

DaCE Cumbria 6th of November 2020

Fact sheet for people using Direct Payments during the Coronavirus crisis

DaCE Cumbria support service will remain open for advice, guidance and information. We've had to stop face to face meetings and all our employees are now working from home. Please bear with us during this difficult time. We're dealing with more queries, but rest assured we will help you in any way we can as soon as we can.

Independent Living Services
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Time sheets: It would be really helpful if you could email in your timesheets, or take a photo of your time sheet and then email this to us. It will now take us longer to process timesheets that are posted to us, so if you need to post in your timesheets please post these as early as you possibly can.

The Coronavirus crisis is changing quickly so we're updating our website with the latest information as we get it: <https://carlisle Disability.org/coronavirus/>

We're also posting lots of useful information on facebook: @disabilityassociation and twitter: @DaCumbria

Do share any useful resources that you find with us over facebook and twitter!

If you do not have access to a computer or the internet and you need copies of the guidance listed below please contact your co-ordinator and if it's possible they will print out the document and send it to you.

Be prepared:

There are some things you can do to get ready if you are taken ill, or if your PA is taken ill, or can no longer work for you because they are in self-isolation.

Emergency contact list. Make sure you have an emergency contact list and that it is up to date. You could include PA's contact details and emergency contact numbers, as well as contact details for your social worker, Clinical Commissioning Group and a contingency care agency.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): You should follow Government guidelines on cleaning, hygiene and use of PPE (face masks, gloves, hand sanitiser, etc) to protect yourself and the people who support you.

This is the latest Government advice on the use of Personal Protective Equipment **(PPE) for Personal Assistants:**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-people-receiving-direct-payments/coronavirus-covid-19-qa-for-people-receiving-a-personal-budget-or-personal-health-budget#personal-protective-equipment-ppe>

Cumbria County Council has also put together a list of suppliers of PPE (15/5/20):

Nexon Group	Covid-19@nexongroup.co.uk	
Wright Health Group	nhsorders@wright-cottrell.co.uk	01382 834557
Trycare Ltd	Mark.Hackin@trycare.co.uk	01274 885544
Careshop	coronavirus@careshop.co.uk	
Blueleaf	emergencystock@blueleafcare.com	03300 552288
Delivernet	lee.morris@delivernet.co.uk	01756 706050
Countywide Healthcare	enquiries@countywidehealthcare.co.uk	01226 719090

If you are in receipt of direct payments or a personal health budget and use these for a personal assistant who does not already receive Personal Protective Equipment

(PPE) from the NHS or other sources then you can access PPE through **Cumbria County Councils Emergency PPE Helpline**. The helpline can be contacted between 9.00 and 17.00 Monday to Friday and 10.00 to 14.00 at the weekend. The number for the Emergency PPE Helpline is **0800 783 1967**.

3) Training for PA's

It's important that PA's have up to date infection prevention training, this is available electronically through DaCE Cumbria. If you use Direct Payments or Personal Health Budgets to pay for your care you can use these budgets to cover the cost of training your PA's. To book training please contact the following people:

West Cumbria: Angela Woodburn Tel: 01946 825550, angelawdace@aol.com

North Cumbria: Kieron Park 07956 633546, kieronparkdace@aol.com

South Cumbria: Alexandria Johnston, ajohnstondace@aol.com

Health Education England has also produced a range of materials and resources for health and social care employees on coronavirus / covid-19:

https://www.nhsemployers.org/news/2020/03/covid-19-elearning?utm_source=Twitter&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=SocialSignIn&utm_source=Twitter&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=SocialSignIn

4) Coronavirus testing

Everyone in England can now access tests. **If you or someone you live with have any of the symptoms of Coronavirus you must all stay at home and arrange to have a test** to see if you have Coronavirus. You can arrange testing through the NHS website:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-for-coronavirus/>

Up to date information on the different **testing sites in Cumbria and how to book a test** can be accessed here: <https://www.northcumbriaccg.nhs.uk/covidtesting>

Personal Assistants (PA) who support individuals who use Direct Payments or Personal Health Budgets are essential frontline workers. If you are a PA and you have symptoms of coronavirus (you are symptomatic), or if you think you have been exposed to coronavirus recently (you are asymptomatic). In both circumstances you should get tested as quickly as possible. The test is most effective in the first three days of infection; however the test can still be effective for up to five days. If you are a PA and you support someone you can self-register for a test, or be referred by your employer. You can go to a drive through testing centre, or apply for a home delivered test.

