



Briefing for all Lincolnshire practices on Covid-19 Response

18 March 2020

- Daily briefing will be issued at 5pm
- Will include latest national guidance, local plans, updates on actions and answers to key questions
- General queries from practices should be emailed to lincsprimary.covid19@nhs.net
Responses will be provided in the daily briefing
- Clinical forum will be established from 19 March to provide guidance regarding clinical issues, please send these to the generic email. Feedback will be provided in the daily brief.
- Local escalation/issues to be raised directly with your regular primary care team
- Additional names for the daily briefing email should be sent to the generic email address above

In today's briefing:

1. National Guidance
2. Communications
3. Digital
4. PPE
5. Finance
6. FAQ

1. National Guidance

NHS England and NHS Improvement - Coronavirus

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/primary-care/>

COVID-19: investigation and initial clinical management of possible cases

Page summary:

Information on case definitions, and the initial assessment and investigation of possible cases of COVID-19 infection.

Change made

Removed minimum dataset form. Added a note relating to testing inpatients.

18 March 2020

Emergency bill to strengthen coronavirus (COVID-19) response plans

Page summary:

New laws will be introduced to protect public health, increase NHS capacity, strengthen social care and support the public to take the right action at the right time.

Change made

First published.

17 March 2020

Stay At Home Isolation Documents. Guidance for households with possible COVID19. Includes guidance document and illustration.

18 March 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance#history>

Guidance aimed at:

- people with symptoms that may be caused by coronavirus, and do not require hospital treatment, who must remain at home until they are well
- those living in households with someone who shows symptoms that may be caused by coronavirus

The main messages are:

- if you live alone and you have symptoms of coronavirus illness (COVID-19), however mild, stay at home for **7 days** from when your symptoms started. See [ending isolation](#) section for more information
- if you live with others and you are the first in the household to have symptoms of coronavirus, then you must stay at home for 7 days, but all other household members who remain well must stay at home and not leave the house for **14 days**. The 14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the house became ill
- for anyone else in the household who starts displaying symptoms, they need to stay at home for 7 days from when the symptoms appeared, regardless of what day they are on in the original 14-day isolation period. See [ending isolation](#) section for more information
- it is likely that people living within a household will infect each other or be infected already. Staying at home for 14 days will greatly reduce the overall amount of infection the household could pass on to others in the community

- if you can, move any vulnerable individuals (such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions) out of your home, to stay with friends or family for the duration of the home isolation period
- if you cannot move vulnerable people out of your home, stay away from them as much as possible
- if you have coronavirus symptoms:
 - do **not** go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital
 - you do not need to contact 111 to tell them you're staying at home
 - testing for coronavirus is not needed if you're staying at home
- plan ahead and ask others for help to ensure that you can successfully stay at home and consider what can be done for vulnerable people in the household
- ask your employer, friends and family to help you to get the things you need to stay at home
- wash your hands regularly for 20 seconds, each time using soap and water, or use hand sanitiser
- if you feel you cannot cope with your symptoms at home, or your condition gets worse, or your symptoms do not get better after 7 days, then use the [NHS 111 online](#) coronavirus service. If you do not have internet access, call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999

Testing for coronavirus (COVID-19) will increase to 25,000 a day

18 March 2020

https://www.gov.uk/government/news/testing-for-coronavirus-covid-19-will-increase-to-25-000-a-day?utm_source=ad6f9c64-6468-485c-aa85-fb840078856b&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

- Officials are working to increase the number of tests that can be conducted by Public Health England and the NHS to 25,000 a day.
- The increased capacity is expected to be ready within 4 weeks, with highest-priority cases being tested first.
- The increased testing will also include developing a point-of-care swab test outside of hospitals, so people with suspected symptoms can quickly find out if they have coronavirus.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) guidance for employees, employers and businesses

18 March 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-employees-employers-and-businesses#history>

Updated with business support measures inclusive of:

- A new Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme
- For businesses with fewer than 250 employees, the cost of providing 14 days of Statutory Sick Pay per employee will be refunded by the government in full.
- A dedicated helpline has been set up to help businesses and self-employed individuals in financial distress and with outstanding tax liabilities receive support with their tax affairs.

Find out the number of cases and risk level in the UK, what to do if you have symptoms, and what the government is doing about the virus.

