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1. Welcome

Welcome to our 5th edition of the National Disability Quality Improvement Office newsletter.

We hope that you are all keeping safe and well in these extraordinary circumstances and want to take this opportunity to commend and thank you for the amazing work that you are doing at the front line of this crisis supporting people with disabilities.

We hope that this newsletter will provide you with an accessible and user-friendly means of accessing the Guidance Documents, Video and Webinar that have been developed by the National HSE Disabilities team, specific to COVID-19.

As you are aware, this situation is evolving very rapidly, so it essential that you keep updated and please refer to the following websites regularly for updates:

www.hse.ie/coronavirus and www.hpsc.ie

2. How to access Disability Services specific guidance for COVID-19

All HSE Guidance and Resources for Disability Services for COVID-19 are available on <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/news/newsfeatures/covid19-updates/partner-resources>

- i. This brings you into the website and you need to scroll down to find HSE Approved Guidance for Disability Services.
- ii. You will find a List of Guidance documents which are numbered. (We will be updating this regularly so please check in once a week)
- iii. You can then find the numbered document that you are looking for and download it.

3. Guidance documents developed by HSE Disability Services for COVID-19:

[1. Contingency Plan for Home Support Managers and Health Care Support Assistants and Disability Managers/Personal Assistance during Mitigation Phase V2](#)

Target Audience :

Home Support Managers
Health Care Support Assistants Disability Managers
Personal Assistants

Description

This document provides advice for Home Care Support Teams/Disability Support teams on actions to be taken during the pandemic. It includes a sample client schedule of service, prioritisation classifications, action cards for the Home Support Coordinator and HCSA/Personal Assistant or other providers of care/support in the home.

[2. Guidance for COVID-19 in Social Care Group Homes and Residential Services – Disabilities V4](#)

Target Audience:

Healthcare Workers
Managers
In non-nurse led services

Description:

This guidance is intended for social care group homes and residential services which are delivered by health care professionals who are not clinically trained i.e. services are not delivered by medical or nursing professionals. It gives general advice on the management of those with disabilities in community setting. It also gives specific advice for named scenarios and includes supporting information in the appendices.

[3. Guidance for COVID-19 in Nurse Led Residential Care Services for people with disabilities V14](#)

Target Audience:

Healthcare Workers
Managers
In residential centres where service is nurse-led

Description:

This guidance is intended for healthcare professionals, healthcare workers and managers delivering care in residential services for those with disabilities where the main model of care is nurse-led. The focus of the document is on the prevention, identification and clinical management of vulnerable people during the pandemic.

[4. Guidance for testing for COVID-19 in Disability Services V2](#)

Target Audience:

Social Care Workers
Nursing staff
In residential services for people with disabilities

Description:

This guidance supports staff to prepare people with disabilities for testing and also addresses the issues of human rights – while every effort will be made to encourage a person to take a test – a test or treatment cannot be forced upon a person with a disability.

[5. Guidance of COVID-19 testing in Disability Services Easy Read Version V1](#)

Target Audience:

People with a disability
Social Care Workers
Nursing staff
In residential services for people with disabilities

Description:

This is an Easy Read version of the Guidance for testing described above.

[6. Guide for Supporting adults in a community residence/at home Easy Read Version V1](#)

Target Audience:

Adults with a disability
Carers
Staff
Families
Who are supporting adults with disabilities

Description:

This is a Social Story to provide staff to prepare adults with a disability for testing and contains a stepped out process for desensitisation which include 9 steps and suggests practicing 2 steps a day until (and if) the person with a disability will tolerate all 9 steps.

[7. Guide for Supporting children in a community residence/ at home Easy Read Version V1](#)

Target Audience:

Children with a disability
Carers
Staff
Families
Who are supporting children with disabilities

Description:

This is a Social Story to provide staff to prepare children with a disability for testing and contains a stepped out process for desensitisation which include 7 steps and suggests practicing 2 steps a day until (and if) the person with a disability will tolerate all 9 steps

[8. Streamlined hospital passport for people with disabilities who are admitted to hospital V1](#)

Target Audience:

To be completed with people who have disabilities (with support where required)
To be read by all Healthcare Workers caring for the person with a disability when they are in the hospital.

Description:

There are a lot of excellent hospital passports throughout Ireland but we received feedback that during the pandemic, staff in acute services may not have time to read a 6-8 page passports so we developed a one-page streamlined health passport with the critical information about a person with a disability – how they communicate etc.

