

Re-introduction of Care Home Visiting Policy

Introduction of Policy

SLW has introduced this policy following the new guidance received from the government, which outlines that visiting into care homes is being re-introduced from the 2nd December 2020.

The National Testing Programme has started to roll-out visitor testing in care homes. This will enable care homes to offer regular testing of visitors, and when combined with other infection prevention and control measures (such as PPE), can support more meaningful visits with loved ones. SLW are determined to help our care homes and families work together to find the right balance between the benefits of visiting on wellbeing and quality of life, and the risk of transmission of COVID-19 to social care staff and vulnerable residents.

At the time of being notified of the changes with very little time to prepare, SLW had to prepare the testing site, visiting area, policies and procedure etc. SLW will be reviewing policies and procedures on our current visiting.

SLW understand that new guidance can provide families with an overwhelming relief knowing that faith has been restored and families will be eager to want to return to some kind of normality of living. SLW will need to ensure measures are put in place before visiting can commence to ensure that all our most vulnerable residents are protected and the risks of COVID-19 entering any of our homes is minimised where possible.

Policy

SLW has put measures in place that are required to work in-line with the ongoing needs of the business, whilst also being able to welcome families back into the care home but in a safe and practical manner.

We recognise that the ongoing pandemic has created difficulties in being able to sustain a normality of living for us all therefore, we have had to review our policy and procedures and have highlighted in this policy measures that are being put in place within our care homes.

SLW have considered that visiting inside the home will need to be limited to 30 minutes per visitor in the designated visiting area. This will be reviewed in-line with any changes to government guidance and with the ongoing needs to the business.

There will be arranged pre-booked appointments and as SLW are following a change in guidance on 17th May 2021, each service user can have 5 nominated visitors only and will be required to visit at separate times (max 2 together) once a day. This will be regularly reviewed, and families will be updated with any changes. Window visits will continue, and we will continue to honour these requests where feasible.

Visits outside of the care home

Following a relaxation of Covid guidelines from the government and the announcement that families can take their loved ones outside of the home, SLW has worked to ensure that this can be carried out safely and will complete relevant risk assessments and review policies and procedures inline.

All appointments must be pre-booked, and visits can only take place outside and not indoors.

The necessary steps are to be considered before any visits outdoors can be given the go ahead:

1. Pre-book appointments only and a risk assessment conducted to determine any risk factors.
2. Location of visit, number of visitors, toilet facilities, vaccine status are just some of the factors taken into consideration for the risk assessment.
3. Every person involved in the visit must attend the centre to have a LFT test carried out and provide a negative result.
4. SLW will provide all parties with a face mask, disposable apron, and gloves for the outdoor visit.
5. Estimated time of returning.
6. Nominated person will be provided with a handover which will include: SALT requirements, allergies, medication, mobility, and continence needs.
7. All visitors are to comply with the following procedures put in place by SLW and any visitor who does not, will not be able to visit or enter the home.
8. All visits to the home must be made via a pre-booked appointment only. No visits can go ahead should any person arrive without an appointment.

Visiting Inside the Home

SLW have put appropriate precautionary measures in place following the change in guidance regarding testing of visitors. These measures are necessary to allow families to be able to return and safely visit their relatives they have spent so long apart from through the pandemic.

1. All visitors are to comply with the following procedures put in place by SLW and any visitor who does not, will not be able to visit or enter the home.
2. All visits to the home must be made via a pre-booked appointment only. No visits can go ahead should any person arrive without an appointment.
3. Visitors are to attend their pre-booked appointment and must go straight to the designated testing area. Visitors are required to attend wearing their own face mask with no persons exempt and a face mask must be worn at ALL times.
4. Upon entering the designated swabbing area, a staff member will be on hand to ensure Infection Control Procedures are carried out and visitors will be prompted with hand hygiene.

