21 December 2020

Dear Relative/ Carer/ Representative

Further to the UK Government and Northern Ireland Executive announcements on 19 and 20 December 2020 I am writing to update the guidance I sent to you only last week regarding the arrangements we will have in place for the Christmas period and beyond.

I am sure that you, like me, are concerned about the potential impact of the newly identified variant of the coronavirus. My role for Livability is to continue to protect the people we support and our staff from the virus and having considered the information presented by the UK Government and Northern Ireland Executive I can now advise that our arrangements are as set our below.

**Christmas Visiting Arrangements – Supported Living Services**

The national guidance for Supported Living services is as follows:

Livability strongly recommends that the additional advice from the UK Government in relation to Christmas Bubbles is followed by the people we support in Supported Living Services and their families. That additional advice is:

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| **SUPPORTED LIVING GUIDANCE ONE DAY PER PERSON ONLY NETWEEN 23-27 DECEMBER** | |
| **Visits to Supported Living services (friends and family)** | Christmas Bubble of maximum three households |
| **Visiting friends and family away from Supported Living services** | Christmas Bubble of maximum three households |
| **Medical appointments (away from supported living service)** | Recommend Essential only - notify local authority of risk, develop risk assessment to reduce risk to lowest levels |
| **Supported Living Visits (contractor/ other)** | Essential only and agreed via COVID Team/ Oncall |

* All parties to avoid all other social contact for five days before the Bubble begins
* Avoid travelling from high prevalence COVID-19 area to areas of lower COVID-19 prevalence
* Avoid overnight stays
* Consider if a visit is essential given the risks this may pose to yourselves, your loved ones and others.
* Restrict the Christmas Bubble to as few people as possible and consider doing as much as possible outdoors
* Maintain excellent ventilation when households are mixing
* Keep the Christmas Bubble visits to as short a time as possible

Outside of the Christmas Bubble and for duration of the Northern Ireland-wide National Lockdown our guidance for Supported Living services is:

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| **SUPPORTED LIVING GUIDANCE OUTSIDE OF 23-27 DECEMBER (ONE DAY ONLY PER PERSON)** | |
| **Visits to Supported Living services (friends and family)** | Only as part of a legally extended household |
| **Visiting friends and family away from Supported Living services** | Only as part of a legally extended household |
| **Medical appointments (away from supported living service)** | Recommend Essential only - notify local authority of risk, develop risk assessment to reduce risk to lowest levels |
| **Day service/ other attendance from people living in Supported Living services** | Strongly advise against – notify local authority of risk |
| **Supported Living Visits (contractor/ other)** | Essential only and agreed via COVID Team/ Oncall |

I would advise that due to the concerns we all have about the spread of COVID-19 across our communities the advice from UK Government and Northern Ireland Executive is to keep any household mixing, even in legally extended households, to an absolute minimum.

**Thank you**

I hope this letter sets out the changes to the guidance we are having to make in order to ensure we are complying with the UK Government and Northern Ireland Executive requirements. I appreciate that this is a tremendously difficult situation and I express my sincere sorrow that this special time of year will be far less special this year than it usually is. I reaffirm my promise to you that Livability is doing all it can to protect the people we support and our staff and I add that we will do all we possibly can to make Christmas as good as it can be this year for the people we support.

Yours sincerely

Jane Percy

Executive Director of Operations