

## Wessex Care 3<sup>rd</sup> COVID-19 Briefing

Four weeks have passed since my last briefing and it feels like a year. What our teams have achieved in this period of time is truly remarkable, inspiring and deeply humbling, we are so proud of each and every one of you.

To our residents, community customers, families and friends we thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your generosity of spirit, patience when we have had to rush to change arrangements and forbearance at being away from your loved ones. Thank you.

To the residents and customers in the community we have lost to COVID-19; we will remember you.

Current position of all services.

All but one of our services has been free of COVID-19 infection to date. Unfortunately and with great sadness three of our permanent residents at Kimberly West, who had significant underlying medical conditions, succumbed to the virus and later passed away in hospital. There have been no new infections, but we maintain a high level of cleaning and disinfecting throughout our services and in the community. The source of this infection is unknown and we can find no obvious link with staff that were working and subsequently self-isolating or had self-isolated before. There were no visitors to these individuals so no obvious line of infection. We have consulted with Public Health and having reviewed all the measures we have taken, and continue to take, they have confirmed that we are doing everything we could and should do to combat this virus.

With great effort we have been able to maintain our PPE stock to a good level so that all staff and visitors can ensure they are wearing the correct PPE based on Public Health England advice.

We have maintained imminent palliative care, loved ones visits and we intend to ensure wherever possible that this continues.

Malcom our Welfare & Engagement Lead has contacted or attempted contact with every single residents family contact point to ensure that communication is promoted and sustained with loved ones from phone contact to assisting in setting up I-pad visits. Your feedback has been so wonderful and special for all the staff. Malcom will continue to closely support all contact with family and friends.

Kimberly East has successfully morphed into the first Hospital Discharge Support Unit in Wiltshire receiving its first patient late last week. This was an amazing achievement by everyone involved across the company. We are truly grateful to the residents and family's forbearance in moving out of their home at Kimberly East to our other Care Centres and to all the staff that also moved to new homes either with their residents or to the new service; you are all truly amazing. We were the first HDSU in England to receive indemnity insurance from Aviva following a review of this service.

To those staff who have moved away from their families, children and loved ones and into staff accommodation to be on hand to care for all our residents we can only say thank you, thank you so much.

To all employees and volunteers who, despite their understandable personal concerns, have continued to come to work and put their residents and community customers before themselves; you are heroes, Social Care Heroes. When some would understandably run a mile you have run toward the risk to combat it and protect your residents and community customers. We stand humbled in your presents.

Employee support remains as stated previously; there is also various discussions going on between Government, Council and Social Care sector leaders to agree financial support for social care staff self-isolating as an instruction from their GP [three months] and staff self-isolating following presentation of symptomatic illness. We will adjust wages accordingly when we have confirmation of what this additional financial support looks like and how we access it. However we will as a minimum double statutory sick pay in all cases related to COVID-19 concerns and then amend the payments when we have confirmation of the extent of the social care support funds.

Many people have asked about testing and we are just starting to get some information relating to access for social care employees and residents in care homes. The information is a little confusing at present but it is clear that in the next couple of weeks, staff that are symptomatic will have access to testing and residents as well. We will keep you up-to-date as the picture becomes clearer.

Discharge from Hospitals to care home testing has also started following last Mondays statement from the Government. So the protocol today is that all such potential resident discharges from hospital will be tested. If they test positive for COVID-19 they will be discharged to our HDSU at Kimberly East where they will be cared for until they are clear. If they test negative then they will be able to be admitted to any care home bed which can meet their needs. All admissions to any of our homes other than the HDSU will be barrier nursed in their room for a minimum of 14 days as an additional precaution. All admissions to the HDSU will automatically be barrier nursed until clear of the virus and then they will be discharged home or to another appropriate service.

Any current residents who present as symptomatic will automatically be barrier nursed for a minimum of 14 days if they don't require or don't want hospital treatment. Two or more residents who present as symptomatic will be viewed as a potential outbreak and would result in all residents being cared for in their room on a barrier nurse basis including all staff wearing surgical masks until the home is clear from symptomatic residents for at least 14 days. During times when there are no residents who are symptomatic then a limited amount of socialisation can occur while also considering the need for social distancing where required.

Please be assured we have and will continue to do everything in our power to care and protect our residents, community customers and employees while supporting the NHS and Social Care colleagues.

Pauline, Matthew, Jodie & Christian

Directors