



## Support Co-ordination in a Pandemic –

### A practical checklist to avoid stressors for service users:

Supporting a person with additional support needs in their home / residential service in a pandemic requires additional planning. We have put together a practical checklist for carers, staff and/or families to help with this. It's useful for both children and adults with additional needs.

1. Is there a staff member available keyworker, teacher, SNA, clinician either directly or via telephone or email for additional advice and support?
2. Does the person you are looking after understand what this is all about – has the coronavirus situation been explained? Do you need to find information that is easy for them to understand, such as a poster or Social Story? Here's just one resource – there are many more: <https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/>
3. Do you have a poster visible of the most important ways of preventing COVID 19?
  - a. Handwashing
  - b. Sneezing and coughing into tissue/elbow
  - c. Social distancing.
4. Do you understand the specific risks for the person you are looking after (ie: are they at greater risk – respiratory/lung concerns, diabetes, immunosuppressed for example – not an exhaustive list) –some additional information can be found on [COVID-19 updates](#)
5. Is your GP's and on call Doctors phone number visible?
6. Does the person you are looking after have an up-to-date health passport (A Health Passport is a document that gives the important information about what specific supports the person may need if they have to go for a test or go into hospital. If you don't have one, there's a template attached.)
7. Have you discussed coronavirus testing? Have you discussed what will happen if they need to be tested? Would they benefit from practicing this in case it is needed so they are desensitized when it comes to a test?
8. Are you considering isolation issues and if so, what preparation is needed for this?
  - a. a week or two of essential supplies – food, hygiene, cleaning supplies;
  - b. prescription medication and over-the-counter medication;
  - c. continence aids, wipes, catheters, feeling tube gear to last perhaps up to a month;
  - d. who can you tell and call if you need anything.
9. What are the CRITICAL (could become very distressed if these are not in place) support needs, and can these supports be available; for example, a walk; a healthy treat; seeing their horse on FaceTime instead of going horse riding?
10. How can you take care of yourself; and remind yourself that you can manage change; also note this with others in your home and praise everyone for 'living with this change'.





- a. Have you planned a Daily Routine you can follow: this is a very stressful time for many – do you have a positive routine laid out?
- b. Do you have a routine for each day of the week? Is this clear to the person you are looking after? Is it written down and visible in a form they can understand? Is it “structured yet flexible?”
- c. Does the daily routine include a variety of activities, including things they enjoy, spread throughout the day?
- d. Does the daily routine include physical activities spread throughout the day, restful breaks, time with others, and time alone? Is there a contingency to sustain these?
- e. Do you have ideas for fun things they can do with you or on their own including familiar and/or new activities? Some ideas might be baking, crafts, drama, dancing, singing, movies, reading, playing games, yoga, science experiments, magic tricks, taking pictures or making videos, or many other things. Look online, in magazines, or talk to friends for ideas.
- f. Do the activities you plan meet current requirements for social distancing?
- g. Does your daily routine include healthy foods, snacks and hydration?
- h. Does your daily routine include going to bed at the usual time and getting up at around the same time every morning? Do you plan on having relaxing time before bed, talking about pleasant things such as happy memories and plans for the next day?

We are conscious that this can be a challenge for some people and that there may be underlying and ongoing challenges in many people circumstances regardless but a revisit to these issues now may be worthwhile

11. Do you know how to help the person you are looking after if they become distressed or angry about what is happening? Particularly the case if you have to step in to care. See guidance.
12. What is your plan for keeping yourself physically and mentally healthy
13. What is your ‘back-up plan’ if you can’t provide care. In this instance have you discussed with the person supported what might happen if needs be around alternative care if it should become a feature?
14. Who is the best person to contact if you have specific questions about caring for the person? If you contact any of the below, tell them you are supporting a person with additional needs.
  - a. Your GP can answer questions if you have specific concerns about the medical needs of the person you are looking after.
  - b. If the person is in a residential centre, your organisation can answer questions about available support.
  - c. Your local disability team can answer other questions about how to help the person you are looking after.

