21 December 2020

Dear Colleagues

I want to start by saying thank you.

I want to say thank you for the incredible commitment you have shown in this year of unprecedented challenge. Dealing with the Coronavirus pandemic was not what we had been expected to be doing this year but we have responded to the challenge magnificently. In large part that is because Livability’s frontline workforce have continued to come to work, followed the best practice guidance we have issued, and, as ever, put the people we support first. It is because of this that we have, right across the country, got an outstanding record of keeping the people we support safe.

You will be aware, I am sure, that the UK Government, Welsh Government and Northern Ireland Executive have each announced changes to the way we can spend time with our loved ones over the Christmas period. These changes are far more restrictive than had been previously envisaged and we have been told that these changes are a result of rising rates of COVID-19 infection and that household mixing is one of the contributing factors.

The national guidance for Christmas Day household mixing is:

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| **Nation** | **National Christmas Day Arrangements** |
| **England (Tiers 1-3)** | Maximum of three households |
| **England (Tier 4)** | No household mixing unless part of a legal support bubble |
| **Wales** | Two households plus one single person household |
| **Northern Ireland** | Maximum of three households (on one day between 23-27 December 2020) |

Additionally, the respective national governments have asked us all to consider whether household mixing on Christmas Day is critical and where it is not we have been asked to avoid it where we can. This means that many of us will be sending this special time of year apart from the people we love. Each national government has expressed concern about the impact of people not following the rules they have set out. I wanted to say that by following these rules you will be making a further contribution to keeping our care services as safe as possible from the transmission of COVID-19.

Aside from Christmas Day, we will see national lockdown arrangements in Northern Ireland and in Wales. In England the Tier system will continue to be in place, with the UK Government adding Tier 4 to this system. All of this means we have further challenges to work through, however, with your support I am confident we will emerge from the pandemic with a justified sense of pride at the job we have done to protect the people we support and each other from the virus.

As ever, I will ask you to pay the utmost attention to the use of PPE when working in our care services and to stringently follow hand hygiene and social distancing guidance. These protections remain our best defence against COVID-19.

The coming year will see the further rollout of the COVID-19 Vaccine which promises to bring about an end to the difficulties we have experienced this year. It is thanks to your unfaltering hard work and dedication that we approach the end of 2020 with a good record behind us and a brighter year ahead.

Thank you so much. Happy Christmas.

Yours sincerely

Jane Percy

Executive Director of Operations