



## **VINCENTIAN CARE PLUS COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS) POLICY**

### **Policy Statement**

Vincientian Care Plus' first priority is always the safety of the people we support, colleagues and visitors to our premises. The organisation continues to monitor the incidence of coronavirus and the illness it causes, COVID-19, employees are asked to review the following workplace policies and guidance. It is likely this information will change as the situation evolves and becomes more known. Questions may be directed to the Management Team.

### **Guidance for Office Based Staff**

All employees are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the following terms:

- Isolation separates sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick
- Quarantine separates and restricts the movement of people who are exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick

Vincientian Care Plus is considered an employer of "Key Workers" and the Registered Manager has in place remote work options for office staff whose positions allow for this alternative. The Registered Manager will determine if the individual's position and responsibilities lend themselves to remote work or could be temporarily modified to integrate short-term remote work. For more information, please see the Vincientian Care Plus Business Continuity Plan.

### **Procedure**

#### **Guidance for Care Workers**

All staff should be vigilant for respiratory symptoms during the incubation period which can be up to 14 days following any exhibited symptoms following exposure to a possible/confirmed case of COVID-19 and should not come to work if they have a fever or continuous cough. If they develop symptoms they should stay at home and follow the seek advice from NHS Inform or occupational health department as per the local policy. During this period, symptomatic staff

and their household members should follow the 'stay at home' advice.

If you have been advised to 'self-isolate' by NHS 111 or a medical professional, you must inform the organisation as soon as possible. This does not need to be in writing. If staff are advised to self-isolate at home they should follow the stay at home guidance and they should not visit and care for individuals until safe to do so.

Vincentian Care Plus' sick leave and pay entitlements will apply. The government has promised that Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) will be given from day one of self-isolation. You may also be asked to certify your absence.

### **Personal Care**

Care workers should use personal protective equipment (PPE) for activities that bring them into close personal contact, such as washing and bathing, personal hygiene and contact with bodily fluids, following Vincentian Care Plus' **Infection Control Policy**.

Aprons, gloves and surgical masks should be used during all personal care support.

New personal protective equipment must be used for each episode of care. It is essential e.g. one set of gloves used to support with personal care, another set of gloves used for any cleaning/household tasks. Staff to ensure they wash their hands with warm water and soap after each task and in between each change of gloves. Staff should ensure that personal protective equipment is stored securely within disposable rubbish bags.

These bags should be placed into another bag, tied securely and kept separate from other waste within the room. This should be put aside for at least 72 hours before being put in the usual household waste bin as per the government **Guidance COVID-19: guidance on home care provision - Updated 19 March 2020**.

If the individual receiving care and support has symptoms of COVID-19, then the risk of transmission should be minimised through safe working procedures detailed in this policy and in the organisation's Infection Control policy.

If neither the care worker nor the individual receiving care and support is symptomatic, then no personal protective equipment is required above and beyond normal good hygiene practices.

General interventions may include increased cleaning activity and keeping property properly ventilated by opening windows whenever safe and appropriate.

