

Public Health, E3 Zone 1
County Hall
Market Road
Chelmsford
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Ref: carehome/050121

Date: 6 January 2021

Dear Care Home Manager

Cessation of social visiting in care homes

Following the guidance sent yesterday that care homes should stop social visiting several questions have been raised which are answered below for others who may have similar questions.

- *Will we still be able to proceed with our purposely built visiting suites?*
The risk of care home outbreaks are significant enough to advise that all indoor visiting should be stopped with only closed window visits. As such even visiting in purpose built visiting suites should not currently take place. When visiting resumes covid-19 secure procedures will still need to be in place. This is when such purpose-built visiting suites will come into their own.
- *Does this mean that visiting POD's with a separate external entrance for visitors and floor to ceiling Perspex also need to close?*
Yes. For the time being the risk is too great to allow even this type of visiting.
- *How it is fair that if homes for the learning disabled are not being treated equally to elderly care homes in terms of the vaccine as they are deemed much less of a risk if they catch the virus then why guidance around visiting is the same and not personalised?*
It is true that the risk to those with learning disability under the age of 65 are lower than those in care homes over 65. The harms from stopping visiting are no less for this group. Against this the prevalence of infection in the community is currently so great that care homes for those with learning disabilities need stop social visiting in order to protect the residents.

Yours sincerely



Danny Showell
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