

Temporary Changes in response to Coronavirus (Covid 19)

Direct Payment Frequently Asked Questions (Updated 16/04/21) for Children’s Direct Payment users and Personal Assistants (PAs) 0-25 Services

The government has [issued guidance for Direct Payment users and Personal Assistants](#), and whilst this is written with a focus on adults, it is relevant to children too.

Below are some additional FAQs to offer additional clarification and reflect decisions made by Hertfordshire and may differ from the government guidance.

FAQs on the COVID-19 vaccine

Question	Answer
When will I be contacted to get the vaccine?	People are being offered the vaccine against Covid-19 in order of priority . You will be contacted to book an appointment when it is your turn. All vaccinations are by appointment only.
When will my PA be contacted to get the vaccine as part of Hertfordshire’s health and social care workforce?	<p>PAs paid via Paypacket have been contacted directly and asked to register with us so we can give their details to the NHS. We also emailed or wrote to all Children’s direct payment recipients with information to pass on to your PAs/DP carers. We are getting the vaccine to all eligible staff as quickly as possible in line with government priorities. If they haven’t heard from us they should email CSBusinesscontinuity@hertfordshire.gov.uk with COVID VACCINE as the subject, and with the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name • Home and mobile phone number

Question	Answer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age • Date of birth • NHS number (your NHS number can be found on any letter you have received from the NHS, including prescriptions and hospital letters. For more information look here: NHS number.) • Preference of Stevenage or Watford <p>We will need them to do this before midnight 24 January 2021.</p>
Is the vaccine safe?	The vaccine is safe. All the vaccines have gone through extensive trials and have been approved for use in the UK by the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA).
Are there any side effects from the vaccine?	Like all medicines, vaccines can cause side effects. Not everyone gets them and most are mild or short-term effects (e.g. tenderness in the arm where you have had the injection or feeling tired). Even if you do have symptoms after the first dose, you still need to have the second dose. Please only rely on reputable websites such as the NHS vaccination advice to seek advice on this matter.
Who cannot have the vaccine?	Please look at advice from the Vaccination advice from the NHS.
What if I am pregnant, trying for a baby or breastfeeding?	Read the latest Covid-19 vaccine advice if you're pregnant, may get pregnant or are breastfeeding on the NHS covid-19 vaccination website . Or the Government website Guidance for women of childbearing age, currently pregnant or breastfeeding
What if I am shielding as I am Clinically Extremely Vulnerable?	You will still be invited to have the vaccine. You must continue to follow government guidance for this group after having the vaccine. See the government guidance on shielding for people who are Clinically Extremely Vulnerable.
Where can I get more information about the vaccine?	<p>Please make sure you only rely on reputable sources of information when you are reading about the vaccine. For more information on the vaccine, please see the Gov.uk and NHS.uk websites. There are Easy read guides on Covid-19 vaccination available.</p> <p>More Information Guides on covid-19 vaccination for social care staff</p>

Question	Answer
	<p>Please note you cannot have the vaccine within 28 days of a positive COVID-19 test.</p> <p>Once you have had your vaccine, it is still extremely important that you continue to remain vigilant and practice <i>hands, face, space</i> at all times. You must continue to wear any PPE which is appropriate for your job and follow infection prevention and control guidelines.</p> <p>Please note NHS England is the Data Controller for vaccination records. More information about the privacy notice for the national flu vaccination programme.</p>

I am a Personal Assistant (PA):

Question	Answer
<p>I am a PA and have symptoms of Covid-19, do I still visit my client</p>	<p>No. Please refer to NHS 111 coronavirus service for medical advice. You must observe the isolation periods, within the NHS guidance on Self-isolation and treating coronavirus symptoms.</p> <p>Please call Children’s Services on 0300 123 4043 so that we can follow up with additional care and support for the person that you work with.</p> <p>Even if you do not work enough hours to qualify for Statutory Sick Pay, the person who receives the Direct Payment should pay you.</p> <p>We will make sure that individuals have enough money in their direct payment account to pay for any sick pay related to Covid-19 and for additional care to meet their assessed care and support needs.</p>
<p>I am a PA and do not have symptoms of COVID-19 can I still be tested?</p>	<p>Key and essential workers such as PAs who cannot work from home during the current government restrictions are being prioritised and are encouraged to book a rapid test twice a week (every 2-3 days) to help ensure that essential services are as safe as possible. Results will be sent by text and email within 45 minutes.</p> <p>Rapid tests are available by appointment only and bookable up to a week in advance on a first come first served basis. To book a test , please visit www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/rapidtest. Please check the website for updates as new test centres will open across Hertfordshire every week.</p>

