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Stakeholder Bulletin

3 April 2020

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19): Derby and Derbyshire stakeholder bulletin #1

Dear partners

This is the first of what will become regular briefings to keep you updated on the NHS response to Coronavirus (COVID -19) in Derby and Derbyshire. It sets out the latest local position in relation to Coronavirus (COVID-19) and the response of NHS partners. It brings together key information to help you and update you on local services.

We will try hard to ensure you have the latest information but as you are aware the situation is rapidly changing.

Through these bulletins we will keep you informed of developments and if you have any questions or would like to ask about a topic please email us at: ddccg.enquiries@nhs.net

We will be very grateful if you could continue to support the message on staying at home and in particular help us to tackle misinformation by promoting the official sources of information: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>.

Kind regards,
Dr Chris Clayton
Chief Executive Officer
NHS Derby and Derbyshire CCG

Latest local situation

As at 2pm on Friday 3 April 2020 there were 167 confirmed cases in Derby, and 342 confirmed cases in Derbyshire. A total of 81 deaths of Derby and Derbyshire patients have sadly been confirmed via the daily national announcements.

The national approach

The Prime Minister has announced a series of measures to help suppress the spread of the coronavirus. The Prime Minister has announced a series of measures to help suppress the spread of the coronavirus. This includes new rules on staying at home and away from others.

When we reduce our day-to-day contact with other people, we will reduce the spread of the infection. That is why the government is introducing three new measures. These are:

1. Requiring people to stay at home, except for very limited purposes
2. Closing non-essential shops and community spaces
3. Stopping all gatherings of more than two people in public.

Every citizen must comply with these new measures. The relevant authorities, including the police, will be given the powers to enforce them – including through fines and dispersing gatherings. These measures are effective immediately. The Government will regularly review these measures, and relax them if the evidence shows this is possible. Full information on these measures can be found by visiting:

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

NHS Advice - Stay at home to stop spreading coronavirus

Everyone must stay at home to help stop the spread of coronavirus.

This includes people of all ages – even if they do not have any symptoms or other health conditions.

People should only leave their home to:

- to shop for basic essentials – only when really needed
- to do one form of exercise a day – such as run, walk or cycle, alone or with other people you live with
- for any medical need – for example, to visit a pharmacy or deliver essential supplies to a vulnerable person to travel to and from work – but only where this is absolutely necessary.



What to do if you have coronavirus symptoms

Continue to stay at home if you have either:

- a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- a new, continuous cough – this means a coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)

To protect others, do not go to places like a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital. Stay at home. Use the [NHS 111 online coronavirus service](#) to find out what to do.

Local preparedness

The local NHS and its partners are continuing to prepare for and respond to the Coronavirus situation. We are doing this through the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) for Derbyshire. The LRF is the multi-agency partnership made up of representatives from local public services including the emergency services, local authorities, the NHS and others. We are working together to implement the well-rehearsed plans already in place to deal with a pandemic.

However, we are not underestimating the scale of the challenge. In the coming days and weeks we know we will continue to see a significant growth in the number of patients suffering from the disease, including those who are critically unwell. Sadly, it also inevitable that we will see an increase in the number of deaths reported locally, although we will do everything we can to minimise this number.

A Derbyshire-wide group is looking at the current modelling of the progression of the COVID-19 virus and the likely demand it will place upon key local health services. Modelling suggests the peak of critical care bed requirement will occur in mid-April, so we are planning for this eventuality and understanding the impact across acute, community, mental health and primary care sectors.

The group is supported by NHS and public health analysts who are determining what types of care will be required in which sectors to treat patients, and most importantly understanding where there may be gaps in that provision of care – including staffing availability – and how these gaps can be closed. The work is very complex with many variables to balance, and will continue as a significant priority in the Derbyshire system's response to the pandemic.

Our hospitals

Work has already been prioritised to free up as much bed capacity as possible within Derbyshire's hospitals. This has included ensuring the timely discharge or transfer of appropriate patients, as well as beginning the process of cancelling elective (non-urgent) surgery for at least the next three months. We have also been reconfiguring wards and other clinical spaces to ensure that the hospitals can be used as flexibly as possible.

Sadly, as confirmed via daily national announcements, a total of 81 patients at Derbyshire's Hospitals who

had tested positive for COVID-19 have died. It should be noted that this is not the same as saying that 81 patients died from COVID-19.

To protect staff, patients and visitors our acute and community hospitals have introduced strict visiting restrictions for the hospitals. Specific visiting information is available on the hospital's websites.

General practice

Local GP surgeries have changed the way in which they are delivering care to patients due to the Coronavirus pandemic. These measures have been put in place to limit the spread of the disease and to protect our patients, and our staff. Practices are working together to deliver care to patients whilst managing high rates of staff absence due to self-isolation and staff with medical problems being unable to work in the normal way.

If anyone needs to get in touch with their local GP practice, they are advised to visit their practice website in the first instance to understand how best to contact them and understand how they are operating at this time. If that is not possible, then calling the practice is the next best option.

