



OAKLAND
— CARE LTD —

Live, Love and Be Loved

Dear Relative / Resident,

18th March 2020

Further to my letter dated 13th March, I am writing to provide you with a further update on the steps we are taking to reduce the risk and impact of Coronavirus in our Care Homes.

As I outlined previously, this is an evolving situation and in order to prioritise the safety and welfare of our residents, staff and visitors we continue to take guidance and advice from the Department of Health and Public Health England.

We understand that this is a very worrying time for relatives and we would like to reassure you that we are doing over and above everything that is required in line with national guidance.

Restricting Visiting

In my previous letter, I asked for your support in stopping non-essential visits to our Care Homes.

Today, the board have taken a decision to now close all our homes to all visits **with immediate effect**. The only exception to this will be if your loved one becomes critically ill or is nearing end of life. If you feel you have the need to make this type of exceptional visit, you should telephone and discuss this with the Home Manager. The visit request will then be referred for approval by the Director of Operations.

No visitors will be permitted to enter without prior approval so please do not attend the Care Home unannounced.

This decision aligns with the Prime Ministers advice earlier this week for people over the age of 70 to be shielded and avoid visits from friends and family members.

We recognise that this is a significant decision to take, and that this will be unwelcome news for some people, however the risk to safety is too high and as you would expect of us, we need to do everything possible to protect lives.

Our homes all have tablet devices available for skype calls and I would urge you to utilise this in order to maintain visual contact with loved ones. Skype appointments are in 15-minute pre-bookable slots between the hours of 2pm and 4.30pm. If you wish to book a slot please contact the reception staff at the home who will arrange this for you. A dedicated team member will be allocated to host Skype calls during these times.

Entertainers

All visiting entertainment will cease with immediate effect. We will continue as much as possible to provide a range of stimulating activities using our own team members.

Standard Precautions

A range of measures continue to be in place including, a robust policy and risk assessment, screening of staff illnesses and holding of increased stock of cleaning products, dried & frozen foods, alcohol gel, gloves and aprons. Staff rooms are now closed so that staff do not mix unnecessarily. Staff will dine with residents and an allocated area on each household will be used for breaks.

Following the advice of our Prime Minister earlier this week, our London office is now closed with all team members working remotely. Calls are diverted to our Office Manager during working hours, therefore any enquiries you may have can be effectively responded to as normal.

Staffing Contingencies

We are continuing to monitor the number of staff isolating and staff sickness. We also have contingencies in place to have staff stay overnight at each home should the availability of staff decline.

However, should the pandemic escalate to an extent where we experience **extreme** staffing shortages, we may need to take unprecedented measures to maintain basic care. This may include measures such as:

1. Asking residents to spend as much time as possible in communal areas so that non intimate care (dining, drinks, safety checks etc.) can be delivered to more people in less time.
2. Changing our menus to serve simpler meals which are quicker and easier to make. This may be especially necessary if multiple kitchen staff are sick
3. Reducing the frequency of preferred (not required) care such as bathing daily

Please be reassured that we are doing everything in our power to protect your loved ones and our team members. I will continue to update you as this situation evolves and once again, I would like to thank you for your co-operation and support at this challenging time.

If you have any questions about this letter or the steps we are taking, please feel free to speak to your Home Manager or you can contact us by email at pa@oaklandcare.com

Yours Sincerely



Joanne Balmer

Chief Executive Officer