Question	Answer
	<p>Anyone with symptoms cannot have a rapid test and must not go to a rapid test centre – instead they should book a standard coronavirus (PCR) test at www.gov.uk/coronavirus.</p>
<p>I am a PA and I have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, do I need to self-isolate?</p>	<p>Under the new NHS test and trace contact-tracing website, anybody who has had a specific ‘close contact’ with somebody who tests positive for COVID will be expected to isolate themselves for 14 days, or for at least 10 days from developing symptoms of COVID. ‘Close contact’ is defined by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • spending 15 minutes or more within 2 metres of an infected person • very close specified personal interaction for a shorter period of time • someone who has lived within the same household during a period of potential risk transmission. <p>If you have had close contact with somebody who has tested positive for COVID (or who has symptoms of COVID and is waiting to be tested) but you were wearing appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) during this close contact, it is unlikely you will need to isolate.</p> <p>If you have had close contact with somebody who has tested positive for COVID (or who has symptoms of COVID and is waiting to be tested) but either you were not wearing PPE at the time, or there was a PPE breach, then you will normally need to isolate for 14 days, in line with advice.</p>
<p>Do I still visit my client if they have symptoms of Covid-19 (a high temperature, a new, continuous cough and a change or loss to your sense of taste or smell) or they are self-isolating?</p>	<p>Yes. If a person receives essential care in their home, then carers should continue to visit.</p> <p>Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) should be worn. There are guidelines on the government website about PPE and safe working and the correct procedures to follow. There is also a simpler PPE guidance illustrated guide on the government website.</p> <p>There are specific guidance documents for aerosol generating procedures (AGPs) such as coughing, spitting, suctioning, tracheostomy care, ventilation. There are guidelines on the government website on the correct procedures to follow.</p> <p>There’s specific PPE guidance on the Public Health England website. There are a number of circumstances in which it is recommended that wearing the right PPE is needed even if you do not have symptoms. If you normally wear PPE to support someone, this must continue.</p> <p>You should attempt to buy PPE equipment through your regular supplier. Any problems with getting supplies, please refer to Hertfordshire Care Providers Association (hpc) or call the Provider Hub on 01707 708108</p>

Question

Answer

In September the Government announced that PAs employed through direct payments are entitled to free PPE for covid related need. The Council is currently writing to all direct payment recipients to understand what the PPE requirements are and to organise delivery.

Footwear covers have not been included as part of PPE guidance for PAs or home care organisations. There is no requirement for paper towels rather than hand towels. Individual hand towels, specific for each PA, can be used and should be washed and replaced frequently.

[Guidance update issued on 10/4/21](#) that PPE should be changed after each procedure or task, not just between different people being cared for, this applies in personal domestic settings as well as care homes:

- Within 2 metres and carrying out direct personal care or domestic duties: Gloves, Apron, IIR, Eye protection (when risk of body fluids)
 - Gloves: 'must be changed between every contact with another person and while working with the same resident, also after using gloves for other activities e.g. cleaning, immediately after completion of a procedure or task and after each person being cared for, and then wash your hands'
 - Aprons: 'must dispose of them immediately after completion of a procedure or task and after each resident, and then wash your hands.'
 - IIR Masks: 'disposed of after giving personal care to each resident, and a new fluid-repellent surgical mask applied when giving personal care to another resident.'
 - Eye protection: Face shield (visor) or goggles where there is risk of droplets or body fluids reaching the eyes (e.g. caring for a positive patient'
- Recommendations apply for personal care regardless of whether they have tested positive or not, or had the vaccine

I am a PA and concerned about how I can work safely during COVID-19, what measures can I take?