5. Visitors will be asked to take a test using a new technology called a Lateral Flow Test (LFT) and will be tested before visiting to check if any visitor currently has Covid-19.
6. Staff will ask the visitor to carry out a throat and nose swab every time they visit and then we will let the visitor know their result in 30 minutes. Staff will ask the visitor to complete the swabbing themselves, supervised by a trained staff member. A swab is a small piece of soft, absorbent material on a plastic stick that is used to take a sample from your nose and throat. If the visitor is unable to carry out this test effectively staff will perform this once a consent form is completed.
7. The visitor who has completed a test will then be asked to wait in a different area whilst they await a result. Dependent on the result the visitor will be advised if they are able to enter the care home.
8. Visitors will be provided with appropriate PPE when entering the care home and Infection Control Procedures adhered to. Visitors will then be escorted to the designated area or bedroom.
9. Should a visit take place within a bedroom due to the physical condition of a service user, staff will explain the procedure to the visitor and that they must remain in the bedroom at all times. Should a visitor require assistance then they are to use the nurse call. PPE must remain worn at all times.
10. Any visitor in breach of not appropriately wearing PPE, visiting will be ceased and they will be asked to leave.
11. SLW are duty bound to abide by the outcome of the result and any antisocial behaviour will not be tolerated, and no visit will be permitted internally.

Dependent on the outcome of the result

We will tell you your result and NHS Test & Trace will also send your result via SMS and/or the e-mail that you provided on the online registration form.

- **Positive** – you will not be able to visit. You must go home immediately and self-isolate. You will have to take a second test which is a confirmatory PCR test which we will provide and register for you. You will receive your result in around 72 hours and you need to self-isolate until you get your result. If you test positive, NHS Test & Trace may contact you to ask you for your contacts.
- **Inconclusive** – we will ask you to do another LFT test. If this is inconclusive too, You will be invited to rearrange your visit.
- **Negative** – your visit will be able to go ahead, as long as you comply with all other infection prevention and control measures (see below). This does not guarantee that you definitely do not have Covid-19, so we still need to make sure visits take place in a safe way, such as ensuring you wear your PPE at all times.

SLW has collaborated relevant documentation that has been sent to families. These templates are outlined in the following appendixes.

Appendix 1 – This letter was written and sent to each NOK providing reassuring and supporting information of the changes to visiting procedures.

Dear Family,

We are pleased to announce that following the Covid-19 Winter Testing Update, the National Testing Programme has started to roll-out visitor testing in care homes. This will enable care homes to offer regular testing of visitors, and when combined with other infection prevention and control measures (such as PPE), can support more meaningful visits with loved ones. We are determined to help our homes and families work together to find the right balance between the benefits of visiting on wellbeing and quality of life, and the risk of transmission of COVID-19 to social care staff and vulnerable residents.

Please bear with us (SLW Limited) at this time as we received this guidance with only 5 days to prepare the testing site, visiting area, policies and procedure ETC, we will be reviewing our policies and procedure on our visiting regular, currently visiting inside the home will be limited to 30 minutes in the designated visiting area, the visiting inside the home will be dependent on the test result as we are duty bound to abide by the result and any antisocial behaviour will not be tolerated and you will not be permitted to visit internally,

Our care home will start testing visitors from 02/12/2020. Please continue to book appointments in order to visit as we have been doing.

This letter sets out more about what the testing process will involve, what it will mean for you and other precautions we ask that you take to keep your loved ones and all our residents and staff safe.

In the event of an outbreak in our care home, please note that apart from in exceptional circumstances, visits will not be going ahead.

What does testing involve?

You will be asked to take a test using a new technology called a Lateral Flow Test (LFT). You will be tested before visiting to check if you currently have Covid-19.

For this, we will ask you to do a throat and nose swab every time you visit and then we will let you know your result in 30 minutes. We will ask you to complete the swabbing yourself, supervised by a trained staff member. A swab is a small piece of soft, absorbent material on a plastic stick that is used to take a sample from your nose and throat. If you are unable to carry out this test effectively staff will perform this for you once a consent form is completed.

The test is very straightforward and you will be supported throughout the process by a member of staff from the care home. Full instructions will be provided to you upon your scheduled visit.

Key steps you should be prepared for during the test include:

1. When you first enter care home

- You will be provided with PPE and asked to put it on as advised by a member of staff. This will include gloves, mask and apron. See the end of this letter for a pictorial guide on how to correctly put on and take off PPE. A staff member will help you with this.
- Your temperature will be taken by a member of staff.
- You will be asked to sign a consent form to take the test and share personal information with us so we can record and tell you your result.
- You will be checked in for your visit.

