

Covid-19 Updated Information for Middleton Hall Retirement Village Residents and Families 2021

Covid update (7th July 2021)

I hope this will be one of the last bulletins, as we continue to ease slowly out of the pandemic. Our intention is that from now on we will only produce a bulletin when there is significant information or changes to guidance. From July, Colin Inglis (Care Director) is in charge of our response to Covid and the contingency team will meet when required – I will help out as the need arises.

There is a mixed picture of news currently. Local infection rates have increased very significantly in the last two weeks (County Durham is now over three times the national average and Darlington two and half times with rates not seen since January) but the cases are primarily in the younger age groups. Although hospital admissions are going up, it is not at the levels seen earlier in the year and most people are recovering. This pattern may become the norm as the country learns to live with Covid.

The only real cause for alarm is an outbreak in a retirement village in an area of high Delta variant cases. 30 fully vaccinated independent residents were involved in a get together which resulted in 15 residents testing positive with 3 of them in hospital last week.

This should serve as a reminder that we still need to be careful.

We have had some instances of Co-owner contact with someone testing positive – it remains essential that no one takes any unnecessary risks and if they have any concerns about contacts to let their manager know before coming into work. We will continue daily rapid testing and weekly PCR testing to ensure that we are able to keep everyone safe. The instructions for the lateral flow tests have changed – please make sure you swab both sides of the throat and one nostril.

The Prime Minister announced on Monday the plan for further easing of restrictions from July 19th. This is due to include ending the restrictions on the number of designated visitors able to visit care homes. We are waiting for the guidance on this but would expect that it will still require testing and PPE. In August the government is planning to change the rules for self-isolation where people have had both vaccines, but again we do not know if this will apply to the social care sector.

We expect that many of the restrictions that care homes have to operate under will continue beyond July 19th – these are very different from the current restrictions for the general public. It is likely that the use of PPE and testing will be a requirement for some time yet.

The government has talked about “personal responsibility” so far as face masks from July 19th – we would urge Co-owners, residents and visitors to remain careful with high local infection levels. People who are double vaccinated will always be safer company than those who are unvaccinated or have only had one vaccine, so we would suggest that should be part of us all being “personally responsible”.

If you have any questions, please let Colin or a member of the contingency team know.

The pandemic has been a long and tough ordeal for many people. Our Co-owners have been incredibly dedicated and selfless during the crisis and our residents and families shown great fortitude to help the community get through the last 17 months.

On behalf of all the directors, thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeremy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke underneath the name.

Jeremy Walford
Executive Chairman