[Number of coronavirus \(COVID-19\) cases and risk in the UK](#)

17 March 2020

Whole System COVID Letter 17 March 2020



Whole system
Covid-19 letter.pdf

Key messages:

- All non-urgent elective operations to be postponed from 15th April at the latest, for a period of at least three months.
- Emergency admissions, cancer treatment and other clinically urgent care should continue unaffected.
- Roll out of remote consultations to support older or vulnerable people for routine or urgent GP, diagnostic or outpatient appointments in the coming months.
 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults>
- Cancelling all routine CQC inspections, effective immediately.
- Reviewing and where appropriate temporarily suspending certain requirements on GP practices and community pharmacists. Income will be protected if other routine contracted work has to be substituted. We will issue guidance on this, which will also cover other parts of the NHS.

2. Communications

NHSEI Daily communications briefing –17/03/2020 Novel coronavirus COVID-19

Colleagues – please see NHSEI and Public Health England updates in relation to coronavirus for your use within your organisations.

Key Messages:

- The updated posters for hospitals, GPs and pharmacists are being uploaded on to the Campaign Resource Centre and will be available imminently.
- Public Health England issued guidance relating to social distancing, following the Prime Minister’s statement yesterday.
- New visitor guidance was published on our website yesterday.
- The NHS England website is currently being updated with new content relating to primary care, reflecting the PM announcement yesterday.



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Daily comms briefing

New resources and copy for practice websites and other communication channels

17 March 2020

1. Posters

There is currently new guidance on the way and our posters are being updated. For the latest patient-facing guidance for patients, please see [here](#)

2. Web text for healthcare settings

Important information about the coronavirus (COVID-19)

The NHS in xxx and Public Health England (PHE) are well prepared for outbreaks of new infectious diseases. The NHS has put in place measures to protect patients, our community and NHS staff while ensuring as many services as possible are available to the public.

If you have symptoms associated with coronavirus including a new continuous cough and a high temperature, you are advised to stay at home for 7 days.

Please do not book a GP appointment or attend your GP practice.

If you **live with other people**, they should stay at home for at least 14 days, to avoid spreading the infection outside the home. After 14 days, anyone you live with who does not have symptoms can return to their normal routine.

But, if **anyone in your home gets symptoms**, they should stay at home for 7 days from the day their symptoms start. Even if it means they're at home for longer than 14 days. The most up-to-date public guidance is always online at www.nhs.uk/coronavirus

If your symptoms are serious, or get worse, NHS 111 has an [online coronavirus service](#) that can tell you if you need further medical help and advise you what to do.

Only call 111 direct if you are advised to do so by the online service or you cannot go online.

For the latest COVID-19 advice please visit www.nhs.uk/coronavirus

Like the common cold, coronavirus infection usually occurs through close contact with a person with novel coronavirus via cough and sneezes or hand contact.

A person can also catch the virus by touching contaminated surfaces if they do not wash their hands.

Testing of suspected coronavirus cases is carried out in line with strict guidelines.

This means that suspected cases are kept in isolation, away from public areas of GP surgeries, pharmacies and hospitals and returned home also in isolation. Any equipment that come into contact with suspected cases are thoroughly cleaned as appropriate. Specific guidance has also been

shared with NHS staff to help safeguard them and others. Patients can be reassured that their safety is a top priority, and are encouraged to attend all appointments as usual.

Everyone is being reminded to follow Public Health England advice to:

- Always carry tissues with you and use them to catch your cough or sneeze. Then bin the tissue, and wash your hands, or use a sanitiser gel.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after using public transport. Use a sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are unwell.

Add in any of the following that apply (more than one may apply):

Wording for healthcare settings where there are confirmed cases in the local area

Following the announcement that an individual in the xxx area has been confirmed as having the coronavirus, PHE is carrying out a thorough risk assessment to trace this individual's movements in the last fortnight. Patients and staff can be reassured that their safety is the top priority, and patients are encouraged to attend all appointments as usual. The local NHS and xxx Council are working closely with PHE to support this work. PHE is prioritising contacting people who might have had close and sustained contact with the individual to provide them with health advice about symptoms and emergency contact details in case they become unwell. If you have not been contacted, you do not need to take any action.

Wording for GP practice/pharmacy closed for cleaning

An individual who has been identified as a possible COVID-19 case has recently attended xxx.

To protect other patients and members of the public, the individual was kept in isolation, away from public areas of GP surgeries, pharmacies and hospitals and returned home also in isolation. In line with Public Health England (PHE) guidance, xxx is closed for cleaning to remove any potential risk for patients.