2. You will then be asked to register for your test

- This is how NHS Test & Trace can link you to your test sample and collect contact details to send you your result.
- This will be an online form on an iPhone that we will provide.
- If you cannot complete this form yourself, a staff member can help you.
- To complete the registration form, our staff will provide you with:
 - 3 copies of your test kit barcode -- used to track your individual test
 - The test site ID number -- used to link your test to the care home
- Please make sure you keep the barcode copies with you.
- Please see the end of this letter for a pictorial guide on how to register your test kit.

3. Take your test:

- After you check in, you will be given a swab.
- You will then need to take your own throat and nose swab, supervised by one of our trained staff members. We will walk you through how to swab yourself which will only take about 30 seconds to do.
- Once you have handed over the swab, you will be asked to wait until your result is ready which will take approximately 30 minutes.

4. What does my result mean?

We will tell you your result and NHS Test & Trace will also send your result via SMS and/or the e-mail that you provided on the online registration form.

- **Positive** – you will not be able to visit. You must go home immediately and self-isolate. You will have to take a second test which is a confirmatory PCR test which we will provide and register for you. You will receive your result in around 72 hours and you need to self-isolate until you get your result. If you test positive, NHS Test & Trace may contact you to ask you for your contacts.
- **Inconclusive** – we will ask you to do another LFT test. If this is inconclusive too, You will be invited to rearrange your visit.
- **Negative** – your visit will be able to go ahead, as long as you comply with all other infection prevention and control measures (see below). This does not guarantee that you definitely do not have Covid-19, so we still need to make sure visits take place in a safe way, such as ensuring you wear your PPE at all times. If you have any questions about this, please do ask.

It's important to recognise that a negative test will provide us with some assurance as to whether you are carrying the COVID-19 virus. However, it is not a guarantee. To keep your loved one and our care home safe, we ask that you please follow the below guidelines:

- Stay home if you are feeling unwell, including if you have a fever, a cough or a change in your taste and smell.
- Follow national guidance outside of your visit, including limiting your contact with other people and wearing a mask in public if possible.
- Observe social distancing with anyone outside of your household or bubble and wash your hands regularly.

During your visit – Do's and Don'ts

Inside the care home, we ask that you continue to wear your face covering and any other PPE that you were asked to wear by a member of staff. Please continue with our visiting policy throughout the visit with in the designated visiting area,

Other behaviours that are allowed during your visit:

- Provided you are wearing appropriate PPE, and following other infection control measures then it will be possible for you to be have physical contact with your loved ones, such as providing personal care, holding hands and a hug.

Behaviours that are not allowed during your visit:

- Taking off any PPE according to guidance from the member of staff.
- Entering into any part of the home that is not designated for your visit.

Please see full list of rules included with this letter.

Thank you in advance for your patience and cooperation. We will continue to work hard to support and improve meaningful visits with our residents.

Yours sincerely,



Helen Featherstone

(Manager)

The following pictorial guide will be displayed within testing designated areas for all visitors to read and follow.

Appendix 1

Pictorial Guide – Self-swabbing instructions

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

NHS
Test and Trace

Pass your barcode to the Processing Operative. Once they hand you swab, peel the packaging open and hold the end of the swab.

Find tonsils at back of mouth (or where they would have been if they are removed), using mirror to help you – this is where you will swab your sample.

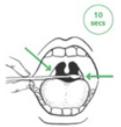
Gently blow your nose into a tissue then make sure to wash your hands.

Open the swab package and gently take out the swab, holding it at the far end from the tip. **Do not touch the tip of the swab.**

Holding the swab in your hand, open your mouth wide and rub in the fabric tip of the swab over both tonsils (or where they would have been) at the back of your throat for 10 seconds (use a mirror to help you do this). Carefully remove the swab stick from the back of your throat.

Put the same end of the same swab gently into one nostril until you feel a slight resistance (about 2.5cm or 1 inch up your nose). Rotate the swab for 10-15 seconds and slowly remove it. You only need to sample one nostril. If you have a piercing, use the other nostril.

