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17 March 2020

Our Ref: E1/20

To: All Branches

Dear Colleagues,

Coronavirus (COVID-19) – NHS Updated Advice for the Public as of today 17 March 2020, including 'Stay at Home' Advice

Introduction

The NHS have again updated their advice to the public regarding Coronavirus Covid-19 which is set out below and includes the 'stay at home' advice.

Number of Cases

As of 9am on 16th March 2020, approximately 44,105 people have been tested in the UK for Coronavirus (Covid-19), of which 42,562 were confirmed negative and 1,543 were confirmed as positive. 55 patients who tested positive for Coronavirus Covid-19 have died.

Main Symptoms to look out for are:

- Fever (high temperature).
- Cough.
- Shortness of breath/breathing difficulties.

Updated NHS Advice

COVID-19 is a new illness that can affect your lungs and airways. It's caused by a virus called Coronavirus.

Stay at home if you have Coronavirus symptoms.

Stay at home if you have either:

- A high temperature/fever.
- A new, continuous cough.
- Shortness of breath/breathing difficulties.

Do not go to a GP surgery, Pharmacy or Hospital.

You do not need to contact 111 to tell them you're staying at home.

Testing for coronavirus is not needed if you're staying at home.

How long to stay at home and what should you do?

- if you have symptoms, stay at home for 7 days.
- if you live with other people, they should stay at home for 14 days from the day the first person got symptoms.
- If you live with someone who is 70 or over, has a long-term condition, is pregnant or has a weakened immune system, try to find somewhere else for them to stay for 14 days.
- If you have to stay at home together, try to keep away from each other as much as possible.

See below 'Advice about Staying At Home'.

Urgent Advice: Use the NHS 111 Online Coronavirus service if:

- You feel you cannot cope with your symptoms at home.
- Your condition gets worse.
- Your symptoms do not get better after 7 days.

Only call 111 if you cannot get help online.

How to avoid catching and spreading coronavirus (social distancing)

Everyone should do what they can to stop coronavirus spreading.

It is particularly important for people who:

- are 70 or over
- have a long-term condition
- are pregnant
- have a weakened immune system

Do

- Wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds.
- Always wash your hands when you get home or into work.
- Use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze.
- Put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards.
- Try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell.
- Only travel on public transport if you need to.
- Work from home, if you can.
- Avoid social activities, such as going to pubs, restaurants, theatres and cinemas.
- Avoid events with large groups of people.

Don't

- Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean.

- Do not have visitors to your home, including friends and family.

How coronavirus is spread

- Because it's a new illness, we do not know exactly how coronavirus spreads from person to person.
- Similar viruses are spread in cough droplets.
- It's very unlikely it can be spread through things like packages or through food.

Travel advice

- There are some countries and areas where there's a higher chance of coming into contact with someone with coronavirus.
- If you're planning to travel abroad and are concerned about coronavirus, see [advice for travellers on GOV.UK](#).

Treatment for Coronavirus

- There is currently no specific treatment for coronavirus.
- Antibiotics do not help, as they do not work against viruses.
- Treatment aims to relieve the symptoms while your body fights the illness.
- You'll need to stay in isolation, away from other people, until you have recovered.

The NHS will be contacting people from Monday 23 March 2020 if they are at particularly high risk of getting seriously ill with coronavirus. They'll be given specific advice about what to do. They should not contact their GP or healthcare team at this stage – they should wait to be contacted.

NHS Stay at Home Advice – Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Tips for staying at home

It's important to stay at home to stop coronavirus spreading.

How long to stay at home if you have symptoms

- Anyone with symptoms should stay at home for at least 7 days.
- If you live with other people, they should stay at home for at least 14 days, to avoid spreading the infection outside the home.
- After 14 days, anyone you live with who does not have symptoms can return to their normal routine.
- But, if anyone in your home gets symptoms, they should stay at home for 7 days from the day their symptoms start. Even if it means they're at home for longer than 14 days.

Important Information:

- If you live with someone who is 70 or over, has a long-term condition, is pregnant or has a weakened immune system, try to find somewhere else for them to stay for 14 days.
- If you have to stay at home together, try to keep away from each other as much as possible.
- After 7 days, if you no longer have a high temperature you can return to your normal routine.
- If you still have a high temperature, stay at home until your temperature returns to normal.
- If you still have a cough after 7 days, but your temperature is normal, you do not need to continue staying at home. A cough can last for several weeks after the infection has gone.

Do

- Try to keep at least 2 metres (3 steps) from other people in your home, particularly older people or those with long-term health conditions.
- Ask friends and family and delivery services to deliver things like food shopping and medicines – but avoid contact with them.
- Sleep alone if possible.
- Regularly wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.
- Try to stay away from older people and those with long-term health conditions.
- Drink plenty of water and take everyday painkillers, such as paracetamol and ibuprofen, to help with your symptoms.

Don't

- Do not have visitors (ask people to leave deliveries outside).
- Do not leave the house, for example to go for a walk, to school or public places.

Urgent advice: Use the NHS 111 online Coronavirus service if:

- You feel you cannot cope with your symptoms at home.
- Your condition gets worse.
- Your symptoms do not get better after 7 days.

Use the 111 Coronavirus service.

Only call 111 if you cannot get help online.

Yours sincerely



Dave Joyce
National Health, Safety & Environment Officer