Once the cleaning is complete, the practice will reopen on xxx. Patients and staff can be reassured that their safety is the top priority, and patients are encouraged to attend all appointments as usual.

Should you need an appointment please contact XXX

Wording for healthcare settings where staff have to self-isolate

In line with Public Health England guidance, a member of staff at XXX has been asked to self-isolate to protect fellow staff members, patients and members of the public.

Steps have been taken to minimise the risk to patients and staff and we are working with individual patients to appropriately manage their care. We would like to offer assurance that it remains safe for patients to attend XXX as normal and ask patients to attend scheduled appointments as normal.

Wording for healthcare settings where staff have tested positive

The Chief Medical Officer today announced that xx new cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed in England. One of these is a clinician from XXX. We are very well prepared for incidents like this and the NHS and Public Health England are taking all necessary steps to manage the situation. All individuals who were in contact with the clinician have been identified and the appropriate measures taken. Steps have been taken to minimise the risk to patients and staff and we are working with individual patients to appropriately manage their care. We would like to offer assurance that it remains safe for patients to attend XXX as normal and ask patients to attend scheduled appointments as normal.

3.Primary care updated information

Telephone message

If you have symptoms associated with coronavirus including a new continuous cough and a high temperature, you are advised to stay at home for 7 days. Do not book a GP appointment or attend your GP practice. If you live with other people, they should also stay at home for at least 14 days, to avoid spreading the infection outside the home.

If your symptoms are serious, or get worse, NHS 111 has an [online coronavirus service](#) that can tell you if you need further medical help and advise you what to do.

Only call 111 direct if you are advised to do so by the online service or cannot go online.

For the latest COVID-19 advice please visit www.nhs.uk/coronavirus.

Online booking

If you have symptoms associated with coronavirus including a new continuous cough and a high temperature, you are advised to stay at home for 7 days. Do not book a GP appointment or attend your GP practice. If you live with other people, they should also stay at home for at least 14 days, to avoid spreading the infection outside the home.

If your symptoms are serious, or get worse, NHS 111 has an [online coronavirus service](#) that can tell you if you need further medical help and advise you what to do.

Only call 111 direct if you are advised to do so by the online service or cannot go online.

For the latest COVID-19 advice please visit www.nhs.uk/coronavirus.

SMS

For the latest Covid-19 advice please visit www.nhs.uk/coronavirus.

Coronavirus advice: if you have a new continuous cough and/or a high temperature, please stay at home for 7 days. Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital. If your symptoms are serious, or get worse, visit the [NHS 111 online service](#).

Red Whale

Red Whale is a company dedicated to the training and education of primary care clinicians. The company also provide weekly bite sized updates focusing on important issues within primary care. They have provided a COVID-19 update today



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18-march-2020-_1.pc

3. Digital

Primary Digital Group – Response to COVID 19

We will be supplying laptops to practices to enable clinical staff to work remotely. There is limited stock available at the moment so we are providing these as “practice pool laptops” so that clinicians that need to self-isolate can work remotely.

We are also in the process of setting up VPN access for all clinicians and looking at the possibilities of using a remote system such as “Away From My Desk” to allow staff to use their own devices. We expect an answer on IG compliance for “Away From My Desk” by COP today.

A questionnaire regarding laptops, VPN access, extra monitors and urgent IT requirements is going out to all practices. Please respond as soon as possible so that we can get this support out to you at pace.

In accordance with NHSE/I directives for all practices to be using online video consultation systems, QDoctor is fully enabled for use in all practices. Please make sure that you are setting up the system. Please contact Steve Pitwell Stephen.pitwell@ulh.nhs.uk for more information..

We are still waiting for NHSE to clarify the position with total triage online consultation tools for rapid deployment to practices that are not yet running systems. Contact with the Regional Director For Digital Transformation was made today and we are expecting a directive by the middle of next week latest, hopefully earlier.

IT issues.

Please continue to use the IT service desk for requests;

Service Desk Details:

T: 0300 123 1020

E: agcsu.itservicedesk@nhs.net

Self-Service: <https://ardengem.saaseu.com>

Live Chat: <https://itservices.ardengemcsu.nhs.uk>

If you have really urgent requests or issues that are not answered promptly, please contact Steve Pitwell Stephen.pitwell@ulh.nhs.uk

Important information about Microsoft Teams - remote working to support Covid-19

You will have received a communication today re: ***Important information about Microsoft Teams NHS Digital is introducing measures to support remote working across the NHS in response to the recent Covid-19 outbreak.*** In this communication there is a paragraph as follows:

What you need to do

Please inform your technical support / IT team. They will need to follow the guidance to find out what is required for your local configurations.

