

**Adult Care Services  
Hertfordshire County Council  
County Hall  
Pegs Lane  
Hertford  
Herts, SG13 8DP  
Date: 4 December 2020**

Dear Families and Carers,

We know you will be very hopeful now that there is positive news around vaccines, rapid testing and care home visits.

We want to reassure you that we are doing everything we can to support care homes to safely allow home visits, whilst balancing the wellbeing and safety of all the care home residents, staff, visitors and the community.

[Government guidance](#) on visiting care homes and people from care homes visiting family and loved ones in their homes recognises that care home managers are best placed to decide how visits should happen and as such, policies may change between homes. We continue to support homes with guidance, training and practical help.

In the guidance, care homes will be asked to complete a risk assessment on individuals for visits out of the home. This will include the potential risk to the entire home and its residents.

You can also play your part to reduce any risks to the person you are having in your home and the wider care home community.

- Please limit your contact with others and isolate as much as possible for two weeks before the visit.
- Your whole family bubble will be asked to take a test. Your care home may have tests which enable results within 20-30 minutes and do not require a laboratory to process. They can be self-administered via nasal and throat swabs.
- Read the guidance carefully and ensure you only mix with people from one household (or a bubble that includes that household plus another that is already connected in a support bubble or childcare bubble). The resident should not become part of a three-household Christmas bubble.
- Do not do anything during the home visit that will bring you into contact with others.
- If a home has an outbreak (two or more positive cases), they are advised against non-essential visitors for 28 days or visits out of the care home. If any members of the household or the resident have symptoms of COVID-19 or test positive during the visit, the resident may be asked to self-isolate in the family home according to government guidance before they return.

For visits out of the care home to see family or loved ones, on their return they will be asked to self-isolate for two weeks. Please be aware of the impact this could have on the resident's wellbeing.

Whilst we understand the immense importance of home visits for people in care homes, there are risks associated with this. Please understand that not all homes have access to new 'rapid' tests yet or the means to support visits out of the home.

If you are unhappy with the decisions made by the home, we urge you to talk to them first about your circumstances. You can also talk to your social care team about specific issues around the care and support of an individual.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you the very best for the Christmas season.

Your sincerely



**Jim McManus**  
Director of Public Health

Yours sincerely



**Chris Badger**  
Interim Director of Adult Care Services