More information on the **Government's testing programme and home testing kits** can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested>

Free antibody testing is now available for PA's and anyone employed in adult social care. It's a voluntary blood test which detects antibodies to the COVID-19 virus to see if you have

previously had the virus. The results of the antibody test will support academic research and will help to better understand COVID-19 and how it has spread. Antibody testing is available for adult social care staff through local NHS sites, there is also a new at-home antibody test: <https://www.gov.uk/register-coronavirus-antibody-test>

5) Guidance on homecare provision: The Government has also produced guidance on Home care provision. The document answers frequently asked questions:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-providing-home-care>

6) Government guidance on Direct Payments / Personal Health Budgets / Personal Budgets: The Government has also produced some guidance that answers frequently asked questions, this document is being updated regularly:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-people-receiving-direct-payments?utm_source=d5497089-2c34-47da-8cc5-29b406055aae&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

There's also a shorter guide from the Government with the **seven most important things that you need to know if you're using Direct Payments:**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-people-receiving-direct-payments/people-receiving-direct-payments-and-those-they-employ-quick-read>

7) Guidance for people who are clinically extremely vulnerable

If you're clinically extremely vulnerable you will have received a letter from the Government advising you to take extra precautions during the first wave of the pandemic in England. This was known as 'shielding'. The Government has produced some new advice ahead of the second lock down in November, which explains what you now need to do.

Over this period, the Government is advising the clinically extremely vulnerable to work from home. If you cannot work from home, you are advised not to go to work and may be eligible for Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) or Employment Support Allowance (ESA). You are encouraged to stay at home as much as possible, but are encouraged to go outside for exercise. The Government will write to everybody who is clinically extremely vulnerable to set out detailed advice while the new restrictions are in place.

The full guidance is available from the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

8) Guidance for people more at risk from Coronavirus

If you are over 60 or clinically vulnerable, you could be at higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus. You should be especially careful to follow the rules and minimise your contacts

with others; should continue to wash your hands carefully and more frequently than usual and maintain thorough cleaning of frequently touched areas in your home and/or workspace.

Clinically vulnerable people are those who are:

- aged 70 or over (regardless of medical conditions)
- under 70 with an underlying health condition listed below (that is, anyone instructed to get a flu jab each year on medical grounds):
- chronic (long-term) mild to moderate respiratory diseases, such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema or bronchitis
- chronic heart disease, such as heart failure
- chronic kidney disease
- chronic liver disease, such as hepatitis
- chronic neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis (MS) or cerebral palsy
- diabetes
- a weakened immune system as the result of certain conditions or medicines they are taking (such as steroid tablets)
- being seriously overweight (a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or above)
- pregnant

Plan ahead:

Talk to the people who support you: Have a conversation with your PA(s) about how you might manage different situations before you need to. If you have a team of PA's how could they change their working rota to reduce the number of people coming into your home? Also plan how PA absences could be covered.

Do a support task list: Do a list of tasks that need to be completed every day, week and month. Mark if these tasks are essential, important or whether you could do without them. This will help you if you need to get someone different to support you at short notice.

Think about who could help you out: Think about who is around you who could help you out. This might be friends, family, people you know or your social worker. You could share your plans with them in case you need support.

Food & supplies: Make sure you've got enough food and supplies. Some supermarkets now have special hours for older people and people with additional needs. If your PA does your shopping you might need a letter explaining that your PA is doing essential work for you. Your Co-ordinator can email you or post you a letter explaining that your PA is doing essential work.

Medication: Make sure you have medication you need and know where you can get supplies if you need them. Many pharmacies are now offering home delivery services for people who are very vulnerable to coronavirus.

Keeping safe: There are lots of local groups, organisations and individuals offering to help at the moment. This is wonderful and we're sure that the vast majority of people offering to help are doing so for the right reasons. However there have been some scams popping up. Government organised volunteering schemes should organise things more and provide a greater level of security.

Looking after your mental health: The coronavirus outbreak is going to have an impact on everyone's daily lives, with people social distancing and staying at home. You may also feel low, worried, anxious, or be concerned about your health or that of those close to you. Everyone reacts differently to events and changes in the way that we think, feel and behave vary between different people and over time. It's important that you take care of your mind as well as your body during this time and to get further support if you need it. Mind has some useful guidance and tips about things you can do to help your wellbeing.