After collecting the sample, hold the swab up right in your hand, do not put it down, and wait until a member of staff is able to receive it from you.




Pictorial Guide – Putting on and removing PPE

OFFICIAL – SENSITIVE – COMMERCIAL

NHS
Test and Trace

PUTTING ON (DONNING) PPE

To be shared with visitors upon entry to the care home.

OFFICIAL – SENSITIVE – COMMERCIAL

NHS
Test and Trace

REMOVING (DOFFING) PPE

To be shared with visitors upon entry to the care home.



Remove gloves, grasp the outside of the cuff of the glove and peel off, holding the glove in the gloved hand, insert the finger underneath and peel off second glove.



Perform hand hygiene using alcohol hand gel or rub, or soap and water.



Snap or unfasten apron ties the neck and allow to fall forward. Snap waste ties and fold apron in on itself, not handling the outside as it is contaminated, and put into clinical waste



Perform hand hygiene using alcohol hand gel or rub, or soap and water.



Remove surgical mask.



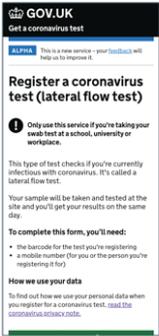
Now wash your hands with soap and water.

Pictorial Guide: Test Kit Registration

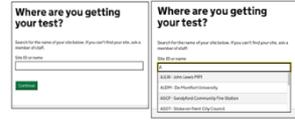
1 NAVIGATE TO THE PORTAL:
After you check in for your visit, you must register details with the test kit barcode.

gov.uk/enter-lateral-flow-test

2 START REGISTRATION:
Read the guidance and tap "Start now".



3 ENTER TEST SITE ID:
Enter the ID of your test site.



4 SELECT TEST CENTRE:
Select your test site from the returned list.



5 ENTER THE DATE AND TIME:



6 ENTER PERSONAL DETAILS:
The following details will need to be provided:

- Date of birth
- Name
- Gender
- Ethnic group
- If they have coronavirus symptoms
- Home address
- Contact details

7 REGISTRATION COMPLETE:
You are now ready to provide the test sample.

Appendix 2 – Covid visitors consent

Consent to COVID-19 Swabbing

Name (print):

Service user visiting:

I consent for a COVID-19 specimen to be taken from my throat and nasal, by a competent member of staff and my personal details to be taken and shared with the relevant agencies where applicable.

Date:

Signed:

Appendix 3 – Family visiting letter

●●● SLW

Dear family,

After what has been a very long and difficult year, I am finally in a position to bring some positive news.

On the afternoon of the 26th of November 2020 I received confirmation that we are to receive a rapid testing facility which will enable us to provide some meaningful internal visits for you and your relative who is in our care.

Whilst we are all very excited about this news there is much work to be done, and procedures must be put in place to continue to keep our residents as safe as possible.

We anticipate that testing will be available from the 2nd of December but this will be dependent upon receiving all equipment in time, and being able to train the staff.

Initially we will be allowing each resident two internal visits per week, which can be by 2 different family members. This will be reviewed once we fully know how the whole system will work and what the implications will be, as we have received very little guidance at present.

All visitors must be tested prior to every visit which will occur on site, visits will be time limited to 30 minutes, only one visitor per resident at any time, no children under the age of 18 will be allowed, and where possible visits will take place in a communal designated area. Full details are included in this information.

All visits must be booked in advance and walk in requests cannot be permitted.

Other visiting will still be encouraged in addition such as, window visits Skype/WhatsApp video calling etc.

Although this is fantastic news may I remind you that Covid has not gone away, and we must continue to keep our residents and each other as safe as we possibly can. We are duty-bound to abide by test results and any antisocial behaviour or rule breaking will not be tolerated. You will be asked to leave if this occurs, and any future internal visits may be denied.

I am sure you will all be eager to visit your loved one, but may I please ask that you bear with us as this is new territory for us and we will be developing our procedures as we go along.

I look forward to welcoming you all back,

Take care

See you soon.

Helen Featherstone
(Manager)

Appendix 4 – Track and Trace

●●● SLW
Track and Trace

This form is for the purpose of contact tracing during the course of the COVID-19, this information will be stored for tracing purposes only.