Appropriate hand hygiene as shown on the [Public Health hand hygiene leaflet](#), the correct use of PPE and keeping safe distances where possible will reduce the potential for contamination.

Resources for those working in domiciliary care settings is available from the [Government website COVID-19: how to work safely in domiciliary care in England](#). This includes information on how PPE can be used to increase safety whilst working in direct payment users' homes.

A [resource for those working in childcare settings](#) is available on the Government website. This includes infection control and safe working practices, PPE, cleaning, supporting children with complex medical needs, and the NHS test and trace system.

For more information on what PPE to wear and when please refer to the [Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\) illustrated guide for community and social care settings](#)

Question	Answer
	<p>For more information on a COVID secure, safe working place please see “How do I make my home safe for a PA to work in” within the Direct Payment User section of this document.</p> <p>If you or the cared for person have concerns about your health and safety at work, you can raise them with any union safety representatives, Health and Safety Executive or by calling Children’s Services on 0300 123 4043 and speaking to your social care team.</p> <p>Guidance update issued on 10/4/21 that PPE should be changed after each procedure or task, not just between different people being cared for, this applies in personal domestic settings as well as care homes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within 2 metres and carrying out direct personal care or domestic duties: Gloves, Apron, IIR, Eye protection (when risk of body fluids) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Gloves: ‘must be changed between every contact with another person and while working with the same resident, also after using gloves for other activities e.g. cleaning, immediately after completion of a procedure or task and after each person being cared for, and then wash your hands ○ Aprons: ‘must dispose of them immediately after completion of a procedure or task and after each resident, and then wash your hands. ○ IIR Masks: ‘disposed of after giving personal care to each resident, and a new fluid-repellent surgical mask applied when giving personal care to another resident.’ ○ Eye protection: Face shield (visor) or goggles where there is risk of droplets or body fluids reaching the eyes (e.g. caring for a positive patient’ • Recommendations apply for personal care regardless of whether they have tested positive or not, or had the vaccine
<p>I am a PA (employed or self employed); do I still get paid if I have to shield?</p>	<p>Yes. Please follow Government guidelines on shielding and call us to arrange for your cared for person to be supported on 0300 123 4043 (Children’s Services).</p> <p>The person who receives the Direct Payment should continue to pay you as normal and we arrange to pay for additional care if needed.</p>
<p>I am a PA; do I still get paid if I have to go into 10 - or 14-day isolation</p>	<p>Yes. Please follow NHS guidelines and call us to arrange for your cared for person to be supported on 0300 123 4043 (Children’s Services).</p> <p>The person who receives the Direct Payment should continue to pay you as normal and we arrange to pay for additional care if needed.</p>
<p>I am a PA (employed or self-employed); do I still get paid if</p>	<p>Yes. Consider if you can support them remotely such as keeping in touch by telephone or video call, shopping or collecting prescriptions. If you have concerns about this decision and feel the person you care for may be at risk, please call their social care team.</p>

Question	Answer
<p>the person I care for <i>has decided</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they do not need my support as they are isolating for 10 or 14 days? • They are Shielding and have decided to cease support • They have temporarily arranged for family and friends to support them to reduce contact 	<p>You may be able to work these paid hours by supporting other families temporarily who are in need of support, we are encouraging PAs to register for redeployment opportunities. Please email directpayment@leonardcheshire.org or call 01462 439 000 if you do not have access to email to register for redeployment opportunities.</p> <p>You and your employer can check to see whether the 'furlough' rules apply. The advice is regularly updated however our understanding of the current position is that the Government's expectation is that all roles which are funded from the public purse will not be furloughed, the expectation is that workers will continue to be paid and either do their regular job or be redeployed.</p>
<p>I am a PA on a zero hours contract or work varied hours, how will my sick pay be calculated?</p>	<p>Your average pay should be calculated using the last 3 months, this is the sum you will be paid for Covid related leave.</p>
<p>I am a PA, am I classified as a keyworker?</p>	<p>Yes, your payslip or contract of employment will confirm this. If you need further evidence for essential travel, shopping or schooling, please email Leonard Cheshire on directpayment@leonardcheshire.org for a verification letter.</p>
<p>Can PAs be tested for Covid-19?</p>	<p>Yes, as essential workers, you must apply for priority testing through GOV.UK by following the guidance on testing for essential workers: Arrange a test for a PA</p> <p>If you are not able to travel to get a test, you can order a test delivered to your door which are now available through GOV.UK.</p> <p>For more information, please check here: www.hcpa.info/covid-19/ or call the Provider Hub on 01707 708108 if you are unsure.</p>
<p>I am a PA and feel my mental health is under pressure</p>	<p>Our Frontline offers round-the-clock one-to-one support, by call or text, from trained volunteers, plus resources, tips and ideas to look after your mental health.</p>

