

Date: 24th March 2020

Dear Provider

Coronavirus Covid-19 – Buildings Based Day Services

Last night the Government announced further enhanced measures to the country about the need for people to remain in their homes where possible and further social distancing measures to be in place, urgently.

The County Council has considered this information and is recommending that all building based Day Opportunities for adults with a Learning Disability temporarily close, in order to adhere to the guidance, thus protecting people. We will review this recommendation as and when further national guidance is shared.

This temporary closure of services should happen as quickly and safely as possible, as per the government guidance. Where possible, the recommendation is to temporarily close the buildings today or if this is not achievable by Thursday 26th March 2020 at the latest.

We would ask you communicate these temporary closures of services to users and carers, where you have not already done so. If you have queries about this letter, please contact the All Age Disability Commissioning Team using the details at the top of this letter.

If during the period of services being temporarily closed, a person who uses services or their carer needs to talk to somebody urgently about their care and support needs, please advise them to contact either their allocated Social Care Practitioner or the relevant Adult Learning Disability Duty Team:

- Adult Learning Disability North: 01782 485020
- Adult Learning Disability South: 01543 334888
- Adult Learning Disability Young Adults Team: 01785 278472

In the letter sent on 19th March 2020 it was acknowledged these services would not be able to operate in the normal way during the peak of this virus, including not being able to support every single person directly; with a number of services already having temporarily closed or changed their operating model to meet the needs of the people who use these services in a more flexible way. The flexible and innovative approach will help to relieve any additional pressure being placed on other services during the peak of the virus, who will be at critical capacity.



Many thanks to all providers who have spoken with commissioning colleagues over the past few days and submitted information in respect of the people who use services and what flexible support can be offered to those most in need during these unprecedented times.

Commissioning colleagues and the Adult Learning Disability Teams are continuing to review the information shared by yourselves and will be in touch, as appropriate, during the course of the day:

1. Where there is an error in the personal identification information submitted by Providers;
2. Where we have not received Risk Assessments / RAG Ratings taking into consideration the closure of building based services to the majority of people;
3. Where there is a requirement to look at the provision of enhanced support for the exceptionally vulnerable people, based on their individual critical care needs.

At this time, we would be grateful if you could please implement your proposed alternative support to those in most need and urgently consider how you can support the council to deliver urgent care and support to other vulnerable people in the local communities during this period.

We acknowledge the feedback from yourselves that a number of people who use these services and their carers may require increased levels of contact and support as the weeks progress and building bases remain temporarily closed; this will be subject to regular review.

We will provide further information about Direct Payments etc in the upcoming days and weeks as this information is finalised. As stated in the previous letter, if you are able to endeavour to support people in agreed ways, as best you can, where the Council pays you, we would continue to pay at the current rate during this period.

Finally, we acknowledge a number of enquiries have been sent via email, either directly to commissioners or the ASC Incident Management Inbox – a number of these questions can be answered via our Provider Pages (considering the information contained in the residential and supported living sections at this time):

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Care-for-all-ages/Information-for-providers/Coronavirus-information/Coronavirus-COVID-19-Care-Provider-Information.aspx>

If any of the questions cannot be answered using this information, responses will be shared shortly.

I know that this is a worrying time everybody, please be assured that we will work with you to keep you updated if there are any significant updates or information that is pertinent to share as soon as is possible to do so.



Thank you again for your co-operation in these uniquely challenging times, and to all of you who have already offered a flexible response to support people in our communities.

Yours sincerely



Dr Richard Harling
Director of Health and Care

