

We have written to all DP recipients with initial advice, this included advising them to use their DPs to ensure they still have the support they need in place and to work with their providers to adjust how they want to be supported whether that's outreach or supporting with tasks whilst adhering to social distancing practices as per national guidance if applicable. We have encouraged flexibility so if you can please keep up communication with your clients on DPs and work with them to agree how to best meet their needs during this time that would be helpful.

This will ensure that your staff wherever possible are still able to work with them and you are able to get the income. There will of course be some people who choose to use their DP differently at this time. Via the wider work we are doing with providers we are asking them to let us know of impacts to their sustainability and those working to ensure risks around DPs are mitigated are connected to that. If Day Opportunities providers are impacted by DP users changing how they have their needs met at this time then we will be able to consider this in due course but for now the message is work with them around what you can do in these challenging times.

We are also developing some FAQs which we will be sharing next week with all DP users and we are responding to queries via our operational teams and the DP.Covid19@essex.gov.uk inbox too.