



MIDDLETON HALL
RETIREMENT VILLAGE

Covid-19 Updated Information for Middleton Hall Retirement Village Residents and Families 2021-2022

4. Middleton Hall - Residents and Relatives – 4th February 2022 - Covid Bulletin No. 3

In follow up to last week's Bulletin, the government have now issued more detailed guidance around visiting in Care Homes. As expected, the new published guidance is very similar to what was previously in place, with the main responsibility still on care providers to risk assess and keep everyone safe.

With the UK gradually moving towards a policy of living with Covid and the high percentage of residents living in care services having had both vaccines and a booster vaccine, are some of the main reasons why restrictions have been eased.

Over the past week we have seen an increase of more than 100% on the number of new positive Covid cases within our local area and we will continue to liaise closely with the Health Protection Team in setting out and reviewing our visiting arrangements. There are still significant numbers of Covid outbreaks reported in Care Homes (more than 50%) and although the closure periods have been reduced, many Care Homes have experienced "rolling outbreaks" which have lasted several weeks, reducing visiting to a single essential care giver for each resident. Having all care services now out of "lockdown", we want to do all we can to ensure that our residents can have more of their family and friends visit.

We have set out below the main summary points from within the guidance and how this will be implemented across all Middleton Hall Care services.

- All visitors (the guidance still recommends that all indoor visitors to be vaccinated) should continue to book visits prior to coming to Middleton Hall, and we are still requesting proof of a negative Lateral Flow Test on the day of the visit.
- Although the guidance indicates no limits on the number of visitors, we will continue to limit the number of visitors, at any one time, to 2 per resident. Any exceptions to this would need to be approved by the Care Service Manager.
- During the periods of lockdown within the Care Services, we were able to allow each resident to have one visitor as an "essential care giver" – this would continue, should an outbreak situation reoccur within any of the Care Services
- Pod visits and outdoor visits are able to continue as before
- Face masks are still required to be worn when indoors and handwashing/sanitising on entering and leaving the Care Services is still required.
- All visitors should not visit if they are feeling unwell, even if a negative Lateral Flow Test is produced
- Physical contact is allowed, but should be kept to a minimum, as long as good infection prevention and control measures are in place such as hand washing/sanitising and good ventilation. Gloves are not required for holding hands
- We have been asked about young children visiting and at present, given the high infection rate within the under 18's, this would have to be agreed by the Care Manager in advance. A negative LFT would still be required on the day of the visit and the child would need to be supervised at all times. At present only 1 child at a time would be allowed to visit.

- For resident visits out of the Care Service, with family/friends, there is no longer the need to carry out LFT's on return, but this would need to be risk assessed depending on the number of people the resident may come into contact with during their time away from Middleton Hall
- Should a resident require an overnight stay in hospital, then the 14 day self-isolation period on return to the Care Service has been reduced to 10 days, but this may be reduced further to 6 days if negative LFT'S obtained on days 4, 5 and 6

We will continue to be as flexible as possible for exceptional circumstances such as end of life and will liaise with the individual family members to provide as much support as required.

We remain cautiously optimistic that the overall situation will improve over the next few months and that the number of positive new cases will fall, allowing some further easing of restrictions within the Care Services. Everyone is looking forward to being able to meet with more friends and family and being able to get together when some of the clubs and groups re-open again within Middleton Hall. We are still having to allocate the times in the Orangery for the Care Services residents, which remain in the afternoons between 2.15 – 4.00pm.

I am sure you can appreciate that at present we need to proceed with some caution, given the high local infection rate. We continue to have our weekly Covid Contingency Meetings where we review any new guidance or developments and we will continue to keep you informed on any further easing of restrictions, or changes within the services.

Once again, thank you for your continued understanding.

Best wishes



Colin Inglis - Care Director

3. Middleton Hall - Residents and Relatives Bulletin – 28th January 2022

With recent changes to the visiting guidance coming from the government, we wished to update everyone on how we will implement these changes at Middleton Hall.

Whilst we welcome the announcement on the easing of restrictions for visiting the care services from 31st January 2022, we still await the full updated guidance, which is expected to be published next week. I have extracted the information from the letter we received from the DHSC below. As you can see, this information is very open to interpretation; however, it is expected that the new published guidance will be similar to arrangements that are currently in place.

From Monday 31st January, we are:

- ***Reducing visiting restrictions for residents:***
 - ***There will be no limit on the number of visitors a resident can have and no requirements to test or isolate after visits out (providing these visits are not deemed to be "high risk").***
 - ***The isolation period will be reduced from 14 days to a maximum period of 10 days.***

Detailed arrangements will be set out in updated guidance, which we will publish in the week beginning Monday 31st January 2022.

There are still a high number of cases of Covid-19 both nationally and locally, but we want to balance this in recognising the importance of visiting, while still keeping everyone as safe as possible. Until we receive the more detailed guidance, our approach will still be to limit the number of visitors at any one time to 2 per resident. We are happy to no longer limit the number of visitors to the 3 designated visitors for indoor visits. All visitors should continue to book visits prior to coming to Middleton Hall, as we are still requesting proof of a negative Lateral Flow Test on the day of the visit.

Regarding the reduction in self-isolation periods for those receiving care this has been reduced from 14 days to 10 days following a positive test, with further reductions possible if a negative LFT is obtained on Days 5 and 6. For residents returning from hospital after an overnight stay, the self-isolation period has been reduced to 10 days and routine Lateral Flow Tests are no longer required for residents who have visits out of the care service.

