

Public Health, E3 Zone 1
County Hall
Market Road
Chelmsford
Essex
CM1 1QH



Ref: carehome/130121

Date: 13 January 2021

Dear Care Home Manager

Resumption of social visiting in care homes without elderly or clinically extremely vulnerable residents

Social visiting to care homes without elderly residents or residents who are extremely vulnerable can resume where there are stringent covid-19 secure measures and there is no ongoing outbreak. In this context I am defining elderly as those over 65 years of age and clinically extremely vulnerable as those fitting the [government definition](#)¹. This is a change to the advice in my letter of 5th January.

I have made this decision because those under 65 years of age and not in a clinical at risk group are less likely to have a severe covid-19 illness. The benefits of reducing the risk do not in my judgement outweigh the harm of stopping social visiting. However if a care home has any resident over 65 years or in a clinically extremely vulnerable group the risk of an outbreak in the home is too great to allow **any** residents to have social visiting, other than in very exceptional circumstances, such as the end of life.

Thank you for all the work you continue to keep residents and staff safe. The situation is under constant review and I look forward to the time when current restrictions can be loosened.

Yours sincerely



Mike Gogarty
Director of Wellbeing, Public Health and Communities
Essex County Council

¹ The Government definition of clinically extremely vulnerable can be found at: [Guidance on shielding and protecting people who are clinically extremely vulnerable from COVID-19 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)