

Updated from 6.7.20

Palmerston Care Home



Our first priority continues to be reducing the risk of COVID-19 transmission. We have to balance the benefit of visits for both residents and visitors against the risk of visitors introducing infection into Palmerston.

Following the regional guidance issued by the Health Minister at the end of June, and having undertaken a risk assessment to take account of the specific circumstances of Palmerston, outdoor visits were introduced in July. Government advice continues to be that virtual and outdoor visits are the safer and preferred option, however, weather conditions are not always suitable and, following further risk assessments, some indoor visiting areas have now been identified.

For the safety of everyone, there are strict visiting protocols which must be adhered to. Thank you for your understanding.

The guidance may change if there is an outbreak of COVID-19 in Palmerston or there is a local or regional increase in pandemic surge level

The Department of Health Guidelines issued in June provide the following advice:

- **Visits can only be by appointment – ad hoc visits cannot be facilitated.**
The appointment system in place will continue.
- **Virtual visiting (such as facetime) and outdoor visiting remain the preferred and safer options.**
We will continue to facilitate this. If the weather suitable have an outdoor visit.
- **Visits will have to be limited to a maximum number per week per resident.**
This is to allow opportunity for every resident to avail of a visit, assist the facilitation of an appointment system, implementation of enhanced cleaning measures between visits, controlling numbers of visitors to comply with social distancing and infection control.
Initially, the aim will be for one visit per week and this will be reviewed.
- **It is recommended that only one person visits at a time.**
In special circumstances and with the prior agreement of the Homemanager, there can be a larger number of visitors for an outdoors visit, possibly up to six, and where all social distancing requirements can be met.
Children may only visit in exceptional circumstances and with agreement of the Homemanager.
- **The length of visits will be determined by the visiting policy.**
Visits will be for 15 minutes, spaced at 30 minute intervals. This will enable staff to carry out infection control measures prior and after each visit. A longer visit may be too long to sustain for someone with dementia for whom a shorter visit would be more beneficial.
- **Indoor visiting may be necessary where weather conditions are not suitable for outdoor visits, but is dependent on safely managing social distancing and infection control procedures.**
Only one visitor will be allowed at a time, unless there are exceptional circumstances which have been agreed with the Homemanager.
Residents should not be visited in their rooms and visitors should not walk around the home or past the point of a visiting screen.

Exceptions may be made in the following circumstances:

- Arrangements for End of Life visiting should be discussed with the Homemanager.
- A pre-arranged visit from a Minister of Faith can be accommodated, provided they adhere to the requirements for PPE, social distancing etc.

What happens during a visit?

1. The visit must be pre-arranged.
2. Arrive as close as possible to the arranged time (wait in your car if necessary)
3. Wear a face covering
4. Go to the front door and staff will assist
5. Your temperature will be taken
6. Complete a "Track and Trace" form.
7. Wash and/or sanitise your hands
8. Staff will guide you to the visiting area
9. The resident will be brought to the visiting area
10. Staff will remain in the area to provide any assistance unless you request otherwise.
11. When the visiting time is over, staff will guide you to the exit. If you have requested that no staff remain in the area during the visit, please call the home on 028 90656166 and a member of staff will come to assist.
12. The visiting area will be cleaned and sanitised in preparation for the next visit.

Indoor visiting areas:

Lewis wing

A clear plastic barrier has been placed in the link corridor between the entrance and the Lewis wing. Entry for visitors will be by walking around the building and through the door where the gazebo is currently situated.

The gazebo will remain to allow for an outdoor visit.

Ellis wing

A clear plastic barrier has been placed at the stairwell at the end of the corridor. Entry for visitors will be by walking around the building. Visitors can continue to use the outside porch (staff have been advised to enter through the back door if visiting is taking place.)

Staff will guide visitors to the visiting area. Doors for visitors to enter and exit are clearly marked. Visitors must stay behind the plastic screen.

Visitors must follow the guidelines:

- Visitors will be required to supply their own face covering and will not be permitted to enter the home without it.
- Visitors must adhere to the guidance provided re washing and sanitising their hands, and observing good infection control practice. Hand sanitiser will be available.
- Visitors are responsible for maintaining a 2 metre distance. There can be no hugging or physical contact.
- Visitors should not bring items for residents.
- Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 or any other infection should not visit, even if these symptoms are mild. Anyone self-isolating following a return from outside the U.K should not visit.
- Visitors must follow instructions about which door to enter, where to wash or sanitise hands, how to make an appointment, not to overstay their allotted visit time etc.
- Visitors must not walk around the home or past the visiting screens.

Thank you for working with us to keep our residents, staff and you as safe as possible. As you will appreciate these visiting arrangements are time consuming and create additional work for staff, so please be patient. We will keep the situation under review and update you regularly as the situation develops.



Geraldine Gilpin
Chief Executive

Paul Johnston
Homemanager