## COVID-19: DEMENTIA AND ADVANCE CARE PLANNING IN RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITIES FOR OLDER PEOPLE

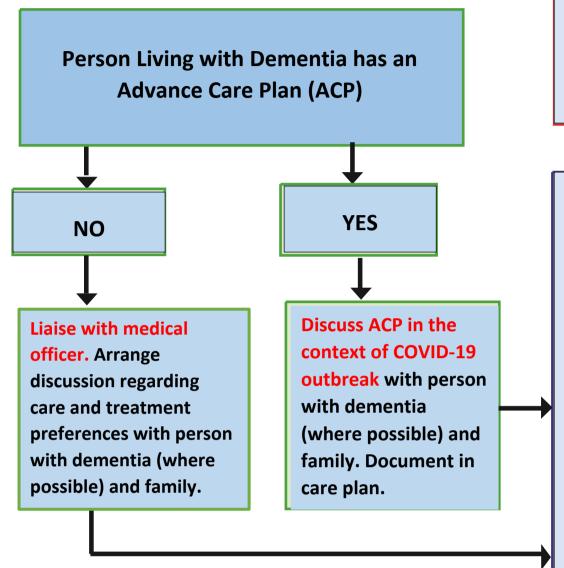






This algorithm should be read in conjunction with official HSE Guidance on www.hpsc.ie / www.hselibrary.ie

(This document is for Residential Care Facilities for Older People. It specifically addresses issues related to implementing COVID-19 measures for people living with dementia)



Recognising that a person is entering the dying or terminal phase of their illness is critical to appropriate care planning, with a shift to comfort care. Ensure that anticipatory medications which may be required to ensure a comfortable death are prescribed in a timely fashion.

Due to visitor restrictions the conversation with family may need to done over the phone by a senior clinician and should be planned in advance to avoid any confusion.

## **Discuss**

- 1. If not already known, establish the resident's wishes in the event of death.
- 2. There is a risk that the resident might contract COVID-19.
- 3. The measures being taken to prevent COVID-19 infection including visitor restrictions.
- 4. It will be necessary to isolate the resident if they are suspected of/confirmed as COVID-19 positive.
- 5. Discuss the risks, benefits and likely outcomes of treatment options (including non COVID-19 illness). With regard to COVID-19, the resident's condition may deteriorate rapidly. Dementia alone does not mean that a resident should not be hospitalised. However, hospital admission may not be indicated for residents with advanced dementia and limited life expectancy (from the dementia or other conditions). The ultimate decision rests with the medical team, considering all aspects of the resident's status.
- 6. Provide reassurance that the resident's symptoms will be managed in conjunction with the medical team with every attempt to maintain comfort.
- 7. Update family regularly regarding residents condition.
- 8. Where possible arrange for family members to stay in contact with resident via Skype or facetime.
- 9. Routine visits are suspended but at end of life a nominated visitor may be admitted (local guidelines may differ). Must be symptom free, not from a vulnerable group and must adhere to infection control guidelines. As this is a fast changing situation this may change.

NOTE: The Irish Hospice Foundation has developed resources for families in response to the COVID-19 crisis and grieving:

Available at: Covid-19 Care and Inform Hub: https://hospicefoundation.ie/covid19careandinform/