

Surrey Care working for you

Message from Erica lockhart

It hard to believe that only a few weeks ago we had never really heard of COVID-19 and it was business as usual. And then it hit us and the world as we knew it changed dramatically.

I wanted to reassure you that we were doing as much as we can to support your work at the front line. Indeed Surrey Care has earned its place at the forefront of much of the activity going on with Surrey County Council and Surrey Heartlands. We are the central point of contact for the key leads in the county and also the main communication network to all care services in the County.

So much is going on – it is at times hard to keep up. I want to pay credit to our own SCA team, Maria, Ali, Kim and Lauren who are doing sterling work all working from home. Also a huge thank you to our SCA Board their intelligence, insights and leading roles have been invaluable.

Here is a flavour of our work:

Maria has coordinated the contacts with all providers across Surrey – Guildford and Waverley, North West, East Surrey and Surrey Downs – ringing everyone each week – with key questions about bed capacity (where applicable) staffing pressures, COVID-19 challenges, use of technology, PPE and any other issues. We then collate these and send them to each CCG (now called ICP's). We've let SCC know we are doing this to avoid duplication but despite our best efforts we know providers have received calls asking for the same information particularly around capacity. We hope as Capacity Tracker is started to be used by more providers on a daily basis telephone calls about capacity might diminish.

But I wanted you to know we are doing something with that information – it isn't going into a black hole. For PPE we have used that to inform the PPE coordination for those with urgent need – this has resulted in urgent deliveries this week. We used the information to advise Surrey Heartlands new Digital team of requests for the new free Facebook Portals – which can be used for care services to contact family. We've picked up other issues for example what happens about residents/clients needing blood tests now GP surgeries are closed. So many queries we have raised working on your behalf.

We post as much information as we can on our website and the surge in hits is amazing as clearly providers find this a very useful “go to” resource.

Surrey Heartlands have just commissioned us to send a weekly newsletter on health and other key matters – first one issued this week. We are keeping emails to a minimum recognising the tremendous pressure you are facing – so please use the website or send us an email and we will do our very best to respond.

At the same time we are putting pressure on Surrey CC to agree sensible financial solutions – more on this next week. But you should have been receiving communications direct from the SCC email ASC Covid 19 - [asc.covid19@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:asc.covid19@surreycc.gov.uk). We are involved Nationally through the Care Association Alliance and are able to raise questions with CQC and DHSC and grateful thanks to Mei-

Ling and James Sage from Royds Withy King who have given invaluable guidance on queries re e.g. furloughing on a pro bono basis.

We have established virtual network meetings for our members – Thursdays 12 noon the LD network, 2 pm Dom Care and Wednesdays 2 pm Older People. Do join us. We have also set up active Whats App groups for each sector the LD one has really taken off. Let us have your mobile numbers if you want to join.

This only gives a flavour of the work we have been doing as an Association to support you. We are at the end of an email or phone and providers have been really keen to share and help at this very worrying and stressful time for them, their residents/clients and staff. Don't face it alone. We will help where we can.

Stay safe and well

Erica