



Monday 6th July 2020

Hello everyone.

With lockdown restrictions relaxing this weekend I wanted to write to you all and share some thoughts about what we have been through and what still lies ahead.

Firstly, I want to thank you again for your dedication during this incredibly difficult time. You have followed the many pieces of government guidance together with helping us implement completely new systems of work and infection control measures. This diligence has kept all of us safe and I am delighted to say that we are still completely COVID free in all of our care homes.

The government has relaxed its restrictions and this weekend will be the most freedom we have been allowed for nearly 4 months. I'm sure you will enjoy reconnecting with family and friends when you get the opportunity . I will be the first to say you deserve this semblance of normality.

Whilst it's encouraging to see a fall in infection rates and a degree of normality returning with pubs and restaurants opening and travel restrictions lifting, care home staff must, more than any other industry remain extra vigilant.

Regrettably we know there is no vaccine yet and we are heading towards winter where the risk of flu and winter viruses bring a new level of risk to our care homes .

We must now put in place a plan to enable us to continue to keep everyone safe whilst supporting our residents to have garden visits from relatives and friends and to accept new residents into our care homes. We still cannot allow any visitors inside the home without the permission of the home manager, this includes health care professionals .

The government has confirmed that the risk for care homes remains high and as a result has announced that all care staff should have a weekly COVID test, this is the same test that you had when we completed whole home testing .

In addition to weekly testing of all staff we will also test residents every 28 days. This combination of testing will protect you, your families and our residents.

We plan to start this testing strategy this week and will continue until September when it is likely that the strategy will be reviewed .

All of the other infection control measures will remain in place for the foreseeable future including wearing face masks at all times, additional hand washing, maintaining social distance of 2 meters, hourly touch spot bleaching, temperature checks on arrival and changing in and out of uniform upon arrival and departure from work .

I also want to remind you that if you or someone in your household has the main coronavirus symptoms you must not come into work and should immediately book a test .

As a reminder the main symptoms are :

High temperature

New, continuous cough

Loss or change to your sense of smell or taste .

Thanks to each one of you our care homes have come through this first stage in a very strong position and I'm confident that we can continue to remain COVID free as long as we all remain vigilant and as long as we don't let our guard down.

Thank you all again for responding so positively to the demands that were placed upon you and for the dedication and compassion you have shown to our residents, their relatives and to each other.

Without your commitment to fighting this virus and your expertise in preventing the spread of infection both in work and outside we would not be in the strong position we are today,

Stay safe , look out for each other and look after your health . This is temporary and there are now signs of much brighter days ahead .

Best Wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Rogers', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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