



ALT-NA-CRAIG  
HOUSE  
CARE HOME

20<sup>th</sup> April 2020

## **OUR APPROACH AND GUIDANCE TO DEALING WITH THE UK CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) OUTBREAK**

We are sure you are aware of the current challenges we all face in responding to the current Coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic. We wish to reassure you all the necessary measures are in place to keep you, your relative or friend safe and you and they remain our priority.

It is important for us all to recognise our staff have very much been on the frontline when caring for your loved ones, and we are continually looking at how we can support them during these unprecedented times.

As in any situation, where one of your loved ones becomes unwell, we will maintain clear and comprehensive dialogue with families, whilst taking advice and following guidance from their GP and other health care professionals.

Please be assured we are following the most up to date advice and guidance from the Government, the Health Protection Teams and Regulatory bodies, and our staff are regularly kept informed of current and best practice.

We understand you may have questions, we have, for your information gathered some of the most frequently asked questions below:

### **Q: Are all residents and staff being tested?**

A: The response to COVID-19 outbreak is fast moving with updates daily. We continue to communicate and follow the guidance from the Government, the Local Authorities and Health Protection teams about staff and resident testing. At present not all residents and staff are being tested, although this is evolving, something which we have no control over. We are alive to the fact that local testing hubs have now been set up in some Local Authority areas, our staff are referred for testing where they or someone in their household experiences symptoms. We can only refer staff, unfortunately we then do not make the decision on who is tested, this is the responsibility of the GPs and local Health Protection teams.

We do, continue to follow and adhere to the shielding and isolation guidance from the Government and seek local advice when necessary for anyone who experiences symptoms or who have confirmed COVID-19.

### **Q: Are all employees wearing full Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when serving meals, administering medications, performing housekeeping or when caring for the residents?**

A: We continue to follow the most up to date PPE and Infection, Prevention and Control guidance issued by the Government, Public Health and NHS. All our staff are trained in line with this guidance and provided with all the recommended and appropriate PPE.



Where we have residents with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 our staff adhere to the enhanced guidelines for isolation, following individual risk assessments. Staff who are caring for this group of residents do so for the remainder of their shift with fresh PPE in order to minimise any transmission risks.

Some of our staff may choose to wear masks and other protective equipment in accordance with the most recent Government guidance, if they consider doing so is necessary to their own safety and the safety of others. We support our staff with this decision and we too will support any resident if it is their choice to wear a mask.

**Q: Are families able to take residents home with them?**

A: While you are free to take your family member home, this should only be when this is the resident's choice and preference, (or those representing them by way of appropriate Power of Attorney), or it is in their best interest to do so, we would recommend you discuss this with us along with their GP and Social Worker.

**Q: Can families visit with residents?**

A: National policies on travel, social gatherings and person to person contact should be observed and as you will be aware, to protect all of us, the home has been closed to all non-essential visitors in line with Government policy.

We understand this is a time of concern and worry for people especially when you cannot visit or be with your loved one or friend. It is important we can help you to stay in touch in order to help maintain the health and wellbeing of all.

We can discuss with you individually how we can facilitate this according to your preference and choice. We have used video technology to assist such as Skype, FaceTime and telephone conversations which has helped some of our residents to feel reassured and remain in contact with their family and friends. If someone is at the end of life and living in the home, it is important you can be with them during this time. We will make what arrangements we can to ensure you can be together. We will discuss this with you individually should the need arise.

We would like to thank you for your continued support during these unprecedented times. We encourage you to talk with us, please contact the Manager or the person in charge who will be happy to discuss or answer any questions, anxieties or concerns you may have.

Naturally, we will only be able discuss matters relevant to you, your relative or friend.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our staff for their hard work and dedication. I am so proud of you all.

Please stay safe and take care.

Yours sincerely

Michelle King  
Home Manager