Question	Answer
	<p>Keeping in touch via video apps: The Evening Standard has produced a list of eight video messaging apps to download if you are self-isolating.</p> <p>MARCH network A network supporting mental health during these unique times.</p>
<p>I am a PA, what training is available to me during this time?</p>	<p>Skills for Care have identified essential training to support PA's in their role through digital solutions. The training is available as three individual packages of learning, rapid induction programme (aimed at new staff), refresher training (aimed at existing staff) and a volunteer programme. This is aimed at people supporting adults but may be useful for the children's workforce too.</p> <p>Health Education England (HEE) e-LfH has created an e-learning programme in response to COVID which is free to access, without logging in, for the health and care workforce. This can be found by following this link: Access the Health Education England course.</p>
<p>I am a PA and I wish to resign, what do I do?</p>	<p>Leonard Cheshire can advise you on the terms and conditions of your contract. Please email directpayment@leonardcheshire.org or call 01462 439 000.</p>

I am a Direct Payment User:

Question	Answer
<p>I receive a Direct Payment to pay for my child's care, should I continue to pay the PA if they have to go into a 10 or 14-day isolation period</p>	<p>No. You will be able to be refunded for necessary SSP paid to self-isolating PAs. SSP will be paid out through payroll and claimed back via HMRC. If you use a payroll provider, they will deal with this for you. This refund will be for up to 2 weeks per employee. See the employer guide to sick pay.</p> <p>If you use payroll software to run your payroll yourself, then you will be required to pay SSP to your PA from your direct payment and reclaim this from HMRC.</p> <p>There are no limits on the amount of times SSP can be claimed for.</p>

Question	Answer
	<p>If replacement care is required during the isolation period, please call 0300 123 4043 (Children) and talk to your social care team.</p>
<p>I receive a Direct Payment to pay for my child’s care, if I decide to cancel the PA because I have to go into 10 or 14-day isolation, do I still pay the PA?</p>	<p>Yes. If you receive essential care in your home, then PAs should continue to visit you. You may wish to use your direct payment flexibly or differently to get the support you need.</p> <p>Consider ways that you can be supported remotely by your PA such as keeping in touch by telephone or video call or asking them to do your shopping or collect your prescriptions.</p> <p>How much pay your PA receives will depend on the nature of the employment contract. Please contact Leonard Cheshire for advice.</p> <p>You and your employee can check to see whether the ‘furlough’ rules apply. The advice is regularly updated however our understanding of the current position is that the Government’s expectation is that all roles which are funded from the public purse will not be furloughed, the expectation is that workers will continue to be paid and either do their regular job or be redeployed. If you are self-funding additional support then different expectations may apply. As the employer, if it applies, you are responsible for applying for it.</p>
<p>I receive a Direct Payment to pay for my child’s care, should I continue to pay the PA if they have to self-isolate because they are in the Shielded category</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p>We will make sure you have enough money in your direct payment account to pay your usual carer if they are shielding and for a new carer if needed.</p> <p>Call 0300 123 4043 (Children) to talk to your case worker about replacement care and Direct Payment amendments.</p> <p>PAs who usually support other families may be available for redeployment to support other families temporarily who are in need of support, we are encouraging PAs to register for redeployment opportunities. Please email directpayment@leonardcheshire.org or call 01462 439 000 if you are seeking a redeployed PA to support you.</p>
<p>I receive a Direct Payment to pay for my child’s care, should I continue to pay the</p>	<p>Yes. You can use your direct payment flexibly or differently to get the support you need.</p> <p>Consider ways that you can be supported remotely by your PA such as keeping in touch by telephone or video call or asking them to do your shopping or collect your prescriptions.</p>

