3rd August 2020

Dear

As the coronavirus pandemic continues, I wanted to write to you to assure you that protecting residents and keeping them safe continues to be our top priority.

The Government has taken steps over the past few weeks to change its guidance on lockdown rules and life, in some ways, is beginning to return to normal. Our residents are still at a very high risk of catching coronavirus if we do not continue to be extremely careful.

The Government provided national guidance for visiting arrangements in care homes on 22nd July. This set out the steps for allowing visitors to the care home in a carefully managed way.

Firstly, the Director of Public Health at Bath and North East Somerset Council (B&NES), working with colleagues across health and care, have assessed and agreed that visiting is appropriate within B&NES, based on local data and public health intelligence.

In addition, we have also undertaken our own risk assessment as a care home, taking into consideration the needs and risks to our residents and staff from visitors attending the home, before deciding on whether we can allow visitors. We will regularly review this assessment, and if we feel it is no longer safe to allow visitors to the care home, they will be stopped. Furthermore, following news this last weekend regarding the testing of staff and residents, we might be required to stop visiting at short notice. We will of course keep you informed.

As before, any imposed visitor restrictions will take into consideration exceptional circumstances such as end of life care.

As we want to allow residents to have visitors as soon as safely possible, we are pleased to announce that with effect from Wednesday 5th August 2020, visits for one family member will be reinstated using the following guidance. Pre-booked visits will take place in the conservatory, unless there are reasons that a resident is unable to leave their room, in which case alternative arrangements will be considered.

Other visitors can continue to meet with our residents through the day lounge window or through video calls. Appointments for this to be arranged as before.

Thank you for your continued support, patience and understanding throughout this challenging time.

Please advise us as to who the designated visitor will be.

Management of Bridgemead.

**Information sheet for visitors to care homes**

**Do not visit if you are feeling unwell and/or should be self-isolating**

**When to self-isolate:**

* You have any symptoms of coronavirus (a high temperature, a new, continuous cough or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste) now or in the last 7 days
* You're waiting for a coronavirus test result
* You've tested positive for coronavirus – this means you have coronavirus
* You live with someone who has symptoms, is waiting for a test result or has tested positive
* You have been advised by NHS Test and Trace, or Public Health England, to self-isolate

**Before your visit**

* There should be a single constant visitor per resident (e.g. the same family member visits each time), wherever possible. This is to limit the number of overall visitors to the care home and the individual resident, to reduce the risk of infection
* Visits will need to be pre-booked to enable us to manage the safety of residents by limiting the volume of people through the home at any one time, as well as support additional cleaning.
* Do not visit if you are feeling unwell and/or should be self-isolating
* Visits will be limited to 20 minutes duration.

**During your visit**

* Please wash your hands carefully (following NHS guidance) before travelling to the home.  As soon as you arrive in the home, we will ask you to wash your hands or use hand gel in the presence of a staff member and again before leaving the home.
* When you arrive, we will ask you a few questions about your health and confirm that you should not be self-isolating. We will also log your visit and contact details.
* Visitors will be given a face mask to wear while visiting unless exempt.
* Social distancing measures must be maintained during the visit which means a no touch approach. This extends to hugging, hand-holding, or kissing. Where this is not possible due to the resident’s needs, an individual risk assessment and additional measures will be required – please follow the advice of the care home staff.
* Should visitors require PPE (which goes beyond a face covering), please follow the advice of the care home staff
* Visitors will not be able to use facilities such as family rooms and toilets.