Please note there is no need to contact the IT desk as this is already being actioned.

4. PPE

PPE issues has the highest national focus at the moment and this update from Dale Bywater, Midland Regional Director, NHSEI, sets out the current position.

Expiry Dates:

Several providers have raised concerns that that the Personal Protection Equipment (face masks) that have been provided have had the best before date extended. The PPE is being supplied through the Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Programme (PIPP) stockpile). In the management of this stock, it has been considered prudent that Public Health England works with manufacturers to extend the life of their masks where possible, through a formal scientific testing programme, including accelerated aging, which allows for appropriate over-labelling with a later expiry date as specified by the manufacturer. These products held in the PIPP stockpile have been stored since new in temperature monitored and controlled dedicated storage facilities. There have been no temperature excursions recorded with this monitoring that would have affected or compromised the stability of the product. This is a mandatory requirement before manufactures will extend the life of their products. Therefore the masks are safe to use.

PPE Availability:

I consider that that the availability PPE to enable healthcare workers to safely complete their work is one of the most important risks in the system at the moment. We have raised this nationally on the daily calls and also raised this with the NHSE/I Executive team. There is much work happening with the supply chain and I understand there is stock available and this needs to be urgently unlocked. Yesterday we sought confirmation from all acute trusts on immediate requirements for the next 72 hours following a national request and have allocated a team at region to work with supply chain to get stocks released ASAP. once we get stock released we will move to work with you on understanding

I have also set up a dedicated team at the region to try to support the prioritisation and direction of resources as they become available this will include working with you on forward planning PPE requirements.

Primary Care (GP Practices) – PHE/NHSE have now issued an initial national contingency quantity of PPE to 7,000 GP Practices. The deliveries comprised 300 Facemasks, 300 pairs of Gloves and 400 Aprons. There is no cost for these items, they form part of the Health Emergency ‘push’

response. Larger practices will receive further deliveries in due course. Practices who did not receive any should contact the contact centre below;

National Supply Disruption line on 0800 915 9964, or email supplydisruptionsservice@nhsbsa.nhs.uk.

Social care:

If care providers have immediate concerns over their supply of PPE, there is now a dedicated line for the health and social care sector.

The National Supply Disruption line

Tel: 0800 915 9964

Email: supplydisruptionsservice@nhsbsa.nhs.uk

In the future, if a social care provider is unable to get PPE from their normal supplier, the supplier is will be asked to report this to the National Supply Disruption Response (NSDR) team (as above), who can advise on alternative suppliers.

We will circulate further information as it becomes available.

5.Finance

Lincolnshire will be working in accordance with national guidance. Details will be included in the daily briefing as these are received.

6.LINCOLNSHIRE FAQ FOR PRIMARY CARE

18 March 2020

Updates with regards Self-Isolation and PPE requirements:

Please refer to illustration included in below link (18/03/2020).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

Patients who fit the case definition for suspected Coronavirus should be kept at home and advised to self-isolate for 7 days if they live alone or 14 days for households (as per current PHE guidance). They should avoid the surgery and if possible, be given telephone or video appointments. Where this is not possible and a symptomatic patient (meeting the case definition) needs a face to face assessment, they should be seen at a different time/place to other patients. This could be at the end of the day, when cleaning can follow.

Please continue to order your PPE via the NHS Supply chain to ensure you maintain adequate stock levels. Any issues with this process need to be escalated via supplydisruptionservice@nhsbsa.nhs.uk or tel: 0800 915 9964 / 0191 283 6543.

CCG orders for PPE are also being delayed / cancelled. We will use our escalation process but cannot guarantee deliveries at this time.

Staff who need to see a symptomatic patient face to face will need to wear the following PPE:

Masks

Fluid resistant, surgical mask is recommended. Due to supply issues, a mask of a higher grade (FFP1, 2 or 3) is suitable and will not require fit testing as it will not be used for aerosol generating procedures.

Masks that have passed their expiry date will be the ones that are being released from Pandemic Flu stocks. As such, they will be appropriate for use in this instance.