Question	Answer
<p>PA if I decide to cancel the PA if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have to self- isolate because I am in the Shielded category • I am getting support from family or friends to reduce contact and/or providing all the support myself 	<p>How much pay your PA receives will depend on the nature of the employment contract. Please contact Leonard Cheshire for advice.</p> <p>You and your employee can check to see whether the ‘furlough’ rules apply. The advice is regularly updated however our understanding of the current position is that the Government’s expectation is that all roles which are funded from the public purse will not be furloughed, the expectation is that workers will continue to be paid and either do their regular job or be redeployed. If you are self-funding additional support then different expectations may apply. As the employer, if it applies, you are responsible for applying for it.</p> <p>Check if you could be covered by the government coronavirus job retention scheme</p>
<p>How do I make my home a safe place for a PA to work in?</p>	<p>There are certain steps you can take to promote a safe home for yourself and workplace for your PA including cleaning and disinfecting objects and surfaces that are touched regularly, washing hands with soap regularly and having a hand sanitiser available.</p> <p>Find out more in the Health and Safety Executive guidance on Cleaning, hygiene and hand washing. For more information on creating a safe place during COVID, please access Working safely during the coronavirus outbreak - a short guide (PDF) and PAs returning to work & safety of individual employers who have been shielding</p> <p>If you feel a risk assessment would help assess risk and promote safety, then there is a useful template available from the Health and Safety Executive: What to include in your COVID-19 risk assessment (PDF) - Portable Document Format</p> <p>Guidance update issued on 10/4/21 that PPE should be changed after each procedure or task, not just between different people being cared for, this applies in personal domestic settings as well as care homes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within 2 metres and carrying out direct personal care or domestic duties: Gloves, Apron, IIR, Eye protection (when risk of body fluids) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Gloves: ‘must be changed between every contact with another person and while working with the same resident, also after using gloves for other activities e.g. cleaning, immediately after completion of a procedure or task and after each person being cared for, and then wash your hands ○ Aprons: ‘must dispose of them immediately after completion of a procedure or task and after each resident, and then wash your hands. ○ IIR Masks: ‘disposed of after giving personal care to each resident, and a new fluid-repellent surgical mask applied when giving personal care to another resident.’ ○ Eye protection: Face shield (visor) or goggles where there is risk of droplets or body fluids reaching the eyes (e.g. caring for a positive patient’

Question	Answer
<p>Where can I access PPE for my PAs to use whether or not my child has symptoms?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations apply for personal care regardless of whether they have tested positive or not, or had the vaccine <p>The Government has made PPE free of charge to Direct Payment Holders until March 2021. Free PPE only covers additional PPE your PA(s) needs due to Covid, and not the usual PPE that you may have been using before Covid. You should attempt to buy any usual non-covid related PPE equipment through your regular supplier.</p> <p>Please order your Covid PPE online at https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/ppepa If you do not have access to the internet, you can call Leonard Cheshire, on 01462 439000 who will fill in the form for you.</p> <p>If your care includes an aerosol generating procedure (AGP), you will need specialist PPE. When you click into https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/ppepa to fill out your form, you will be guided clearly. If you require specialist PPE because AGP procedures are taking place, FFP3 masks are advised because of the risks presented by COVID-19 and this will require Fit Testing for these masks. Once the form has been completed, and if you have said yes to being in receipt of an AGP someone will be in touch with you to arrange for the masks and fit testing.</p> <p>It is important to wear the correct PPE during this pandemic, particularly with a more virulent strain of the virus in circulation, and we would like to stress the importance of wearing the correct protection to help reduce the risk of contracting COVID-19.</p> <p>Please contact Leonard Cheshire on 01462 439000 if you have any further questions.</p> <p>Any problems with delivery of ordered items please email: PPEInfo@Hertfordshire.gov.uk</p> <p>There are PPE guidelines on the government website on the correct procedures to follow. There is also a simpler illustrated PPE guide on the government website.</p> <p>There are specific guidance documents for aerosol generating procedures (AGPs) such as coughing, spitting, suctioning, tracheostomy care, ventilation. There are AGP guidelines on the government website on the correct procedures to follow.</p> <p>If you or your PA cannot get PPE in this way, your direct payment is not set up to fund PPE, or different/additional PPE needed during the COVID-19 pandemic cannot be funded through your existing</p>

