



**Guidance for Home Care Providers during COVID-19  
Updated March 2021**

## **Thank you to all home care staff for all your hard work in keeping Islanders safe**

### **Introduction**

As we make progress with delivering the COVID-19 vaccine to Islanders who are at highest risk, we must continue with a safe approach to protecting those receiving care. Whilst the COVID-19 vaccine offers a good level of protection to the person receiving it, it does not prevent illness from COVID-19 or the spread to others, in every case.

This guidance is for registered care providers delivering home care, to reduce the risk of infection with COVID-19 among both staff and those receiving care. Home care providers are responsible to implement this guidance and take measures to ensure that care giving arrangements are safe regarding COVID-19.

### **Other guidance relevant to care settings**

This guidance is in addition to the following guidance published on gov.je. which is also applicable to registered care providers:

Guidance for Islanders at higher risk:

<https://www.gov.je/Health/Coronavirus/PublicHealthGuidance/Pages/ShieldinGForVulnerablePeople.aspx>

Guidance on PPE for health care and essential workers:

<https://www.gov.je/health/coronavirus/healthcareprofessionals/pages/ppeforessentialworkers.aspx>

Public health guidance on protecting yourself and others:

<https://www.gov.je/health/coronavirus/publichealthguidance/Pages/index.aspx>

### **Safer Hygiene**

Home care providers should follow the following steps in line with public health and infection control guidance:

- Strict hand hygiene following the WHO 5 moments of hand hygiene: <https://www.who.int/infection-prevention/campaigns/clean-hands/5moments/en/>
- Thorough cleaning and decontamination of all hard surfaces/floor/chairs/door handles/reusable non-invasive care equipment/sanitary fittings in the room

- Following PPE guidance, including a requirement for all staff to wear a face mask at all times when delivering home care,
- Full PPE is required when delivering direct care to a client, when a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained.
- There may be some instances when full PPE is not required when within 2 metres of clients, where there is no direct contact with residents, for example when staff are giving a drink to a client. Wearing of surgical masks is sufficient for these interactions, unless the client is symptomatic or has tested positive for COVID-19, in which case full PPE is still required.

### **Safer at a distance/in smaller groups**

- To safeguard staff and clients, it's recommended that staff work in smaller groups and preferably the same groups wherever this is possible.
- Cross-organisational working is strongly discouraged for staff who are not fully vaccinated. In the unlikely event that this occurs, mitigation measures should be carefully followed, such as following physical distancing recommendations, wearing PPE as per the PPE guidance and ensuring strict hand hygiene at all times.
- All staff working in care settings are strongly advised to download the COVID ALERT app which is available for iPhone and Android mobile phones. This alerts users when they have spent time with a positive case outside of a safe distance, so that rapid action can be taken and advice given from the contact tracing team.
- Staff, along with all Islanders, are strongly encouraged to carefully follow the public health guidance available on gov.je, and reduce their level of risk exposure, both at work and outside of their working hours.

### **Contact tracing and welfare checks – staff and home care clients**

- Staff must not attend work and must immediately call the Coronavirus helpline on 445566, as well as immediately informing their manager/main base of work, if they are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 (listed at: <https://www.gov.je/Health/Coronavirus/PublicHealthGuidance/Pages/CoronavirusInformation.aspx>).
- Staff should be actively screened for symptoms of COVID ahead of them starting a working shift, to include a temperature check wherever this is feasible, with staff instructed not to work if their temperature is 37.8C or above, or if they have any other symptoms of COVID-19.

- If staff develop symptoms during working hours, they must immediately inform their manager, return home, and phone the Coronavirus Helpline for further advice.
- All staff should take part in regular PCR screening for COVID-19, currently every 4 weeks. Information on how to book a test can be found at: <https://www.gov.je/Health/Coronavirus/Health/Pages/COVID19TestingProgramme.aspx> or by phoning the Coronavirus Helpline on +44 (0) 1534 445566
- Results of staff swabs will be managed by the contact tracing team, who will give further advice.
- If the results are not returned, phone 449994 the COVID-19 results team.
- Any symptomatic clients must also be isolated immediately on identification of symptoms and their GP contacted to arrange review and swabbing.

### **Ventilation**

While opening windows is more challenging as we move into winter months, staff are encouraged to open windows wherever possible when delivering care.

Good ventilation, which enables movement of air within indoor spaces, can significantly reduce the risk of virus particles remaining suspending in the air and transmitting infection to others.

### **Client outings**

If staff take clients for outings, the following guidance should be carefully followed:

- Keeping physical distancing of 2 metres with anyone other than the home care staff.
- Although not always possible to keep 2 metres physical distance between clients and staff, this should be attempted in all situations where it is possible.
- Wear a face mask whenever possible. This is especially vital:
  - when physical distancing of 2 metres cannot be maintained, for example when travelling by car.
  - when indoors.
- Any surfaces that more than one person touches, such as a door handle, should be sanitised. For example, if travelling in a private car,

car surfaces should be wiped down before travel with disinfectant wipes.

- Clients should be guided to use 60-70% alcohol hand-sanitiser frequently where regular handwashing is not possible.
- Avoid use of public transport.
- Spend time outside wherever possible.

For clients who are not fully vaccinated in particular, the level of risk of certain activities should be considered. An [Activity Risk Guide](#) highlighting factors that make an activity higher or lower risk is available at [gov.je/shielding](http://gov.je/shielding).

### **Useful information**

- For information on how to book a staff PCR screening test visit: <https://www.gov.je/Health/Coronavirus/Health/Pages/COVID19TestingProgramme.aspx> or phone the Coronavirus Helpline on: +44 (0) 1534 445566
- PPE can still be accessed via the [PPE@gov.je](mailto:PPE@gov.je) cell
- Workforce can still be accessed via [nursebank@health.gov.je](mailto:nursebank@health.gov.je)
- Infection control can still be accessed via [HSSinfectioncontrol@health.gov.je](mailto:HSSinfectioncontrol@health.gov.je) or bleep 616 Monday to Friday 8-5.