

**Carer briefing – 21.05.20**

**Introduction**

We have delayed sending a further communication out to you as carers, as we wanted to hear what the Prime Minster had to say last Sunday (10.05) and then have an opportunity to look at the supporting information that we knew would follow his announcement. This information started to be released last Monday afternoon and we have taken time to understand what the changes were and how they might affect the way in which we are currently working and going forward.

**General update**

Given the news that there was an intention for more children to return to schools as of the 01.06.we have been particularly interested to read the guidance provided to schools as to how they would achieve this to see if there was any information/guidance that we felt would be helpful in considering how we could offer a level of service at Skills Group.

Having read the guidance, we do not feel that we could use the information provided to safely open Skills group – all be it to a limited number of users initially. At this stage the service will remain suspended but we will be starting discussions with the local authority about their thoughts as to how a building based service such as Skills could be re-opened, what that might look like and potential timescales. We will of course keep you informed with our progress on this.

In terms of the work being delivered in the localities, this has remained fairly static since the initial lockdown in March. We have had some requests to support some additional hours, which we have looked at and been happy to put into place.

Given the change in guidance in relation to travel and being able to spend more time exercising etc with parks being opened again, we will be speaking to the local authority in relation to potentially delivering more hours within the localities as we are aware from our welfare calls to families and carers that some service users are finding the prolonged period of self-isolation challenging. It’s important that we have discussions with lead Commissioners in the local authority to ensure that as and when we offer more support it is in partnership with the local authority as well as yourselves as carers.

As already mentioned the weekly welfare calls to our service users and their carers are continuing and where potential issues have been raised with us we have followed those up with respective social workers, advocating on behalf of those we support to ensure they are aware of some of the pressures being felt by some.

**Cheddle Lodge**

Media attention has continued to focus on Care homes and the impact of Covid-19. Because of this focus and the obvious concerns and worries being shared, Public Health England produced a resource pack for Care homes to help them to prepare for a potential Covid outbreak in the home. This document is an extensive pack of information/requirements and includes what response needs to be in place if there is an outbreak, including how to support people, manage the staff team and cleaning schedules etc.

Considerable focus has been given to this to tailor the document to Cheddle Lodge and the people living there and we now have an agreed plan as to how we are to prepare – so making sure we have enough PPE for example – as well as how we will manage the situation should we have someone poorly with Covid -19.

Testing has also become more readily available for people living in care homes and staff working in them and testing can be done even if people are not showing any obvious signs and symptoms – it is possible even in these circumstances to test positive for Covid -19. All our residents have been tested and to date all the results received show that no-one living at Cheddle Lodge has Covid-19 which is great news and all credit to the staff working at Cheddle, in terms of following the infection control measures in place both within the home and when not in work.

We are actively encouraging all staff working out of Cheddle to have a test as well – we appreciate that the results are only an indicator on that particular day at the time of testing that people do not have the virus – a bit like a cars MOT – but taking this measure ensures that we are all doing our bit to ensure the wellbeing of the people living at Cheddle Lodge.

**Amended Government guidance**

Given the statement made from Boris Johnson on the 10.05, the guidance for the general public has changed as in what we are able to do. For clarity and to make sure you are aware of what these changes are, they include the following;

* **Continuing to stay at home as much as possible**
* **To work from home if possible**
* **To go to work if it’s not possible to work from home**
* **To limit contact with other people**
* **If possible to wear a face covering in enclosed spaces**
* **To continue to social distance where possible so keeping 2m apart**
* **Continue regular hand washing for a minimum of 20 seconds using soap and water/ or hand sanitiser with 60% alcohol**
* **Not leaving home if any one within the household has symptoms.**

The Government also gave some additional guidance in relation to the signs and symptoms of Coronavirus earlier this week which now **include the loss of sense and/or smell, known as Anosmia** in addition to the previous symptoms shared of a high fever of 37.8 and/or a persistent new cough.

**And finally……**

If you have any questions regarding the support you would normally receive from the organisation or if there is something specific that you would like to raise with us, please make use of the welfare calls as the initial way of highlighting anything with us or you can use the contact number shared via our office voicemail, the office is not always manned with the majority of our staff normally based at Meridian House, working from home at the moment.

Whilst there has been a change of instruction from the Government, we would ask that you remain vigilant in relation to going out, and please ensure that you are following the guidance that’s been shared and keep yourselves and your family safe and well.

**Senior Leadership Team**