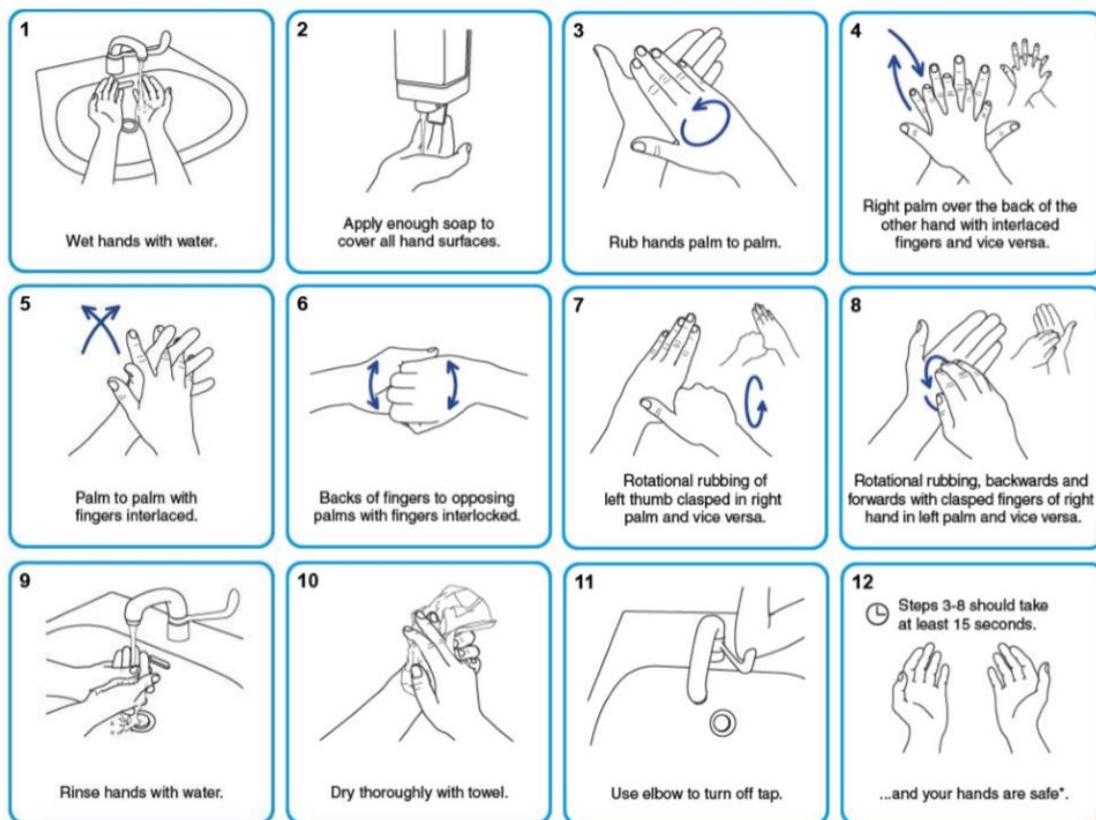
Care workers should follow advice on hand hygiene.

## Staff Uniforms

If possible, laundry services should be used to launder staff uniforms. If this is not available uniforms should be transported home in a disposable plastic bag. Uniforms should be laundered:

- separately from other household linen
- in a load not more than half the machine capacity
- at the maximum temperature the fabric can tolerate, then ironed or tumble dried

## Hand Washing



## Domestic Support

If care workers undertake cleaning duties, then they should use usual household products, such as detergents and bleach as these will be very effective at getting rid of the virus on surfaces. Frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned regularly.

Personal waste (for example, used tissues, continence pads and other items soiled with bodily fluids) and disposable cleaning cloths can be stored securely within disposable rubbish bags.

These bags should be placed into another bag, tied securely and kept separate from other waste within your own room. This should be put aside for at least 72 hours before being put in the usual household waste bin for disposal as normal.

### **Laundry**

If care workers support the individual with laundry, then they should not shake dirty laundry before washing. This minimises the possibility of dispersing virus through the air.

Wash items as appropriate, in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Dirty laundry that has been in contact with an ill person can be washed with other people's items. If the individual does not have a washing machine, wait a further 72 hours after the 7-day isolation period has ended; the laundry can then be taken to a public laundromat.

Items heavily soiled with body fluids, for example, vomit or diarrhoea, or items that cannot be washed, should be disposed of, with the Service User's consent.

### **Individual being cared for does not have symptoms but is part of a household that is isolating**

If the Service User which the organisation provides care for does not have any symptoms but resides with individual(s) who are self-isolating, the organisation would ask that individuals presenting with symptoms or self-isolating stay away from the Service User as much as possible.

If the Service User being cared for and their worker can remain at a safe protected distance from the symptomatic member of the household, then care can be provided without additional precaution. This would apply, for example, where the symptomatic family member can remain in their own room, is using separate bathroom facilities and is observing robust isolation procedures, staying 2 metres away from other family members.

If the household member is self-isolating, they should be advised that prior to the arrival of the carer, they should move to another room within the house and remain there for the duration of the home visits.

Where this is not possible – and this will vary on a case-by-case basis – the same procedures should be adopted as if the person being cared for did have symptoms of COVID-19. Care should continue to be taken to limit contact with any household member that has symptoms.

