

SAFE VISITING DURING COVID-19

(HS.PW.07)

POLICY STATEMENT

The Oaklea Group recognises how difficult it is for both our customers and those who care for them (loved ones and employees) to restrict visits during the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated restrictions on interaction with others.

We also recognise the importance of finding ways to enable visits in a risk-based, balanced way, and help to reduce the inevitable anxiety experienced by the families and friends of those in care settings as they have been unable to visit them for some time.

Many people who are living in care settings - such as care homes and supported living - are at higher risk of catching COVID-19 and of having poorer outcomes and many will be shielding. Our approach to enabling visits and visitors has to be based on the circumstances of each location and the individual needs of our customers within that location, and the external COVID-19 environment around that location.

In order to reduce the spread of the infection, Oaklea have implemented a safe visiting procedure and carried out risk assessments for each location / individual customer as appropriate (OS/147 – Risk Assessment for Visitors and Visiting during the COVID-19 Pandemic); putting in place practical measures to mitigate any risks arising from visits where appropriate.

We urge families and friends to read and follow the below guidance to help us to continue to keep customers as safe as possible.

Oaklea will continue to be led by advice from the Public Health England Local Health Protection Team (in the event of an outbreak), and the local Director of Public Health and Infection Prevention and Control Lead from the responsible CCG.

Visitors to properties may be required to take a COVID test upon arrival where Lateral Flow Device testing is available.

A separate area will be allocated for undertaking the self-test and NHS guidance will be available. As testing is not guaranteed to be 100% accurate; Oaklea Group cannot accept any liability for false positive or false negative test results.

Should a visitor test provide a positive result the visitor must immediately leave the property, self-isolate and obtain a confirmatory PCR test. Please see our LFD Risk Assessment for further details

PROCEDURES AND GUIDANCE TO BE FOLLOWED:

- Visits will be by appointment only
- Visitor numbers will be limited to a single constant visitor wherever possible, with an absolute maximum of 2 constant visitors per customer. This, for example, means the same family member visiting each time to limit the number of different individuals coming into the location.

- Care Home customers may nominate up to 2 named visitors who will be able to enter the care home for regular visits (and will be able to visit together or separately as preferred). In addition to their 2 named visitors, Care Home customers with higher care needs can also choose to nominate an essential care giver.
-
- Wherever possible, visitors must try to walk or travel by car and avoid public transport when visiting, in line with the latest government advice on travel
- Outside contact will be the preference for all visits, avoiding walking through the home where possible; this may include visits at windows.
- Where a visit is facilitated in a well ventilated room inside visitors may need to access the property by a different entrance than usual.
- Visitors will be escorted direct to the customer by employees
- 2 metre distancing (between visitors and customers, employees, and visitors from other households) will be maintained as best practise.
- Visitors will be asked to bring a face covering to wear during the visit. If visitors do not have a face covering, Oaklea will be able to provide you with a mask. Appropriate PPE will be required to be worn throughout the visit including in the grounds
- Visitors must be prepared to wash hands frequently and/or use hand sanitiser throughout the visit.
- Pets will not be allowed on the visit
- Food or snacks will not be able to be brought on the visit
- Toilet and other facilities will not be available to visitors during the visit
- Visits will be limited to around 30 minutes each time
- Only one customer visit will be booked at a time and we will allow sufficient time between visits to prevent any cross over of visitors outside each property.
- We would discourage visiting by children at this time
- Visitors will be asked to check in with the local team on the day, prior to their visit, to ensure the situation in the property has not changed
- Visitors will be asked not to visit if they are unwell, are currently displaying any signs of a cold/flu, respiratory or Covid-19 symptoms or have done so in the last 14 days.
- Visitors will be asked to confirm on arrival that they do not have COVID symptoms and are not living in a household with anyone who has COVID symptoms in the last 14 days
- Visitors will be required to provide their details for the purposes of NHS Test & Trace
- In the event of any suspected or actual outbreak of COVID-19, or a suspected or known case of COVID-19 within a property, or on the advice of local public health teams, visitor restrictions may need to be immediately implemented which suspend some of these enabling approaches and will include exclusion of any non-essential visitors. If this is the case we will communicate this to families and customers as soon as possible and keep both customers and their families up to date with the situation as things change.

RELATED POLICIES/ INFORMATION:

- OS/147 – Risk Assessment for Visitors during the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- Risk Assessment – Use of Lateral Flow Devices
- Safe Visiting During COVID Guidance Sheet - Saved On General (O:) Server.
- HS.PW.06 – Working Safely During COVID.