In the interim, here's some general guidance:

- **Visiting:** it is vital you **do not** visit the practice in person unless you are asked to following discussion with a clinician.
- **Making an appointment:** if you think you NEED an appointment please contact your surgery. Practices have moved to a total triage system. Patients requesting an appointment will be booked a telephone or video appointment; most medical issues will be able to be dealt with telephone or video consultation. However, if the clinician feels it is appropriate for you to be seen, they will offer you an appointment. You will be given specific instructions on what to do on arrival at the surgery; please also note this may not be at your usual GP practice.
- **Consultations:** instead of face-to-face consultations, nearly all consultations will now be carried out by telephone or video-call, with only a small percentage of patients being asked to visit a surgery to see a clinician at a specified time.
- **Routine Annual reviews:** e.g. Diabetic, Asthma Clinics etc, will be carried over the telephone as much as possible. If your condition requires a face-to-face consultation your clinician will see you by prior arrangement following a telephone call to check your general health status.
- **Referrals:** Because of the huge impact of Coronavirus on hospital services, GPs are very limited on what routine problems they can refer to hospitals; including outpatient appointments, x-rays and scans. However, they are still able to address and refer on **urgent problems and to cancer services**. If you have an urgent problem and you need to speak to a GP please do.
- **Prescriptions:** will be sent to a nominated pharmacy (no collections from surgery). If you have not nominated a pharmacy please telephone us or your pharmacy to set this up.
- **Ordering Repeat Medications:** you should request your repeat prescriptions by telephone through the Medicines Order Line, on 0115 855 0260, open Monday to Friday between 8am and 4pm. Alternatively, you can order online by downloading the **NHS App**
- **Test results:** can be viewed online through the NHS APP, or you can telephone your practice reception in the usual way.

NHS 111

The NHS 111 service is experiencing unprecedented levels of demand. Extra capacity is being provided, but it is important that patients concerned about symptoms use the online 111 coronavirus service if they possibly can by visiting <https://111.nhs.uk/service/COVID-19/>.

Find your nearest NHS service

If you want to find your GP practice, or nearest NHS Service, use [this search facility](#).

Extremely vulnerable patients

If you are an 'extremely vulnerable patient' and have received a letter from the NHS, you need to following the 'shielding' advice as you are at a higher risk during the pandemic and are advised not to go out at this time. You can read more about the support being offered at the [.gov.uk](#) website. If you need to see a GP they will determine the most appropriate place to assess/perform any required procedures. This may mean attending the surgery at a specified time.

Service changes

We are inevitably making changes to the way services operate to focus on the management of COVID-19. This will have an impact on most patients but is essential to manage the current and anticipated increase in demand for COVID-19 related services across Derby and Derbyshire.

Many of these changes are still in the planning and we will be making regular announcements to alert everyone to changes. Changes to hospital and GP services outlined above are the main areas of change so far, but we are also planning to introduce some new services – including those to support patients with mental health issues or concerns – to help with the response to the pandemic.

Staff testing for COVID-19

A free testing programme for COVID-19 is being rolled out. It is initially aimed at identifying NHS frontline staff in critical care, emergency care departments and ambulance services and other high priority groups who are self-isolating at home and may be able to return to work.

Looking after NHS colleagues

We are of course aware of the need to look after the welfare of our teams during the COVID-19 outbreak. Ensuring their wellbeing is essential and working with other agencies in Derby and Derbyshire we are promoting and putting in place measures to provide them with information and support. A resource has been created on the [Joined Up Care Derbyshire website](#) and this may be of equal use to our wider stakeholders and partners so please feel free to access it.

The Clap for Carers was very well received by NHS staff last week and provided them with a boost to

know that their hard work is appreciated by the public. Many of those working in the NHS and social care will be could be directly impacted through their loved ones as well in their caring role. Their commitment to provide the best care possible for patients has been remarkable, but not surprising.

What you can do to help

Help us to save lives by reinforcing key messages in this bulletin with your key contacts. In particular, this should include the essential message that everyone must stay at home to help stop the spread of coronavirus. This includes people of all ages – even if they do not have any symptoms or other health conditions.

Please use your social media accounts to share only official messages from Government and NHS websites and accounts. There is a lot of misinformation about coronavirus being shared online, which is causing confusion about the virus and how it spreads.

Maintaining wellbeing

It's more important than ever that people look after their mental health and well-being., particularly if they are worried about the coronavirus and the effects of self-isolation or social distancing.

[Mind's website](#) has helpful information on a range of mental health problems (such as anxiety, panic attacks, OCD and depression) and some of their common symptoms.

The NHS has a brief [mood self-assessment](#) (18 questions) which can be a useful way to understand whether you are experiencing symptoms of depression or anxiety, and to what severity.

As noted above, a resource has been created on the [Joined Up Care Derbyshire website](#) and this may be of equal use to our wider stakeholders and partners so please feel free to access it.

Contact

If you have any feedback, or questions, please email us at: ddccg.enquiries@nhs.uk. We are sure you will understand that we are very busy, but we will endeavour to respond to all queries within 72 hours.