Question	Answer
	<p>direct payment, please call 0300 123 4043 (Children) to talk to your social care team who will explore this further and ensure you are getting the correct PPE.</p>
<p>My PA is not practising social distancing in their personal life, what can I do?</p>	<p>You should discuss this with your PA. You should keep a record of your discussion and what has been agreed between you both. If your PA continues to refuse to practice social distancing in line with government advice, it might be appropriate to take disciplinary action. If you require support about employer and/or employee rights and terms and conditions of the PA's contract, please contact Leonard Cheshire on directpayment@leonardcheshire.org or call 01462 439 000</p> <p>It is important that all involved in your care and support understand the importance of social distancing. There's an increased risk on both you, and them, if they do not do this.</p>
<p>My PA does not want to come to work because they cannot practice social distancing while providing care, what can I do?</p>	<p>You should speak with your PA about their concerns and explain to them what has been put in place to support you both safely, in line with guidance.</p> <p>However, there are some tasks where social distancing will not be possible, for example if your PA is providing personal care. In these circumstances, it is important that your PA wears the required PPE and follows the additional infection control procedures that are in place and highlighted within this document. Doing this can help to reduce fears.</p> <p>Support is available to help you decide on the best course of action based on your circumstances. Please call your social care team on 0300 123 4043 (Children).</p>
<p>Will my direct payment be reviewed during COVID?</p>	<p>Reviews will be completed during the pandemic. Records should be kept as normal so they are available when the next review takes place. As is normal practice, you should keep hold of any receipts or evidence that shows how the direct payment has been used.</p> <p>If you are concerned that the amount allocated to you within your direct payment is not enough, or is too much, you should speak to your social care team by calling 0300 123 4043 (Children).</p>
<p>Where can I get help in finding a PA if my child's usual support isn't available?</p>	<p>Our Short Break Local Offer activities are not available at the moment however the provider organisations are setting up online activities for children to enjoy and providing updates as things change.</p> <p>Call 0300 123 4043 (Children) to talk to our social work team about replacement care and Direct Payment amendments.</p>

Question	Answer
	<p>Leonard Cheshire are maintaining a PA Register which can be used to access support from PA's who are seeking redeployment opportunities. Please email directpayment@leonardcheshire.org or call 01462 439 000. HCC is encouraging staff who usually work within SBLO settings to register if they are available to offer individual support. Redeployment is on a voluntary basis because the PA will continue to be paid by their main employing service user or organisation. Leonard Cheshire do not offer a matching service but you will be given contact details of potential PAs available to support.</p> <p>Your child's school or college may be able to redeploy staff to support you.</p> <p>#TeamHerts Volunteering are coordinating the countywide volunteering efforts and are busy matching volunteers to people and organisations in need of support. Their advice if you need support for yourself or another Hertfordshire resident is to contact Herts Help (see below).</p>
<p>What other support is available to help while we are in lockdown / social distancing?</p>	<p>The KIDS Hub will be able to help you with ideas, support for yourself as a parent carer, and advice on a range of issues you may be experiencing as well as offering practical help. Information about the services offered can be found on their website.</p> <p>Phone: 01923 676549 (West) and 01992 504013 (East).</p> <p>Email: hub.herts@kids.org.uk Twitter: @KIDSHUBHerts</p> <p>You can also join their KIDS Hub Facebook Group This is a useful way for parent carers to share ideas and solutions.</p> <p>This can be useful for parents keeping in the loop and communicating with other parents. It's a private group, so you follow the link to send a join request and KIDS will add you.</p> <p>KIDS are posting useful tips and ideas to keep children busy and help families cope with the current situation daily. As well as resources for parents to use with children they are including things about self-care and maintaining wellbeing and information about support organisations for example domestic violence, mental health etc.</p> <p>Other support from KIDS includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sleep Support – KIDS have a qualified sleep practitioner who offers sleep support to families. This is being done via email, post and phone at the moment.

