

Safe visiting practices OUT of a Care Home during the festive season

We expect and encourage care homes to facilitate residents to take part in visits out of the care home. This could be for a short walk, to attend a place of worship or for a longer visit including an overnight stay to see family and friends.

Spending time with others outside the care home will increase the risk of exposure to COVID-19 for the resident and potentially to other residents and staff on their return.

Additional measures are in place to facilitate visits out of the care home. These include infection prevention and control (IPC) measures, individual risk assessments, testing arrangements and isolation on return from some high-risk activities out of the home.

It is strongly recommended that both residents and their relatives receive 2 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, plus their booster where applicable. If eligible, relatives should also get their flu jab when it is offered to them.

Responsibility of Care Home Managers

- Visits out of the care home should be planned and supported wherever possible
- Outward visits should be supported by individual risk assessments. Individual risk assessments should consider the vaccination status of residents, relatives and friends, and any testing for those involved in the visit out
- Check anyone else who the resident may meet as part of a visit out of the care home has provided evidence of a negative lateral flow test on the day of the visit. All tests should be reported to the Unique Organisation Number of the care home
- Relatives should be reminded of the wider guidance on ventilation, limiting close contact, good hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene and requirements on use of face masks to be followed while residents are away from the home

Responsibility of relatives and friends

- Relatives should make arrangements with care homes in advance of the visit out
- Relatives must support the care home manager to complete a resident's risk assessment in advance of the visit out
- Anyone else who the resident meets as part of a visit out of the care home should undertake a lateral flow test and receive a negative result on the day of the visit
- Wider guidance on ventilation, limiting close contact, good hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene and requirements on use of face masks should be followed while people are away from the home