The full version of a Health Passport and Guidance Notes available [here](#)

[9. Guidance to support a person with additional needs who becomes distressed and angry when you try to engage with them V1](#)

Target Audience:

Staff or carers who do not normally work with people with disabilities, e.g.
Hospital Staff

Description:

This guidance is for staff, for example, hospital staffs who do not work with people with disabilities on a regular basis. It seeks to highlight that behaviour is not intentional but rather a sign of distress and identifies ways for staff to support people to regain self-control.

[10. Support Coordination in a Pandemic – A practical checklist to avoid stressors for service users V1](#)

Target Audience:

Carers
Staff
Families
Who are supporting people with disabilities

Description:

This is a checklist that supports staff to support people with disabilities to avoid or decrease stressors during the pandemic.

11. Guidance for Alternative Models of Care (Non-Residential) V1

Target Audience:

CHOs

Service Providers

Who are supporting people with disabilities

Description:

In the absence of regular, scheduled day services, respite supports and multidisciplinary supports, CHOs and their service providers are encouraged to use creative and innovative models of care to support service users, both adults and children. This document provides guidance to support staff to develop alternative support models.

Actions for Healthcare Workers



Implement Standard Precautions for infection prevention and control with all people you support at all times:

- Hand hygiene
- Respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette
- Environmental hygiene



Promote respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette which involves:

- Covering mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing and sneezing or coughing into the crook of an elbow
- Discarding used tissue into a waste bin
- Cleaning hands



Maintain a physical distance of at least 1 metre (3 feet) but ideally 2 metres from individual with respiratory symptoms (where possible)

Avoid touching your face



Clean your hands regularly as per WHO 5 moments



Cleaning and disinfection is also very important

Use a facemask in addition to Standard Precautions when working within 2 metres of a service user, regardless of COVID-19 status.

Use Contact and Droplet Precautions (use of PPE) in addition to Standard Precautions when working within 1 metre of person who is confirmed/suspected COVID 19. PPE use:

- Mask
- Gloves
- Eye protection (if risk of contamination to eyes from splashing of blood, body fluids, excretions or secretions including respiratory secretions)
- Plastic disposable apron (if risk of blood or body fluid splashing on HCW's clothes)

[12. Guidance on the use of Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\) in Disability Services V2](#)

Target Audience:

Healthcare Workers

Managers

In residential centres for people with disabilities

Description:

This guidance consolidates all of the PPE related documents on the HPSC website into one document specifically for Disability Residential Services.

[13. Coronavirus \(Covid-19\) Frequently Asked Questions for people with disabilities and family carers V1](#)

Target Audience:

People with disabilities

Families

Description:

This document provides answers to frequently asked questions from people with disabilities and their family carers.

[14. Staff Guide for communicating with people with intellectual disability and with Autism \(short version\) V1](#)

Target Audience:

Staff in test centres, community assessment hubs, hospitals

Description:

This one-pager provides succinct advice for people who don't work with people with disability services on a regular basis, to support that staff in communicating with children or adults who have ID and/or autism.

[15. Staff Guide for communicating with people with intellectual disability and with Autism V1](#)

Target Audience:

Staff in test centres, community assessment hubs, hospitals

Description:

This two-page guidance provides succinct advice for people who don't work with people with disability services on a regular basis, to support that staff in communicating with children or adults who have ID and/or autism. It also provides guidance on making the venue accessible and accessibility as part of the way you work.

[16. Staff Guide on communicating with Deaf and Hard of Hearing people](#)

Target Audience:

Staff in test centres

Community assessment hubs
hospitals

Description:

This document provides communication tips to healthcare professionals to ensure that two-way communication is optimised.

[17. Staff Guide on working with an ISL or English interpreter](#)

Target Audience:

Staff in test centres
Community assessment hubs
hospitals

Description:

Guidance is to support healthcare professionals who may need to book an ISL interpreter in advance of an appointment with a Deaf person.

[18. Covid 19 Guide on how to stay connected using communication apps Easy to Read Version](#)

Target Audience:

People with disabilities
Families

Description:

This is a very handy Easy Read guide that explains the various technology – Communication Apps that are available to people with a disability to stay connected.

[19. Covid-19 Test Process explained for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people](#)

Target Audience:

Deaf and Hard of Hearing people

Description:

This poster explains the process of testing for a person who is deaf or hard of hearing.