Question

Answer

- Visual resources to help families manage day to day activities, routines and specific activities with their children. For example, using images that KIDS have or families own pictures, KIDS can help create visual timetables, social stories, now and next boards, pictures and symbols. At the moment KIDS are producing these and posting out to parents who can't print things at home.
- Updates in the form of mail-outs, with details of resources and other information that might be of interest to families.
- Helping with forms and letters about children including DLA and other benefit claims, EHC needs assessment applications and other forms.
- Explaining Short Breaks Local Offer options and signposting to specialist services for children and support services for parent carers.
- No Stay and Play sessions, but the Toy and Equipment Library is still available. Though the HUBs are closed to visitors if parents need any specialist equipment to help them cope with these difficult times you can contact the KIDS HUBs and they will do their best to make reasonable arrangements for you to safely pick up the items.
- Supporting parents with applications or in meetings about their child via conference call or video call - for example Way Forward meetings, Annual Review Meetings and consultation with Paediatricians.

Whilst the Herts Help service is primarily focussed on adult service users, parent carers are also welcome to call. They may signpost you to Leonard Cheshire, and they may also know of other services through their extensive knowledge of the Hertfordshire Directory and may be able to support and advise you with issues you are experiencing related to your own health and wellbeing as a carer or financial circumstances for example. Please email Herts Help on info@hertshelp.net or phone 0300 123 4044.

[Carers in Hertfordshire](#) also offer support and information to unpaid family and friends who look after someone, their services include:

- Providing the space for you to discuss practical and emotional concerns around caring and opportunities to share experiences with others.
- Providing the information you need to make choices about your life and caring role and the opportunity to have your voice heard by the people who plan services that affect your life.
- A range of free workshops and training related to caring, but also courses and learning events to help with your life outside caring through our Carers and Learning project.

Call: 01992 58 69 69

[YC Hertfordshire](#) is offering:

- [SEND Youth Projects in each district](#)

Question	Answer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online group work • One to one support (email / phone) • 8 Youth Access Points are open for information, advice, guidance and support across the county • Detached youth work support in the community
<p>I want to stop the direct payment, what should I do?</p>	<p>Please call 0300 123 4043 (Children) to talk to your case worker or the duty worker who will explore this further and ensure you are getting the right amount of help to meet your care and support needs.</p>
<p>Should I continue to pay my Client Contribution if my usual support services have ceased?</p>	<p>Please contact 0300 123 4042 (Adults) for more information, this only applies to people over 18 years old who are receiving direct payments through Adult Care Services and where the person makes a financial contribution towards the cost of their care.</p>
<p>I want to end the employment of my PA</p>	<p>Leonard Cheshire can advise you on the terms and conditions of your contract. Please email directpayment@leonardcheshire.org or call 01462 439 000 you might also contact your public insurer model.</p>

Activities funded by Direct Payments:

Question	Answer
<p>My child usually uses commissioned short break services, some of which are currently offering reduced availability. I could employ a PA to provide support. Can I be given increased direct payments, or start to receive direct payments?</p>	<p>Hertfordshire County Council recognises that services have only been able to continue supporting families because Covid safe measures are in place at every setting. By being vigilant and consistent we can minimise the risk of infection and protect children and staff.</p> <p>HCC is not limiting the number of clubs / providers that CYP can attend as the current Government guidance does not set a limit of the number of settings children and young people can attend. However, we stress that the national guidance strongly encourages families to be mindful of the current risks and take the necessary steps to protect themselves and the community by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limiting the number of settings their child(ren) attend to minimise the risk of infection - Ensuring that children who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does or have been advised by NHS Test and Trace to self-isolate, do not attend Short Breaks activities

