

Bath and North East Somerset Council
St Martins Hospital
Clara Cross Lane
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Tel. 01225 477972

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Dear Direct Payment User

Re Planning for coronavirus (COVID-19)

Health and social services are making sure that they have robust plans in place to cope with coronavirus. Part of this includes making sure that people who use Direct Payments to employ their own personal assistants (PAs) have got plans in place in case their PAs are unable to work due to coronavirus. This might include having family/friends or alternative staff available to come in to support you when needed. Please make sure you have got these plans in place just in case you need them.

If you employ your own staff please be aware that they will have employment rights which may include the right to receive statutory sick pay if they are off sick or self isolating, and if you are self isolating and not requiring staff to attend, please be aware that you may still need to pay them. If any of your PAs are available to pick up additional shifts for other care users please ask them to contact The Virgin Care Direct Payment Hub. The Virgin Care Direct Payment Hub can also give further information regarding employment rights and responsibilities. They can be contacted on 0300 247 0203

If you use an agency to supply your staff, they will continue to be responsible for making sure you get the care and support you need so please contact them if your usual support worker/carer is unable to attend.

If the situation around coronavirus worsens and none of your staff or family/friends are able to provide the care and support you need please contact your social worker or care coordinator.

If you do not have a social worker or care coordinator, please contact First Response at the Virgin Care Coordination Centre - Telephone 0300 247 0203

Option 2: Adult Social Care, First Response Team

Useful information

How coronavirus is spread

- large droplets from coughing and or sneezing by an infected person within a short distance (usually one metre or less) of someone
- touching or shaking the hand of an infected person and then touching your mouth, eyes or nose without first washing your hands
- touching surfaces or objects (such as door handles) that have become contaminated with the virus and then touching your mouth, eyes or nose without first washing your hands

The most common symptoms of coronavirus

- a new continuous cough and/or
- a high temperature

But these symptoms do not necessarily mean you have the illness. The symptoms are similar to other illnesses that are much more common, such as cold and flu.

What to do if you think you might have coronavirus symptoms

If you have symptoms of coronavirus, the NHS advice is to:

- stay at home and do not leave your house for 7 days from when your symptoms started (this action will help protect others in your community while you are infectious)
- if you live with other people, they should stay at home for 14 days from the day the first person got symptoms
- If you live with someone who is 70 or over, has a long-term condition, is pregnant or has a weakened immune system, try to find somewhere else for them to stay for 14 days plan ahead and ask others for help to ensure that you can successfully stay at home
- If you have to stay at home together, try to keep away from each other as much as possible.
- stay at least 2 metres (about 3 steps) away from other people in your home whenever possible.
- sleep alone, if that is possible
- ask your friends and family to help you to get the things you need to stay at home

- wash your hands regularly for 20 seconds, each time using soap and water, or use hand sanitiser
- stay away from other vulnerable individuals such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions as much as possible
- **you do not need to call NHS111 to go into self-isolation. If your symptoms worsen during home isolation or are no better after 7 days contact <https://111.nhs.uk/>. If you have no internet access, you should call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999**

More information on: [‘Staying at Home’](#) can be found by clicking this link.

Please keep up to date via the Public Health England Website if you are able to as this is routinely updated: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Many thanks

Mike Bowden

Corporate Director

B&NES Council