

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

April 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. For many weeks, people were asked to stay at home. This was referred to as “Lockdown”.

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

There were a few months when rules were relaxed, but sadly, through the last 12 months we have had three “lockdowns”. Government restrictions were put in place to try and keep everyone safe.

Next
Reader,
Please

Schools were closed and students had to learn at home using the internet.

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, Wimbledon and many Christmas celebrations were all cancelled.

Even the 2021 Olympic Games have been postponed until 2021, with no spectators allowed from overseas.

As the spring and summer of 2021 arrive, the rules are beginning to relax once again. The government has a plan to open shops, restaurants, and entertainment venues.

At each step the scientists will advise about whether it is safe to move forward. The plans are very delicate and can change very quickly if the number of people with the virus goes up.

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

This has been a very difficult time for everyone.

Next
Reader,
Please

What we all need to do.

The most important message from our Government is that everyone must follow the rules: stay alert, limit contact with others and keep your distance to stop the spread.

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.
- Stay 6 feet apart when possible.

Next
Reader,
Please

The good news is that Scientists have developed several vaccinations that will help reduce the effects of the coronavirus.

In December 2020, the UK was the first country in the world to start a mass COVID Vaccination programme. The first person was 91 year old Margaret Keenan and she had her jab in Coventry hospital.

The NHS is providing the coronavirus vaccination for everyone in the whole of the UK. Two jabs are needed, about 12 weeks apart, to give the best protection to ourselves and others.

People who live and work in care homes were among the first to have the vaccination.

Next
Reader,
Please

The vaccinations have been tested on thousands of people around the world. The World Health Organisation and the UK Medication Regulation Authority are happy that the vaccinations are safe.

There are no religious or cultural reasons that stops a person having the vaccination, it does not contain any of the virus and it does not change anything in your body. The vaccination simply teaches the body's immune system how to react and fight the corona virus if it enters the body.

Next
Reader,
Please

All adults are being invited to have the vaccination, but no one is being forced to have it. Most people have been very happy and excited to have the vaccination. It brings protection and hope to everyone. Hopefully, we will soon get back to our normal daily lives.

A few people have been worried about getting the coronavirus vaccine and there are a very small number of people who do not believe the pandemic is real and so will not have the vaccination.

When people decide to have the jab, they are not only protecting themselves, are protecting family and friends too.

Having the jab is a very important way to show others how much we care.

Next
Reader,
Please

One of the vaccines, called the Oxford Astra Zeneca vaccine, was developed in the UK by Scientists at Oxford University. The research for the vaccine was funded by our government.

Scientists are confident that if everyone has the vaccination, the pandemic will be over more quickly. Although we are lucky in the UK that our vaccination programme is free and working well, other countries have been slower in starting their vaccination programme.

Sadly, there some countries that cannot afford to buy the vaccines. Our government has given a lot of money to help poorer countries buy the vaccines.

So, taxes we pay are helping the world to be safe too.

Next
Reader,
Please

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. This is called “social distancing”.

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.

Scientists do not know yet if vaccinated people can carry the virus or pass it on to others.

Next
Reader,
Please

During this past year, life in care homes has changed a great deal.

You may find that where you are living, people who help you wear special 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

Visitors have not been allowed inside care homes for nearly a year. The government has given guidance to care homes to help them slowly and carefully re-introduce visiting.

The care home must think about how every resident can have a visitor, while keeping others safe.

There are strict rules that must be followed by the home and the visitor. There are also rules about how many visitors a person may have and where they can meet them. All visits must be carefully managed to ensure the risk of spreading COVID19 is reduced.

Sadly, kissing and hugging is not allowed, but holding hands and chatting together may be!

Next
Reader,
Please

Staff, residents, and visitors must have regular tests to ensure they are not carrying the virus.

If a person becomes infected with Coronavirus, they must isolate for 10 days, so that the virus does not spread.

If you are found to have the virus, you must stay in your room for 10 days, or until you are better. If a person has had the vaccination, it is unlikely they will become ill enough to need to be admitted to a hospital.

All staff wear protective clothing to ensure the virus does not pass from one person to another. Everyone must be incredibly careful, to avoid spreading the virus to other residents or their own families.

Next
Reader,
Please

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

While they are doing their best to care for everyone who needs care and support, they cannot do their job without the help of others, such as the cleaning staff, catering staff and maintenance staff. We all need to be thankful to every single 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

COVID-19 rules and restrictions are constantly changing. We must all follow these rules until the government says it is safe to do otherwise.

Infection control experts also say that social gestures such as shaking hands and hugging must stop during the pandemic. 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. While the vaccine provides hope, it will take many months for life to go back to normal.

No one knows how long these new COVID-19 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 safe and keep well!

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