Question	Answer
	<p>Our Short Break Local Offer providers are offering online activities for children to enjoy as well as offering some physical sessions with reduced availability to ensure compliance with covid guidelines. Please keep checking online for updates as things change.</p> <p>Please call 0300 123 4043 (Children) to talk to your case worker who will explore this further and ensure you are getting the right amount of help to meet your care and support needs.</p> <p>If your child is not currently open to the 0-25 Together Service, you would need to request an assessment to find out whether you are eligible for specialist support. Please call 0300 123 4043 (Children).</p>
<p>I am currently not receiving any service for my child due to coronavirus restrictions. Can I use the direct payments to pay for activities or equipment at home?</p>	<p>If you wish to use your direct payments to pay for suitable alternative activities and resources that will help your son or daughter and have a focus on positive outcomes for your child, you can do so and during coronavirus restrictions / social distancing you can spend up to a total of £250 without needing to check with your case worker.</p> <p>Please retain all receipts and invoices with your direct payment records.</p> <p>Please speak to your case worker, Duty Worker or Brokerage if you want to spend more than £250.</p> <p>If you want further information on how to stay safe whilst accessing your community, the Government has provided guidelines on staying safe outside your home and you can check whether your area is in local lockdown.</p> <p>Examples of resources might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchasing online services or streaming. Please check the Terms & Conditions that you can opt out at any time and are not committing your direct payments to a long-term contract when you will want to use them for your usual support again in future. • Purchasing art and craft resources, games and toys, outdoor play items, sensory toys • Electronic devices such as tablets <p>HCC does not have an approved list, creating one would be too time consuming and delay access to resources that will be supportive. Please take reasonable and responsible steps to ensure what you are buying is legal, suitable and appropriate for your child, as well as providing value for money.</p> <p>Some useful sources of ideas and information (other sources are available) might include some of those below, whilst some are educational, they can provide great ideas for games and activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIDS Hub and SENDIASS

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your child’s school • https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize or www.bbc.co.uk/teach • www.weareteachers.com • The Education Detective online and on Facebook • The Imagination Tree online and on Facebook • Chatterpack online with an extensive list of resources on their Chatterpack blog • Sparkle Box for online SEND resources • Monkey Wellbeing to help children and young people with new experiences • SpeechLink Multimedia Ltd (for speech and language games) • Time to come in Bear – A short story to help explain social distancing <p>As well as the above resources, our Local Offer has a resources area packed full of educational resources and entertaining ideas to help support both families and professionals.</p> <p>The Children’s Direct Payment policy explains what cannot be purchased with direct payments, including household bills, food shopping, fuel, gambling etc and items of equipment that are provided by the NHS.</p>
<p>My child’s regular activity has stopped running because of Covid -19, should I continue to use the Direct Payment to pay the provider?</p>	<p>Yes. Activity providers have been asked to offer different types of services during this pandemic so that everyone can follow guidelines about social distancing or shielding.</p> <p>Continuing with these arrangements will support the provider during these challenging times and strengthen them for the future.</p> <p>Call 0300 123 4043 (Children) to talk to your case worker about replacement care and Direct Payment amendments.</p>
<p>My child’s regular community activity has stopped running, can I use the Direct Payment for something else?</p>	<p>Yes. Please take every opportunity to use your money as creatively and flexibly as you can to support your needs. You can call your case worker for advice: 0300 123 4043 (Children).</p> <p>If you are invoiced by your regular provider, you must continue to pay them even if you are not using their remote support.</p>
<p>I am a children’s services provider and we have had to</p>	<p>Please try and diversify your current offer to include online and remote support to your clients and continue to invoice them as normal.</p>

Question	Answer
<p>stop our regular activities because of Covid-19 guidelines. Can we still get Direct Payment funding?</p>	<p>Providers commissioned by the 0-25 SEND Commissioning Team in Children’s Services should contact the commissioning team by email at csf.commissioning@Hertfordshire.gov.uk</p> <p>For and issues or general advice please refer to the Provider Hub.</p>
<p>Should I continue to pay my Client Contribution if my usual support services have ceased?</p>	<p>Please contact 0300 123 4042 (Adults) for more information, this only applies to people over 18 years old who are receiving direct payments through Adult Care Services and where the person makes a financial contribution towards the cost of their care.</p>
<p>All direct payment use</p>	
<p>What happens if we can’t use our direct payments – will HCC ask for them back?</p>	<p>At the moment HCC’s focus is on ensuring children, young people, adult service users and their families receive the support you need.</p> <p>We have not decided what will happen. It is possible we may need to ask for the return of an excess build up of funds and as always individual circumstances will need to be taken into consideration.</p>