

Safe visiting practices IN a Care Home during the festive season

Visiting is an integral part of care home life, maintaining the health, wellbeing and quality of life of residents. Visiting is also crucial for family and friends to maintain contact and life-long relationships with their loved ones, and to contribute to their support and care.

It is strongly recommended that visitors receive 2 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, plus their booster where applicable. Visitors must follow any guidance and procedures put in place by the care home to ensure compliance with IPC

Responsibility of Care Home Managers

- Visits should take place in a room most practical and comfortable for the resident - own rooms where possible to avoid communal spaces and other close contact
- Check all visitors, unless under the age of 18 years, can provide evidence of a negative lateral flow test taken on the day of their visit. Evidence is available via the visitors NHS App
- Care homes should ensure that Infection Prevention and Control policy and practice are communicated in a clear and accessible way to visitors
- Visitors should be reminded to wear a face mask when visiting the care home
- Visitors should be reminded, and provided facilities, to wash their hands for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser on entering and leaving the home
- If festive events are planned within the care home, additional risk assessments must be completed for each event

Responsibility of visitors

- Visitors should make arrangements with care homes in advance of the visit
- Visitors should receive a negative lateral flow test on the day of their visit, either by conducting the test at home and providing evidence via their NHS App or on arrival at the care home
- Visitors should consider whether a family visit with children or young adults under the age of 18 is appropriate and necessary
- Visitors should not enter the care home if they are feeling unwell, even if they have tested negative for COVID-19 and are fully vaccinated and should avoid the care home until at least 5 days after they feel better
- Visitors who are not legally required to self-isolate are advised against visiting the care home if they have been identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19, unless absolutely necessary, even if they have been fully vaccinated. Where visits do occur, visitors should have received a negative PCR test result prior to their visit, and a negative lateral flow test result earlier in the day of their visit providing evidence via their NHS App
- Visitors should limit contact with other residents and staff, and maintain as much distance as possible