

Visitors Policy

Update June 2025

Introduction and Background

Our top priority is to minimise the risk of infection transmission within our services and to prevent outbreaks of infectious diseases, safeguarding the health and well-being of the people we support, our staff, their families, and visitors.

This policy aligns with government guidance and involves collaboration with the local Community Infection Prevention and Control Team. It is designed to manage outbreaks of infections such as influenza, COVID-19, or norovirus, ensuring safety while maintaining meaningful connections for those we support.

Purpose

This policy aims to balance the rights of individuals to visit or be visited with the need to protect others in the care setting. It provides a framework to ensure safe visiting practices while reducing the risk of infections.

Types of Visits

Visits, may occur in various ways, including family, friends, professionals, and contractors. The primary focus is to prevent infection transmission into homes while allowing visits to proceed safely.

Key Measures for Infection Prevention and Control

1. **Sterilising Hands:**
 - Visitors must sanitise their hands upon entering and leaving the service. Hand sanitiser and/or washing facilities will be provided.
2. **Visitor Reporting:**
 - Visitors are encouraged to report any concerns they observe during their visit. Information on how to report concerns will be readily available at all services.
3. **Pre-Visit Health Screening:**
 - Visitors will be requested to complete a health screening questionnaire prior to or upon arrival, addressing symptoms or potential exposure to infectious diseases.
4. **Risk Assessments:**
 - Risk assessments will be conducted based on questionnaire responses. In uncertain cases, the Health and Safety Manager or Local Community Infectious Control Team will provide further guidance.
5. **Exceptional Circumstances:**
 - Reasonable adjustments will be made for exceptional circumstances, such as end-of-life visits.
6. **Service Lockdowns:**
 - In the event of an outbreak, services may restrict visits to essential and exceptional cases only, in consultation with health authorities.
7. **Compliance with Guidance:**
 - All visits will follow the latest national and local infection control guidance, including PPE usage, designated visiting areas, and hygiene practices.

Policies and Procedures

Infection Risk Assessments:

- Each service will maintain an Infection Risk Assessment and Infection Control Plan, outlining measures to minimise risks.

Visitor Health Checks:

- Health status checks, including questionnaires and temperature screenings, will be conducted as needed.

Visitor Responsibilities:

Visitors must adhere to the following:

- Notify the service in advance of their visit.
- Check in with the service on the day to confirm conditions are safe.
- Avoid visiting if unwell or symptomatic.
- Provide honest responses to the pre-visit questionnaire.
- Sanitise hands upon entry and exit, comply with PPE requirements, and respect other infection control measures.
- Ensure any gifts are sanitised in line with IPC guidance.

Supported Living Visits:

- Supported living settings, while personal homes, also serve as workplaces for staff. Similar infection prevention measures apply, adapted to the individual's capacity and circumstances.
- For those lacking capacity, decisions will be made in their best interests under the Mental Capacity Act (2005).

Ability to decline or suspend visiting

City Care Partnership reserves the right to assess and decide on the safety and viability of visits to ensure the well-being of all involved.

- I. **Declining Visits:**
 - Following a thorough and transparent risk assessment, City Care Partnership may decline a visit if it poses a significant risk to anyone.
 - Clear reasons for this decision will be communicated to the visitor(s) in an honest and respectful manner.
- II. **Suspending Visits During Outbreaks:**
 - Visits may be restricted or suspended immediately in response to:
 - A suspected or confirmed outbreak of an infectious disease within a service
 - A suspected or confirmed case of infection in the local area.
 - Non-essential visitors will be excluded during these periods.
- III. **Transparent Communication:**
 - Any restrictions or changes will be implemented transparently, with clear communication to residents and their families to ensure understanding and minimise distress.
- IV. **Dynamic Risk-Based Approach:**
 - City Care Partnership will adapt its visiting policies based on evolving risks in the local community, ensuring decisions reflect the current situation and prioritise safety.

This approach ensures visits remain safe, while maintaining flexibility to respond to changing circumstances.

