

Keeping safe in residential care settings during the Pandemic of 2020-2021 in England

February 2021



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This book is part of the UK Dementia Care Book Club series. The style, content and layout of this book has been inspired by the books written in the series 'Carry on Reading in Dementia' by Gail Elliot Gerontologist and Dementia Specialist, DementiAbility, Canada.

Writing books that enable people living with dementia to continue to enjoy reading and sharing a book is based on the research of Dr Alan B. Stevens and Dr Cameron Camp.

An important feature of the book is the size, type of font and layout of the material, which has been tested in individual and group settings by people living with dementia. Another key feature is the Montessori approach of how a person is invited to join the book club, the beauty of the book and ensuring the environment is carefully prepared.

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Factual accuracy: Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this book is correct and in line with Public Health England guidance available at the time of publication. No responsibility can be taken if this book is used for anything other than reading and discussing or if the book is used after Public Health guidance has altered.

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Important Message

A serious virus is spreading in our community and around the world. It is called the Coronavirus or COVID-19.

The symptoms include, but are not limited to, a cough, fever, difficulty breathing or loss of taste and smell.

We are doing all we can to prevent the spread of this virus. Here are some important things to know. This includes:

- **Rules about visiting might change**
- **Meals will be provided in your room if you are unwell**
- **Staff will wear protective clothing to protect you and them**
- **All residents and staff must wash and / or sanitize hands very regularly**
- **Everyone must try to keep their distance from each other**

How does the virus spread?

The World Health Organization says that Coronavirus (COVID-19):

“Can spread from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth which are spread when a person with Coronavirus coughs or exhales”.

Next
Reader,
Please

Facts About COVID-19

Coronavirus (COVID-19) has been spreading around the globe. The virus has spread to many people, in all parts of the world, and is therefore referred to as a pandemic.

In today's world, many people travel, making it easier for a virus to spread to communities large and small. The virus has spread around the world affecting people as far away as Brazil, Italy and China. World health leaders are continuing to establish action plans to help stop the virus from spreading.

Next
Reader,
Please

The pandemic began in the UK in March 2020, and for many weeks no one could leave home. As the virus got under control, rules were relaxed, and the country began to come out of 'lockdown'.

This means everyone had to stay at home unless they were going to work, doing essential shopping and having medical care or exercising, such as going for a walk.

Sadly, as the autumn and winter arrived the virus has got worse again and new restrictions have been put in place to try and keep everyone safe.

This has been a difficult time for everyone.

Next
Reader,
Please

What we all need to do.

The most important message from our Government is that everyone must stay at home, stay alert and limit contact with others.

We must all remember three things.

- Wash our hands very regularly for 20 seconds and / or use hand sanitizer.
- Wear a face covering in shops, on public transport and when asked to.
- Keep space and stay 6 feet apart when possible.

Next
Reader,
Please

There are different rules across the four countries of the UK. In January 2021 the government had to bring in another 'lockdown' in England. Once again non-essential shops, hotels pubs restaurants, cinemas and hairdressers had to close. The only shops that could stay open were those that sell essential things like food, medicines and household goods.

As these rules are always changing, we must rely on the news to keep us updated.

Next
Reader,
Please

Before the lockdown there were different rules in different parts of England, depending on how many cases were reported in each region. Rules and restrictions change regularly and can be different across different parts of England.

The government wants to slow the spread of the virus to protect the NHS so that it can care for us if we need their services. The new rules will keep us updated.

Next
Reader,
Please

Schools are closed and students have had to learn at home using the internet. This may change as things improve.

There were no team sports for many months. When they started again spectators were not permitted in the stadiums which made the atmosphere very different.

The Grand National, the Boat Race and Wimbledon were all cancelled. Even the 2021 Olympic Games have been postponed until 2021. However this could be postponed again.

Next
Reader,
Please

The good news after, is that Scientists have developed a vaccination that will help reduce the effects of the coronavirus.

The NHS is providing the coronavirus vaccination for everyone in the whole of the UK. People who live in care homes, together with the staff, will be the first to have the vaccination.

The government hopes that in the coming months, life will start returning to normal.

It is important to keep safe until everyone has had the vaccination.

Next
Reader,
Please

The rules have been put in place to keep people from coming into close contact with each other. Staying apart from people is called social distancing. Health experts recommend that people stay at least 2 metres (just over 6 feet or the length of a bed) away from each other, to ensure they do not spread the virus.

The biggest challenge is that people may not know they have the virus, because it can take up to 14 days before they have the symptoms.

If we all keep our distance, we can help to keep each other as safe as possible.

Next
Reader,
Please

Life in care homes has changed too.

You may find that where you are living, people who help you also wear protective clothing. This special protection is used to keep everyone – including you – as safe as possible.

Other changes may be that the chairs have been moved further apart and there are fewer cushions, ornaments, and other things around the home.

Next
Reader,
Please

All these changes are done to help stop the spread of the virus.

Visitors have not been able to come into care homes for many months.

The government is continuing to look at ways to improve visiting arrangements. Families may soon be able to have a COVID test and if they do not have the disease, they will be allowed to visit their family member inside the care home. Rules may still change regularly, and sadly touching, hugging or kissing each other may not be allowed, until the scientists are sure it is safe.

Next
Reader,
Please

Many people believe that Health and Social Care workers have been heroes during these difficult times.

They are doing their best to care for everyone who needs care and support but cannot do their job without other workers helping to keep things running.

The cleaning staff, catering staff and maintenance staff are all playing their part and as a society we should be very thankful to every one of them.

Next
Reader,
Please

We also need to thank those who continue to make sure we have food and essential services in our community. Workers like supermarket workers, lorry drivers, electrical, water, telephone, and gas engineers have been vital.

The country has also learned how we cannot live without unsung heroes like the refuse collectors and postal workers.

Next
Reader,
Please

If a person becomes infected with Coronavirus, they are asked to isolate so that the virus does not spread. This will mean staying in your room until you are better. Some people might have to be admitted to hospital, if the symptoms get worse.

Staff will wear protective clothing to ensure the virus does not pass from one person to another. Everyone must be incredibly careful as staff could catch it too and spread it to other residents and their own families.

Next
Reader,
Please

The rules and restrictions must stay in place until everyone in the care home has had the vaccination and the government says it is safe to mix normally.

Infection control experts also say that social gestures such as shaking hands and hugging must stop during this time and we need to find other ways to let people know that we care.

So, smile brightly or wave from afar and let everyone know you are happy to see them.

Next
Reader,
Please

The end of the pandemic is in sight.

The vaccine provides hope, although it will take many months for life to go back to normal.

No one knows how long these new rules will be in place. Let us all work together to keep our distance, wash our hands regularly and do our part to stop the virus from spreading.

Remember what we are being asked to do:

- Wash your hands
- Wear a face covering (if needed)
- Keep your distance from other people

**Stay at home – Protect the NHS
– Save lives**

Stay safe and keep well

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