Name of service user visiting:	
Date:	Time:
Location of visit:	Duration of Visit:
Temperature:	
Print Name:	
Address:	
Email:	
Telephone number:	
Relationship to service user:	
Have you felt unwell recently – especially with a cough, breathlessness, tiredness, a temperature or vomiting or diarrhoea?	
Have you had a recent onset of a new continuous cough?	
Have you been in contact with someone, in the past 14 days, who is suspected of having or is confirmed as having COVID-19?	
Have you been advised by your GP or other NHS professional that you should not be visiting a care home?	
Have you noticed a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste and smell	
How have you travelled today? i.e. Bus, Car, Walk, Public Transport	
If travelled in a car, have you car shared?	
Signature:	

Appendix 5 – Visiting over Christmas Period



Visiting over the festive period

As we are all aware the festive season is approaching and we will try our utmost to ensure visits to your loved ones can be facilitated.

Christmas visits will be limited for internal visits to allow all families to opportunity to see their loved one. Window visits will continue to be arranged by appointment over this period.

Please find below the following information and guidance that will be required over the Christmas and new year period.

- Testing will still apply for all Christmas and New Year visiting.
- PPE must be worn at all times during the visit and hands must be sanitised
- Visiting over Christmas eve, Christmas day, Boxing day, New year's eve and New Years day will be limited to 15 minutes per visit to ensure that all service users have a visit during the festive period.
- Bookings will need to be made from the 14th December for Christmas visits over the days specified and visiting will be allocated on a first come first served basis.
- Any cancellations must be in advance so that this visit can be offered to another family member.
- Gifts or cards are to be delivered to the home by the **20th December** so that these can be quarantined for the correct amount of time. Cards or gifts arriving after this date will not be able to be given to the residents on Christmas day.
- Please do not bring gifts with you on Christmas day, as this may cause upset as the residents will not be permitted to open this for a minimum of 72 hours.
- Families are requested to let the home know if they wish for presents to be kept and opened on their visit with their family member. If no request is received the resident will open their gifts with the staff or when Santa visits on Christmas morning.

We appreciate that all family members would like to spend time with their loved ones at Christmas and we are trying our best to ensure this can happen in the safest way possible.

Appendix 6 – Visiting Rules



Visiting Rules

With the happy introduction of visiting within SLW LTD Care Centres and the ever-changing guidance surrounding visiting, we have implemented rules to promote the safety of all involved, as we have a duty of care to not only our Service Users and staff, but also to yourselves. This will be reviewed on a regular basis.

You MUST agree to the following:

- Only one family member to visit at any one time
- No one under the age of 18 will be permitted to visit.
- You must complete Track and Trace form provided in full and honestly
- You must be tested every time you visit internally
- You must arrive on time for your test.
- You must have test taken 30 minutes prior to your visit
- If you are late for your test your visit may still end at the pre-allocated time
- You must abide by the test results and the implications if you obtain a positive or inconclusive result
- PPE must be worn at all times; no eating or drinking when in the designated visiting area, no taking off the mask to kiss your loved one.
- Contact is allowed, but breaches of PPE will result in the visit being terminated.
- You must don and doff PPE at the appropriate station located at the main entrance of the building.
- You must sanitise your hands before entering the building
- Once in the designated visiting area, you are not permitted to enter another area of the home
- If your visit is taking place within your loved ones bedroom (in exceptional circumstances only), you must remain in that room for the entirety of your visit and must summon staff using the nurse call within the room to escort you out of the building.
- The visiting policy is available for you to read if you wish.
- SLW LTD reserve the right to refuse visiting for safety reasons, and if the home has an outbreak all visiting will cease immediately with no notice being given.

Each visit will last 30 minutes (excluding specific days – see Christmas visiting sheet) and staff will supervise all visits. If any of the rules above are breached, your visited will be terminated and you will be asked to leave.

If you agree to all rules, please sign and print your name below.

Signed:Print
name:

Service User
name:

Relationship to Service
User:

Date:

Signed on behalf of SLW Ltd	Helen Featherstone
Date of original	27 th November 2020
Policy amended	18 th May 2021
Policy review date	31 st March 2022