Rights and responsibilities

This protocol includes a set of rights and responsibilities for both City Care and visitors which put the welfare and wellbeing of people we support at the heart of the visitor policy

RIGHTS	
City Care have the right to:	Visitors have the right to:

Mitigate infection risks by refusing entry or requesting that a visitor leave the premises for reasons consistent with this protocol, such as failing to meet health and safety requirements or posing a risk of infection.	<i>Access care settings in line with the visiting policy, provided they comply with all entry requirements to safeguard health and safety.</i>
Implement increased visitor restrictions during outbreaks, declared clusters, or extraordinary circumstances, ensuring such measures are proportionate and subject to regular review.	<i>Receive timely, clear, and regular updates on changes to visiting arrangements, including the prevalence of local outbreaks and transmission risks.</i>
Provide alternative means of contact, such as video calls or phone calls, and facilitate outdoor or community-based visits when in-person visits are limited.	<i>Be supported in maintaining meaningful connections through alternative methods of communication or adjusted visiting arrangements when in-person visits are restricted.</i>

RESPONSIBILITIES	
City Care have a responsibility to:	Visitor have a responsibility to:
Follow Government and local Director of Public Health guidance, including advice on visitor protocols.	<i>Play an honest role in the risk assessment process by providing accurate information.</i>
Provide a clear, publicly available visiting policy and use a dynamic, risk-based approach to facilitate visits.	<i>Follow the home's visiting policy and Visitor Code, including booking visits in advance (as required) .</i>
Communicate how visits will be conducted, including required infection control measures.	<i>Avoid visiting when unwell or displaying symptoms such as a cold, flu, fever, respiratory illness, sickness, diarrhoea, or COVID-19.</i>
Support staff with written processes and procedures to ensure visits are facilitated appropriately.	<i>Respond truthfully to screening questions and sign the visitor checklist, as required.</i>
Treat all visitors with respect and courtesy, offering clear guidance about the visiting policy.	<i>Treat staff with respect and courtesy and follow their instructions regarding the visiting policy.</i>
Provide timely communication to residents and families regarding outbreaks and their impact on visiting arrangements.	<i>Comply with infection prevention and control measures, including washing hands, adhering to designated areas, maintaining social distancing, and providing accurate contact details. Failure to comply may affect future visits.</i>

References

- National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE): Infection Prevention and Control Guidance**
Offers evidence-based guidelines on preventing and controlling infections in health and social care settings.
- Infection prevention and control in adult social care settings**
Infection prevention and control (IPC) principles for adult social care settings in England, to be used with guidance on managing specific infections. This guidance applies from 4 April 2022. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/infection-prevention-and-control-in-adult-social-care-settings>
- Infection prevention and control: resource for adult social care Published 31 March 2022**
This guidance applies from 4 April 2022. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/infection-prevention-and-control-in-adult-social-care-settings/infection-prevention-and-control-resource-for-adult-social-care>

4. **Health and Safety Executive (HSE): Controlling Risks of Infection at Work**
Practical guidance on managing infection risks in workplace environments, including care settings.
HSE Guidance on Infection Control
5. **World Health Organization (WHO): Guidelines on Infection Prevention and Control**
International standards and recommendations for preventing and controlling infections in health and care settings.
[WHO Infection Prevention and Control Guidelines](#)
6. **Skills for Care: Infection Prevention and Control Resources**
Training and resources tailored to adult social care staff for effective infection prevention.
[Skills for Care IPC Resources](#)
7. **Care Quality Commission (CQC): Infection Prevention and Control in Care Homes**
Inspection framework and key indicators for infection prevention and control compliance.
CQC Infection Control Guidance
8. **Public Health England (PHE): COVID-19 IPC Guidance for Adult Social Care**
Specific guidance related to managing COVID-19 risks in social care settings.
PHE COVID-19 IPC Guidance
9. **Local Authority Infection Prevention and Control Teams**
Many councils provide tailored guidance and resources specific to the local community's needs. Check your local authority's public health resources.
10. **Mental Capacity Act 2005 Code of Practice**
Relevant for decisions around infection control and visitor restrictions when working with individuals lacking capacity.
Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice
11. **Department of Health and Social Care: Health and Social Care Act 2008 – Code of Practice on the Prevention and Control of Infections**
A statutory code offering detailed infection control measures for regulated services.
Code of Practice

Written **October 2020**. Joseph Hughes [Regional Manager] Phillip Jones [Director of Health and Social Care]

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