children at CQC and when?

Response: This will be led by our childrens team but in the planning stage please contact Charles.Rendell@cqc.org.uk

Question: Are childrens team linking with Ofsted?

Response: CQC's specialist Children's Services Inspection team deliver a wide range of specialist inspections, some of which are delivered in partnership with other inspectorates, including Ofsted.

Question: will your CQC inspectors have Learning disability knowledge and experience? will you speak to families?

Response: Our inspectors will all receive training in advance of any work they undertake. Some will have a background in Learning Disability. Training will be supported by our current policy staff who work in this area as well as our National Professional Advisor Learning Disability and Autism Services, Kenneth Courtney.

Question: Will it look at how the funding currently works which impedes integrated care?

Response: We will not look specifically at funding for these reviews although we have looked at this relating to integrated working previously:

<https://www.cqc.org.uk/publications/themed-work/beyond-barriers-how-older-people-move-between-health-care-england>.

Question: How are you choosing which systems to look at?

Response: We are looking at all 42 ICS areas for the whole programme. So far we have reviewed 19 for the first 2 phases of the programme (phase 1 over 65s, phase 2 Urgent and Emergency Care). The Learning Disability sites will be agreed for the remaining areas based on systems where we know from our current inspection work that there is outstanding practice, some areas where there is a identified need for improvement and a geographical mix. The systems will be announced in February.

Question: alongside this work, given the risks associated with closed services for people with learning disabilities, (esp ATUs) will you be carrying out unannounced inspections, especially for inadequate services?

Response: Yes, where risk is identified CQC will carry out unannounced inspections

Question: Would be helpful to have childrens lead join you Charles - if another meeting is held

Answer: Agreed

Question: will CQC make unannounced visits?

Response: Re CQC inspections we are discussing our overall approach to inspection, particularly in light of the new lock down, however the general principle will be to continue our risk based approach and higher risk services will include ATU. All requests for onsite inspections are now signed off by Chief Inspectors.

Published Resources

- The Government has published a Mental Health Act White Paper for public consultation until 21 April 2020. The link is here www.gov.uk/government/consultations/reforming-the-mental-health-act
Easy read version https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/951744/mha-easy-read.docx
- Covid Vaccine easy read leaflet: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/951000/PHE_11843_Covid-19_Easy-read_leaflet.pdf
- Please see the NHS visiting guidance which was updated on the 23rd December at: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/publication/visitor-guidance/>
- National lockdown: stay at home easy read, from Cabinet Office: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/952298/National_Lockdown_Easy_Read.pdf
- Easy read guide to explain how to test yourself for coronavirus is published on the gov website here: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/934264/testing-yourself-for-coronavirus-easy-read-home.pdf
- Pulse oximetry to detect early deterioration of patients with COVID-19 in primary and community care settings - new easy read guide now available called Using a pulse oximeter to check you are ok: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/publication/pulse-oximetry-to-detect-early-deterioration-of-patients-with-covid-19-in-primary-and-community-care-settings/>
- NHS England and NHS Improvement video information about vaccines: For people with a learning disability and autistic people, available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M3Wh23PDnfE&feature=youtu.be>
- The second national *PHE Screening Inequalities Conference* will be held on Friday 5 February 2021, via Microsoft Teams Live Events. The theme of the conference is reducing screening inequalities for people with learning disabilities and service users with lived experience are helping to plan the conference. The link to sign up to attend is here: www.phe-events.org.uk/sic21.
- The Department for Education have published guidance for [special schools, specialist post-16 providers, and alternative schools \(including hospital schools\)](#) during the national lockdown period. It should be read alongside the main guidance document: [Restricting attendance during the national lockdown: schools](#) and the [Further education guidance for restricting](#)

attendance during the national lockdown, which covers the main operational issues. They have also published an open letter from Vicky Ford MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families to children and young people with SEND, their families, and those who work to support them.

Future webinars

The next webinar will be on 20th January. If there is a specific theme you would like to discuss or present please let us know.

Additional information

For Public Health England weekly updates sign up here:

<https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKHPA/subscribers/new>