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/>

If you're working in Care it can be hard to prioritise your mental health while you're caring for others in such a difficult situation. **Mental Health at Work is also offering text & phone support for Social Care workers:**

<https://www.mentalhealthatwork.org.uk/toolkit/ourfrontline-socialcare/>

Bereavement advice and support:

If someone you know has died, the NHS Bereavement Helpline offers support and advice to families, friends and carers. Nurses on the helpline can give you advice, guidance and practical support during this difficult time. The helpline is open every day from 8am to 8pm
Tel: 0800 2600 400

The NHS website also has lots of helpful information on bereavement at this difficult time:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/bereavement-advice-and-support/>

Other sources of support

Cumbria County Council has a helpline for residents who need urgent help finding food and essential items, or if they are struggling to cope with their current situation for whatever reason. Helpline No: 0800 783 1966 (Monday to Thursday 9am to 5pm, Friday 9am to 4.30pm). You can also email COVID19support@cumbria.gov.uk and you will receive a response within one working day. Cumbria County Council has also put together a directory of other sources of support that are available in Cumbria:

<https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/welfare/default.asp>

DaCE Cumbria helpline: Our helpline for disabled people and carers in Cumbria is now open. We can help with any queries that you have on disability issues. Richard looks after our helpline and he would be happy to help you. **Telephone Number: 07768 997437**
Email: rmullen.dace@aol.com Opening hours: 11am – 2pm Monday – Friday. At other times please leave a message and we will call you back.

Examples of the type of support we can offer includes:

- Travel – Blue badge scheme, free bus passes and mask exemptions on public transport
- Shopping – Support schemes due to covid-19, online shopping help and food hubs/banks
- Support schemes – befriending schemes, mental health support and general chit chat
- Grants & advice on saving money – Support to apply for hardship grants, low cost energy tariffs and home adaptation grants
- Rights – Advice on disabled people's rights to access things like services.

Employment Issues

ACAS have produced advice for employers and employees on Coronavirus (COVID-19). The advice is updated daily and is the best place to access information on employment issues.

<https://www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus>

The ACAS guidance includes guidance on the following:

- 1) If an employee does not want to go to work
- 2) Vulnerable people who are at high risk
- 3) Self isolation and sick pay
- 4) Furloughed workers
- 5) If an employee needs time off work to look after someone
- 6) School Closures
- 7) If someone with Coronavirus comes to work.

You can access more detailed guidance on statutory sick pay here, including what to do if you are not entitled to statutory sick pay: <https://www.gov.uk/statutory-sick-pay/eligibility>

If you are self-employed there is a coronavirus **Self-employment Income Support Scheme**. Individuals can apply for a grant from the scheme using the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-a-grant-through-the-coronavirus-covid-19-self-employment-income-support-scheme>

Mark Bates Ltd who provide your insurance have a free helpline which you should call if you need any further advice or support with employing Personal Assistants: Tel: 0161 603 2167.

There is now Government guidance on the **management of staff and exposed patients or residents in health and social care settings according to exposures, symptoms and test results**. This guidance contains information about what to do in a range of circumstances, such as if a staff member develops coronavirus, return to work criteria and risk assessment information.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-management-of-exposed-healthcare-workers-and-patients-in-hospital-settings/covid-19-management-of-exposed-healthcare-workers-and-patients-in-hospital-settings>

Death in service benefit for social care staff. Staff performing vital frontline social care work during the COVID-19 outbreak may be eligible for a life assurance scheme. If they meet the qualifying work-related criteria for the scheme and die due to COVID-19, a lump sum payment of £60,000 will be made to their estate. It will cover staff who provide hands-on personal care for people who have contracted coronavirus, or work in health or care settings where the virus is present. Within social care, the scheme will include directly employed carers including personal assistants.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-guarantee-on-death-in-service-benefits-for-frontline-health-and-care-staff-during-pandemic>

Coronavirus (COVID-19): **bereavement scheme for family members of NHS and health and social care workers:** If you're a non-EEA family member of any NHS worker, including support staff, or a healthcare or social care worker who has died as a result of coronavirus, you will receive immediate indefinite leave to remain, free of charge.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-bereavement-scheme-for-family-members-of-nhs-and-health-and-social-care-workers>

International health and care staff are now exempt from the immigration health surcharge (IHS). IHS is a charge that is used towards the cost of the NHS. Individuals must apply online to get the exemption. Overseas NHS and care workers can also apply online to claim a reimbursement for some charges they have already paid:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/health-and-care-staff-can-claim-immigration-health-surcharge-reimbursement>