

Updated Information about COVID-19 – Novel Coronavirus (23rd March 2020)

Current situation

Since Friday 20th March, there have been further national announcements linked with intensifying our efforts to stop “face to face” social contact. This is critical for reducing spread and protecting the most vulnerable, and protecting the NHS. Some new guidance for extremely vulnerable groups has also been published [here](#) alongside a suite of guidance for educational settings regarding school closures [here](#). There are many ways in which we can use technology to keep in touch with our family, friends and with people who might be more vulnerable/living alone.

The key message for all of us is that by strictly following the below, we can reduce the spread of infection, serious illness and deaths:

- **Stop all unnecessary social contact with others and unnecessary travel - see additional guidance regarding travel [here](#). This advice is particularly important for people with certain health conditions, people over the age of 70 and pregnant women. Advice [here](#)**
- **Support people who are extremely vulnerable to follow the new guidance to protect them from infection. Advice [here](#)**
- **Self-isolate with those in your household if you develop COVID-19 symptoms (however mild). Advice [here](#) and [here](#)**
- **Wash your hands regularly with soap and water and clean surfaces that are regularly touched with detergents and chlorine-based disinfectants (1000 ppm chlorine)**

All pubs, bars, nightclubs, restaurants, cafes, theatres, cinemas, concert and bingo halls, museums and galleries, spas and massage parlours, casinos and betting shops, and leisure services (including gyms) have been asked to close (as of Friday 20th March 2020). Pubs and restaurants may continue to operate as hot food takeaways. Guidance [here](#)

With regard to the further guidance that has been published over the weekend regarding "shielding" of groups who have been determined to be extremely vulnerable, based on their health conditions. They are being written to individually, and plans are also being developed locally for how this group will be supported/provided with key essentials (e.g. food and medication).

It is extremely important, as the national situation evolves, that we think about how we can best support the mental health and wellbeing of people affected by the outbreak. The Mental Health foundation has some good advice [here](#). Also, following simple advice about washing our hands more regularly with soap and water really can make a difference.

Key public facing advice.

Key links for public advice remain [here](#) and [here](#)

Please see [here](#) for national advice documents translated into a range of languages, courtesy of Doctors of the World. Please note that many of the guidelines below have also had translated version added on 20th March 2020. There is also now an easy read version of the main national advice regarding home isolation [here](#)

Travel advice

Travel advice is changing regularly as the situation changes internationally. The Foreign Office now recommend against all non-essential travel worldwide - see [here](#).

Useful guidance, resources and communications materials,

The national COVID-19 action plan can be found [here](#).

A list of all national guidance has also been published [here](#), and this contains guidance for a range of partners/sectors, including guidance for educational settings, adult social care settings, the transport sector, employers and businesses, hostels or day centres for people who are rough sleeping. This list also contains NHS guidance. New hospital discharge guidance relevant to NHS and social care was published on 19th March 2020 and can be found [here](#). Linked with the employer/business guidance, a summary of support available for businesses and individuals can be found [here](#). A suite of guidance for educational settings has been published [here](#). There is also due to be some guidance issued around community volunteers.

Please see PHE advice against use of COVID rapid tests that are being marketed [here](#)

PHE have produced a “Finding the Evidence” collection of resources - [here](#)

This week there will be a national PHE campaign launched ‘Looking out for each other’ focused on those who are well looking after those who are not well in communities. National updated campaign materials can be found [here](#)

London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine has worked with Future Learn to develop a new free to access [online learning programme](#) on COVID-19

Imperial College London have just opened up a new [online COVID course](#),