



COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS) BCOP BULLETIN 4th May 2021

The BCOP Bulletin aims to ensure that families and other visitors remain informed of the latest guidance, and latest BCOP specifics in relation to the virus. Click on these headings to access the information relevant to you:

[End of Life Visits](#)

[Essential Resident Visits \(referred to in the Government Guidance as Essential Care visits\)](#)

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[Out of Care Home Visits](#)

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I am sure that you have all heard the latest announcement from the Government relating to Out of Care Home visits and are as excited as we are about the gradual return to some kind of normal for families, our residents and life in general!

Whilst the announcement has 'gone viral' so to speak, the actual guidance has not yet been published.

However, this bulletin will provide you with a summary of the main areas addressed in the Government's announcement.

DISCLAIMER: This information is compiled by BCOP and updated by 2pm on 4.05.2021. The information about BCOP policies and actions is correct at the time of publication.

While we make every effort to accurately communicate the latest government recommendations, due to the fast-moving nature of the current coronavirus situation, we advise relatives, external visitors and staff to check the official guidance from the UK government at www.gov.uk for further clarification/information.

End of Life Visits

2 people are permitted to visit at any one time for End of Life visits - this is not restricted to the same 2 individuals for each visit.

Before entering the nursing unit, visitors must:

- conduct a lateral flow test at the nursing home and receive a negative result OR provide evidence of a recent negative Lateral Flow Test taken at home (e.g. by showing the text on your mobile phone giving the negative result)
- take and record their own temperature
- fill in the visitors' log

During the visit, visitors must:

- wear, face masks, aprons and gloves
- follow all infection control and prevention controls, in line with the 'Hands, Face, Space' principles - staff can explain these if required
- go straight to the resident's room, once they have received/shown their negative Lateral Flow Test result

During the visit, visitors may:

- hold hands as long as they are wearing full PPE
- request a face visor from staff if they wish to hug the resident or move close to their nose or mouth

After the visit, visitors must:

- Sanitise the face visor prior to leaving the nursing home
- Keep hold of the face visor for future visits and ensure it is sanitised directly before entering the nursing home for the next visit

Essential Resident Visits (referred to in the Government Guidance as Essential Care visits)

Staff conduct a care needs assessment when a resident is admitted to the nursing home and the care plans of existing residents are regularly reviewed. In some instances, through conducting the care needs assessment or care plan review, staff identify that a resident's condition would deteriorate without certain elements of care that can only be provided by a single named visitor (relative/advocate/representative).

Where this is the case, staff will arrange Essential Resident Visits. The purpose of these visits is specifically to promote the health and wellbeing of a resident, to prevent deterioration in their condition that would occur without this specific element of care being provided by the Essential Resident Visitor. During these visits, the single named visitor is treated exactly like a member of staff.

Before the visits start, Essential Resident Visitors must:

- complete the consent documentation regarding testing and sharing of test results
- complete the care plan, Infection Control and Prevention, and PPE training
- complete the risk assessment

Every week, Essential Resident Visitors must participate in the staff testing regime, taking 1 PCR test a week plus an LFD test and then taking a second LFD test 3 - 4 days later - results are notified to the nursing home

During the visits, Essential Resident Visitors must remain in the resident's room, unless walking in the gardens - you must not walk round the rest of the nursing home.

More detailed information can be found in the leaflet 'Essential Resident Visits', which is available on our website:

(<https://www.bcop.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Essential-Resident-Visitors-leaflet-A4.pdf>)

or you can request a copy from the management teams in the nursing homes.

Normal Day-to-Day Visits

If residents are not receiving End of Life visits or Essential Resident Visits, they can receive 'normal' day-to-day visits by two nominated visitors. As there is a high demand for visiting at present, we are having to limit the duration of visits, but we will extend or abolish these limits as soon as we are able to.

Before entering the nursing unit, the nominated visitors must:

- conduct a lateral flow test at the nursing home and receive a negative result OR provide evidence of a recent negative Lateral Flow Test taken at home (e.g. by showing the text on your mobile phone giving the negative result)
- take and record their own temperature
- fill in the visitors' log

During the visit, visitors must:

- wear, face masks, aprons and gloves
- follow all infection control and prevention controls, in line with the 'Hands, Face, Space' principles - staff can explain these if required
- go straight to the resident's room, once they have received/shown their negative Lateral Flow Test result
- During the visit, visitors may:
 - hold hands as long as they are wearing full PPE

Pod and/or Garden Visits

- These visits must be booked in advance, so that staff can bring the resident to the Pod
- Visits are currently restricted to 1 hour, due to high demand
- You do not need to enter the nursing home for these visits, but please read the notices on display in the Pod which outline the 'Do's and Don'ts' of Pod visiting, to help us maintain infection control and prevention within the Pod for your safety too.

Out of Care Home Visits

From 4 May 2021, residents should be enabled to leave their care home to spend time outdoors, without having to isolate for 14 days afterwards, subject to the following conditions:

- care homes should discuss arrangements with residents' nominated visitors, or essential care provider, in advance
- the resident should be accompanied by:
 - one or both of their nominated visitors
 - their essential care provider (where applicable)
- visits should take place solely outdoors, except for the use of toilet facilities
- there should be no visits to indoor spaces (public or private), apart from polling stations
- visits should not involve the use of public transport
- where a care home is situated in a local community with high, or rapidly rising, levels of infection, and/or where there is evidence of variants of concern (VOCs), care home managers should seek additional local advice from directors of public health

If the visit out of the care home includes visiting a polling station, the following additional measures should be in place:

- residents should be accompanied to the polling station by a member of care home staff to help facilitate a safe journey
- residents (and staff accompanying them) should adhere to all social distancing measures in place at the polling station

Where people living in care homes are registered to vote, care providers should take all reasonable steps to support them to do so. If staff are required to escort a resident for voting, this would need to be charged at the staff member's hourly rate, to ensure we maintain safe staffing levels in the care home. If you feel this may be required, please do speak to the home manager.

An emergency proxy vote can be obtained by 5pm on polling day if adhering to coronavirus advice or guidance would prevent a resident from going to the polling station. This would be the case where a resident has tested positive for COVID-19, or there has been an outbreak in their care home, for example.

Other Visits out of the Care Home

Visits out of the care home which do not meet the criteria set out above will need to follow the guidance in [Visits out of care homes](#), including guidance on the need for residents to isolate for 14 days on return to the care home.

We are still awaiting further government guidance outlining any further testing regime that may be imposed for residents taking part in out of care home visits, and we will let residents and relatives know once we receive the guidance.

Equally, all visitors should remain aware that, should the infection rate in the local area rise, Care Homes may be instructed by Local Authorities to apply further restrictions; if this happens, we will of course inform you at the earliest opportunity.

Thank you, once again, for your patience and understanding.

Kindest regards

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Janet', with a decorative flourish underneath.

Janet

Head of Care & Quality, BCOP