Plastic apron

This does not need to be a long sleeved gown. A plastic apron is sufficient.

Gloves

As per usual standard precaution requirements.

Eye protection

Use where splashing of bodily fluids is likely to occur. Glasses do not constitute eye protection.

Can healthcare workers be tested for COVID-19?

Following the Primary Care cell meeting yesterday (17/03/2020), Silver Tactical has escalated to Gold, the significant risk around not swabbing healthcare staff. We have requested approval to produce a local protocol to swab healthcare staff in order to release staff back into the workplace where they test negative. Whilst we are awaiting this approval, please consider digital options for consultation where possible/appropriate. We will keep Primary Care networks up to date with swabbing decisions as they evolve.

UPDATE (18.03.20 1645) - New guidance has been issued with regards swabbing of healthcare workers:

https://www.gov.uk/government/news/testing-for-coronavirus-covid-19-will-increase-to-25-000-a-day?utm_source=ad6f9c64-6468-485c-aa85-fb840078856b&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

Do staff with Asthma/Diabetes etc need to stay off work?

PHE guidance should be followed and dynamic risk assessments made by each employer with Occupational Health input, if possible. Staff who have underlying chronic health conditions that are well managed would be at less risk than staff with chronic asthma who require hospital admission for management of their asthma.

Please be aware of the difference between Social Distancing and Isolation when carrying out the risk assessment. Isolation is only advised when staff become unwell with symptoms including a high temperature and/or persistent new cough.

What is the advice if I am a healthcare worker and pregnant?

“We understand that it must be an anxious time if you work in healthcare and you are pregnant, especially following the Chief Medical Officer’s advice on 16 March 2020 for all pregnant women to minimise social contact as a precautionary measure. To the best of our knowledge, most pregnant healthcare professionals are no more personally susceptible to catching the virus than their non-pregnant colleagues.

There is no convincing evidence that coronavirus infection can affect your baby’s growth, but as other similar viruses have been known to cause fetal growth restriction, an extra ultrasound scan 14 days later is advised, as a precaution.

You should discuss your individual circumstances with your local Occupational Health department.

Further guidance for pregnant healthcare workers is being sought urgently and will be published in our next update to the guidance.”

<https://www.rcog.org.uk/en/guidelines-research-services/guidelines/coronavirus-pregnancy/covid-19-virus-infection-and-pregnancy/>

Who are home visiting teams staffed by? What services are they providing?

Home Visiting will be reviewed at the county wide clinical meeting scheduled for 19th March 2020, focusing upon clinical priorities. An update will be shared following the meeting.

Can we suspend extended hours?

This will be reviewed at the county wide clinical meeting scheduled for 19th March 2020, focusing upon clinical priorities. An update will be shared following the meeting.

Will we be provided with the equipment to carry out video/telephone consultations from home?

See update within today's briefing.

How do we continue to manage patients who require bloods for INR or specialised drugs monitoring?

Again, please be aware of the difference between Social Distancing and Isolation. Isolation is only advised when patients become unwell with COVID-19 symptoms including a high temperature and/or persistent new cough. If the patient is Social Distancing due to being in an at risk group, but has no COVID-19 symptoms, then they could attend a face to face appointment either first or last thing (at the practice) in order to protect them from potential cases / other risks.

If the patient is isolating due to having COVID-19 symptoms and requires a blood test, this will need to be carried out in the patients' home by appropriate staff wearing the correct PPE as described above.

Are 111 issuing medical certificates for those patients self-isolating?

Please refer to below link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/guidance-for-employers-and-businesses-on-coronavirus-covid-19>

QOF /Enhanced services

QOF/Enhanced services will be reviewed at the county wide clinical meeting scheduled for 19th March 2020, focusing upon clinical priorities. An update will be shared following the meeting.

Should 111 be referring patients with moderate symptoms through to GP practices?

Further information has been received with regards to the expectation of Primary Care to review patients with moderate symptoms – whilst CAS are accepting these calls, and offering telephone consultations – a number of patients are requiring a face to face assessment.

This is to GPs in hours and UTC out of hours. LCHS have confirmed that they are happy to support by reviewing these patients through UTC until Monday.

Currently 95% of patients are being reviewed and closed by CAS.

The remaining small amount of patients are being sent to UTC.

Patients are being referred to GPs for complex patient advice, which would be over the telephone or if they believe they are not COVID 19.

The process for primary care is due to be discussed at the clinical forum 19th March 2020.