[20. A message from Cathal Morgan, Head of Disability Operations, HSE for people with disabilities and their families.](#)

Target Audience:

People with disabilities and their families

[21. Clinical Pathway – Clinical Consultation required – disability services](#)

Target Audience :

Social Care Workers
Nursing staff
In non-nurse led residential services for people with disabilities

Description

This is a one-page clinical pathway to guide staff in residential services that are social-care led to identify the appropriate time to contact a GP for a person suspected of having COVID-19

[22. Clinical Guide for hospital clinicians when supporting a person with a disability](#)

Target Audience:

Staff or carers who do not normally work with people with disabilities, i.e. Hospital Staff – doctors, nurses, allied health professionals

Description:

This one-page poster is for staff in Acute Services who do not work with people with disabilities on a regular basis. It identifies 9 key items of advice to optimise the experience of people with disabilities who are hospitalised during the pandemic.

[23. Pathway to HIQA Registration and model for developing an Enhanced Support Facility for people with disabilities during COVID-19](#)

Target Audience:

Service Providers for people with disabilities

Description:

This document was developed to guide providers who are supporting people with disabilities to move to appropriate temporary (previously unregistered) during the COVID-19 crisis. It provides a preferred pathway for registration with HIQA and describes how such a facility could be developed and used.

[24. Webinar – Prevention and Preparedness in Disability Residential Facilities](#)

Target Audience:

Carers
Staff
Who are supporting people with disabilities

Description:

A webinar was held on 27/04/2020 for disability service providers. The focus of the webinar was on Prevention and Preparedness for COVID-19 in a residential service for people with disabilities. This was presented by Mary McKenna from AMRIC and a number of expert panel members.

[25. Guidance on End of Life in social care-led disability centres during COVID 19](#)

Target Audience

Persons-in-Charge
Social Care Workers
Nursing Staff

Description

This document gives advice on care AFTER any decisions about end of life care have been made by an appropriate clinician, e.g. GP. It relates to end of life care for COVID 19 and non-COVID 19 related illnesses. The purpose of the guidance is to ensure those working in and managing disability social-care led residential services in the pandemic are aware of their role in responding to and addressing the end of life care needs of residents, and in doing so, are supported to have an active/supportive role. It also gives practical guidance to staff supporting and providing end of life care to residents, in line with normal pathways, during the pandemic.

[26. Appendices to accompany Guidance on End of Life in social care-led disability centres during COVID-19](#)

Target Audience

Persons-in-Charge
Social Care Workers
Nursing Staff

Description

This document consists of 9 appendices to the *Guidance on End of Life in social care-led disability centres during COVID-19* including non-pharmacology support in the last days/hours of life and practical advice for carers and families of a person at the end of life, to name but a few.

4. COVID-19 Assessment and Recognition

A presentation ***COVID19 Assessment and recognition among people with intellectual disability*** has been developed in collaboration with the Centre for Ageing and Intellectual Disability TCD and is now available on HSELand – [link](#).

Education and Training Programmes and Resources for staff in the fight against COVID-19 - COVID-19 Resource Pack - Resource Pack for Registered Nurses and Registered Nurses Returning to Professional Nursing Practice (Intellectual Disability) in response to COVID -19 OUTBREAK 2020.

5. Ethical Considerations

The Department of Health published supplementary information this weekend to the Ethical Considerations relating the Critical Care in the context of COVID-19. This information relates specifically to the rights of people with disability and reiterates that people with disabilities will be equitably cared for in the event that they contract the virus and become critically ill. The document states that people with physical and intellectual disability have equal rights to the highest attainable standards of health and to a high standard of healthcare.

Click [here](#) for the full text.

6. Next Steps

If you have any ideas on issues that you would like us to focus on, resources or tools that you would find helpful or if you are aware of best practice and resources that you are willing to share, please feel free to contact us at mariet.kehoe@hse.ie





We welcome your feedback in regards to information you would like to see or topics covered in this newsletter. If you have any feedback please email disabilitiesqi@hse.ie

Marie, Joanne & Nicole







**Coronavirus
COVID-19**

Coronavirus
COVID-19
Public Health
Advice

Know the signs

-  High Temperature
-  Shortness of Breath
-  Breathing Difficulties
-  Cough

For 8 out of 10 people, rest and over the counter medication can help you feel better.

-  Wash
-  Cover
-  Avoid
-  Clean
-  Stop
-  Distance