Although from 27th January 2022, the wearing of facemasks for the general public is no longer required by law, people are still encouraged to wear a face covering in crowded places. The wearing of face masks in care settings is still required by both visitors and Co-Owners, to comply with infection prevention and control guidelines. We will provide further clarity in relation to some services e.g. The Orangery/Spa area, that are shared with both care residents, independent residents, and visitors.

We will write with more detail regarding visiting arrangements following the publication of the updated guidance next week.

Thank you.



Colin Inglis - Care Director

2. Middleton Hall - Residents and Relatives Bulletin – 23rd December 2021

Some good news to start this bulletin, in that some early studies of the Omicron variant suggests that the symptoms people are getting are milder and not leading to the same number of hospital admissions as the Delta variant. Experts believe this to be a combination of the actual make up of Omicron, as well as high levels of immunity from vaccinations and previous infections. Also, reports indicate that the vast majority of those hospitalised are those who are unvaccinated.

However, we do know that Omicron is spreading very quickly, with over 100,000 new positive cases being reported yesterday, so it is right to remain cautious, particularly when out in public. The consistent message from the government is that the booster vaccine is essential to protect people from the Omicron variant.

Although there have been no positive tests since we had two Co-owners test positive two weeks ago, we are waiting for one PCR result in Middleton Gardens before PHE (Public Health England) allows Middleton Gardens to formally be out of lockdown.

The government have not announced any further restrictions pre- Christmas but have not ruled out that this may change; we will continue to monitor this situation and keep you updated with any developments.

Thank you to those who have informed reception of your 3 nominated visitors and if you have not yet done so, please would you contact reception at your earliest convenience. This guidance remains in place to keep everyone as safe as possible. There have been no changes to our Visiting Option which were issued with last week's bulletin. And would remind you that for visits outside of the Care Home by residents, residents will need to complete Lateral Flow Tests (LFT's) for 10 days following their return to the Care Service.

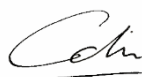
One new announcement is that the government have purchased a significant number of approved antiviral medication to help protect the most vulnerable people over the coming months. These antivirals will be used to

treat those who are infected with a virus, or sometimes to protect exposed individuals from becoming infected. They work by targeting the virus at an early stage, thus preventing progression to more severe symptoms and less hospital admissions. As more information becomes available, we will keep you informed.

We wish to remind you again that The Orangery will be closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day. Unfortunately, under current restrictions we are unable to facilitate Christmas lunch for Care Residents and their family/guests in the restaurant/Orangery.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your patience and understanding during another difficult year and we hope you have an enjoyable Christmas and New Year.

Best wishes



Colin Inglis - Care Director

1. Middleton Hall - Residents and Relatives Bulletin – 15th December 2021

We wish to update you on the most recent information regarding the Omicron variant of Covid-19. Most of the information that has been received on this variant is from the media and there is a lot still unknown particularly in relation to the levels of protection for those vaccinated and how ill people infected may become.

What we do know is that this variant is spreading very quickly, with numbers of positive cases doubling every 2 -3 days. Some of the clinicians have described this variant as a “big wave coming straight at us” and Professor Whitty informs us that there is a reasonable chance “there will be some vaccine escape from this variant”. The encouraging news is that the booster may give significant more protection.

Given the seriousness of situation and with further restrictions now in place across the country it is reasonable to expect further tightening within all Care Homes and Care Services, with the prime intention of slowing the spread and protecting the residents and care teams.

You may have seen or read about the increased efforts for everyone over the age of 18 to have a booster vaccine or book a booster vaccine by the end of this month. We are fortunate that all our residents in the Care Services are fully vaccinated and have had their booster vaccine. We are urging all our Co-Owners to have their booster vaccines and are providing support with this where required.

The government have just confirmed that some further restrictions are to be put in place within Care Services from today 15th December 2021. Only 3 nominated visitors will be allowed under government guidance for each resident, for indoor visits. We will continue to offer Pod visits to any other additional visitors. We know that this will be disappointing for residents, their friends and families who would be looking to spend more time, not less time together over the holiday period. We now need to follow the guidance for restricted visiting from today and will keep the situation under review, as more information and evidence come to light. This is to ensure that we provide the safest environment for our vulnerable residents and care teams. Please could you inform reception of who the 3 nominated visitors will be as soon as possible.

We have updated our Visiting Options to reflect some of these recent changes and we will closely monitor these options in line with any new guidance from the government. The Visiting Options are attached to this Bulletin and the majority of these will need to be booked in advance via reception unless under exceptional circumstances. For visits outside of the Care Home by residents, another change is that fully vaccinated residents will need to complete Lateral Flow Tests (LFT's) for 10 days following their return to the Care Service.

There are additional precautionary measures that we have already implemented, including our Care Team continuing to complete daily LFT's and everyone receiving refreshers on the importance of wearing PPE effectively and handwashing.

Finally, we wish to reassure you that we understand the importance of family and friends spending time with their loved ones, but we need to balance this with protecting our residents, protecting our care teams, and hopefully protecting the ability to be able to provide visiting over the Christmas/New Year period. Please be aware that The Orangery will be closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day. Unfortunately, under current restrictions we are unable to facilitate Christmas lunch for Care Residents and their family/guests in the restaurant/Orangery.

We sincerely hope that these restrictions will only be for a short while, as we continue to monitor any new data relating to the Omicron variant and we can be more flexible in our visiting options.

Thank you for your support and understanding of this current situation and should you have any further questions, please let me know and we will do our best to respond as quickly as possible.

Best wishes to you and your families.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Colin', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Colin Inglis - Care Director