(see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-residential-care-supported-living-and-home-care-guidance/covid-19-guidance-on-home-care-provision> )

**Staff with underlying health conditions that put them at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19, including those who are immunosuppressed, should not provide direct care to patients with possible or confirmed COVID-19.**

## **Guidance for Management**

Management will continue to review the list of **Service Users and staff**. The Quality & Compliance Manager, Care Coordinators and Field Care Supervisors will need to ensure that it is up to date, including levels of informal support available to individuals. This information may be shared with the Local authority intermittently at the discretion of the Registered Manager and GDPR guidance.

The organisation will work with the Local Authority and professionals involved in the recycle of support to establish plans for mutual aid, taking account of the Vincentian Care Plus Business Continuity Plan, and may consider arrangements to support sharing of the workforce between home care providers, and with local primary and community services providers; and with deployment of volunteers where that is safe to do so.

Information regarding arrangements that local authorities, CCGs, and NHS 111 are putting in place to refer vulnerable people self-isolating at home to volunteers who can offer practical and emotional support will be cascaded to all staff actively working in the office and field as appropriate.

### **Staff Cohorting (working in dedicated teams)**

The organisation will continue to assign a dedicated team of staff to care for individuals in isolation is an additional infection control measure which can help prevent onward spread of infection. This should be implemented whenever there are sufficient levels of staff available (so as not to have negative impact on non-affected patients care).

### **Staff Management**

If anyone becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature in the business or workplace they should be sent home and advised to follow the stay at home guidance.

If they need clinical advice, they should go online to NHS 111 or call 111 if they don't have internet access. In an emergency, call 999 if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. Do not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.

**If a member of staff has helped someone who was taken unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves.** They should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell with symptoms consistent with coronavirus infection.

### **Travel arrangements**

Anyone who has a new, continuous cough or a high temperature should be advised to quickly and directly return home and to remain there and initiate household isolation. If they have to

use public transport, they should try to keep away from other people and catch coughs and sneezes in a tissue.

**Communication**

The organisation’s management team will monitor staff working from home and keep in touch with them. Make sure they understand any monitoring system and procedures you use. These may include:

- When supervisors should visit and observe field staff
- Knowing where all staff are, with pre-agreed intervals of regular contact, using phones, email etc
- Other devices for raising the alarm, operated manually or automatically
- Monitoring of the ECM system to ensure staff have attended all visits

Regular back up reports will be run from the rostering system periodically throughout the day.

**Risk Assessments**

As required by Regulation 3 of The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, employers must make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to the health and safety of their employees to which they are exposed whilst they are at work; and the risks to the health and safety of persons not in their employment arising out of or in connection with the conduct by their undertaking.

Any assessment must be reviewed if:

- there is reason to suspect that it is no longer valid; or
- there has been a significant change in the matters to which it relates; and whereas a result of any such review changes to an assessment are required

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| <b>Overall and final responsibility for staff risk assessment arrangements:</b>                                     |
| Board of Trustees, Registered Manager   |
| <b>Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practice:</b>                                     |
| Quality & Compliance Manager & Registered Manager   |
| <b>Responsibility for undertaking the Service User risk assessments:</b>  |
| Field Care Supervisor & Quality & Compliance Manager  |
| <b>Responsibility for monitoring Government updates and disseminating information to the office and field team:</b> |
| Quality & Compliance Manager and Registered Manager   |

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| <b>Responsibility for undertaking an annual audit of general risk assessment arrangements:</b>   |
| The Registered Manager   |
| <b>All employees are required to:</b>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperate with the Company and co-workers on health and safety matters to help everyone meet their legal requirements;</li> <li>• Respect and implement NHS Guidance on 'How to avoid catching and spreading coronavirus (COVID-19)';</li> <li>• Adhere to Government coronavirus (COVID-19) 'Stay at home guidance for employees';</li> <li>• Report all health and safety concerns to an appropriate person.</li> </ul> |

### Policy Reference Information

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| Policy Name                                   | COVID-19 Policy  |
| Implementation Date                           | March 2020   |
| Review date                                   | April 2020 (unless legislation or guidance changes before) |
| Next review date                              | May 2020   |
| Person responsible for monitoring this policy | Registered Manager   |