

Public Health

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County Hall
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Dear Care Home Managers

Re: Care Home visiting arrangements

Following our email/communication on 28th July 2020 about the new guidance for updating [policies for visitor arrangements in care homes](#) first published on 22 July 2020, Surrey County Council is able to update you on how we will communicate the Director of Public Health professional assessment on whether visiting is appropriate in the local authority area. This is referred to in the guidance as the 'Visiting Guidance'

Each day, Public Health teams led by the Director of Public Health, receive and monitor COVID19 local test and trace data from Public Health England, to provide a single professional assessment of the situation across their local authority area. This includes detailed analysis of the data down to postcode area level, to identify community-based transmission and outbreaks in specific settings, such as care homes.

The local COVID19 assessment is described using a Red/Amber/Green (RAG) status based on the national escalation categories in the Contain Framework¹. The Director of Public Health will provide clear communication to care homes and other partners, on which RAG status applies to the local area, any changes to the RAG status, and what actions care homes are advised to take for visiting arrangements. Details are provided in the attached framework.

The current RAG status for Surrey is **GREEN (Living with COVID19, outbreak prevention and containment), which means visiting is supported as per the national guidance. Therefore, the action that you need to take includes:**

- **Updating your risk assessments and visitor policy to allow safe visiting within the setting taking into account the RAG status to ensure you are prepared should the RAG status change**

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/containing-and-managing-local-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreaks/covid-19-contain-framework-a-guide-for-local-decision-makers>

- **Ensure any visits by residents to family/friends outside the home premises have individual documented risk assessments**
- **Communicating the visitor policy to your residents, families and other visitors**
- **Where you have a current outbreak, you will need to restrict visiting as advised by Public Health England Health Protection Teams as part of outbreak management within the care home**

We would remind you that the role of the Director of Public Health is to advise on the current RAG status and provide general support and information. Public health teams will not review risk assessments for individual care homes in their area.

Outbreaks or cases of infection within your home are managed separately by Public Health England, who will provide advice on testing, visiting and home closures; which is independent of the local RAG status.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/visiting-care-homes-during-coronavirus/update-on-policies-for-visiting-arrangements-in-care-homes>

Yours sincerely



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Director of Public Health
Surrey County Council



Simon White
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Surrey County Council