

Issue 8 – 10 July 2020

Latest news from Torbay and South Devon

We are sending you this update to keep you informed about Trust developments. Please feel free to share these updates amongst your networks. If you wish to unsubscribe, or you have been passed this update by someone else and you would like to subscribe please email: communications.tsdf@nhs.net

We are ensuring our website has the latest information on it so please do look there for the most up-to-date information www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/

You can also keep up-to-date by following us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#)

How to stay safe

Current NHS guidance is to keep up with regular handwashing and cough etiquette and if you do develop any of the symptoms – including a high temperature, cough or difficulty breathing - do not go to your GP, pharmacist or hospital, but instead self-isolate (stay at home) to reduce the possible spread of infection. If you feel you cannot cope with your symptoms at home, your condition gets worse, or you do not get better after 7 days, please call NHS 111 or visit [here](#) You can also book a Covid test [here](#)

Guidance for people shielding

The guidance for people who have been asked to shield has been updated.

Current:

- You may, if you wish, meet in a group of up to 6 people outdoors, including people from different households, while maintaining strict social distancing;
- You no longer need to observe social distancing with other members of your household;
- In line with the wider guidance for single adult households (either an adult living alone or with dependent children under 18) in the general population, you may from this date, if you wish, also form a 'support bubble' with one

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other household. All those in a support bubble will be able to spend time together inside each other's homes, including overnight, without needing to socially distance. This is a small advisory change that brings those affected a step nearer others in their communities. However, all the other current shielding advice will remain unchanged at this time. The guidance for the clinically extremely vulnerable will be relaxed to allow shielded individuals to meet up to 5 people from other households outdoors, socially distanced, and to form support bubbles if they live alone or are a lone adult with a dependent under 18.

From 1 August:

- The advice to 'shield' will be paused. From this date, the Government is advising you to adopt strict social distancing rather than full shielding measures. Strict social distancing means you may wish to go out to more places and see more people but you should take particular care to minimise contact with others outside your household or support bubble.
- You can go to work, if you cannot work from home, as long as the business is COVID-safe;
- Children who are clinically extremely vulnerable can return to their education settings if they are eligible and in line with their peers. Where possible children should practise frequent hand washing and social distancing;
- You can go outside to buy food, to places of worship and for exercise but you should maintain strict social distancing; and
- You should remain cautious as you are still at risk of severe illness if you catch Coronavirus, so the advice is to stay at home where possible and, if you do go out, follow strict social distancing."

What support will be available after July?

From 1 August, clinically extremely vulnerable people will continue to have access to priority supermarket delivery slots if you have registered online before 17 July for a priority delivery slot.

NHS Volunteer Responders will also continue to offer support to those who need it, including collecting and delivering food and medicines.

The NHS Volunteer Responders Scheme has been expanded to offer a new Check in and Chat Plus role. This new role has been designed to provide peer support and companionship to people who are shielding as they adapt to a more normal way of life.

If you are vulnerable or at risk and need help with shopping, medication or other essential supplies, please call 0808 196 3646 (8am to 8pm).

Government is committed to supporting local councils and voluntary sector organisations to respond to those who have specific support needs and requirements during the COVID-19 pandemic. Details of the support and advice available can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/find-coronavirus-support>

The updated shielding guidance should not affect any social care or support you were receiving prior to the start of shielding.

Individuals should continue to contact their local council if they have any ongoing social care needs.

NHS Nightingale Hospital Exeter

Currently the Nightingale Exeter isn't needed for COVID patients, so we will be using our CT scanner to help local GPs and hospitals provide people with safer and faster access to tests for a range of conditions, not just cancer.

The hospital beds are specifically designed for people with COVID needs, and throughout this time the facility will remain ready to quickly revert to our primary purpose and receive patients with COVID, if the number of cases in the region rises significantly.

It is safe to attend your health appointment

Please be reassured that there are extensive measures in place to keep them safe when attending a hospital or clinic. You should be reassured by measures being taken to protect their safety following feedback that suggests fear of infection is a barrier to attendance.

New measures are in place to protect anyone attending, including:

- Staff wearing masks, including non-clinical staff

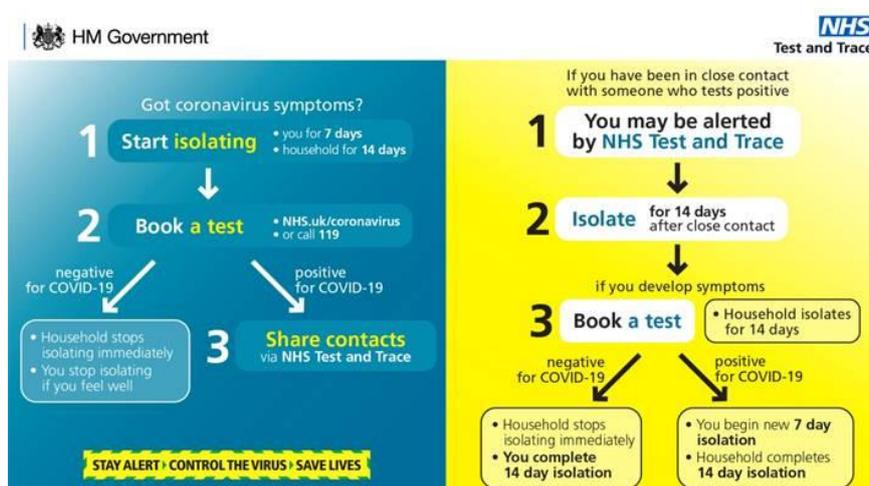
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- Patients are asked to wear face-covering and will be provided with one if they cannot bring their own
- Testing of staff
- Rigorous social distancing
- Keep left and one-way systems
- Regular hand sanitiser facilities
- Testing patients before they come into hospital for certain appointments
- Designated separate areas – sometimes referred to as blue and green – for patients with and without COVID-19, respectively. In both types of area, there are precautions in place to ensure that patients and staff are not put at risk

NHS Test and Trace

The NHS Test and Trace service:

- provides testing for anyone who has symptoms of COVID-19 to find out if they have the virus
- gets in touch with anyone who has had a positive test result to find out who they have had close recent contact with
- alerts those people where necessary, and notifies them that they need to self-isolate to help stop the virus spreading
- By self-isolating, people who have had close recent contact with someone with COVID-19 will help prevent the virus spreading to others.



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Smoking increases the risk of more severe COVID-19 symptoms #QuitforCOVID



There are always health and financial benefits to quitting smoking, but quitting now will help you:

1. Reduce the likelihood of life-threatening complications from COVID-19. Smoking damages your lungs, and your heart, which can put you at greater risk of life-threatening complications if you get COVID-19.
2. Reduce your risk of other diseases caused by smoking such as cancer, diabetes, heart attack, emphysema, bronchitis and stroke. Quitting will improve your health, and help protect the NHS.
3. Stopping smoking allows your body to repair itself – after 8 hours oxygen levels return to normal, after 2 days, your lungs start clearing out smoking debris, after 3 days breathing becomes easier and within weeks, your heart attack risk begins to drop. [Watch this film](#) which explains all the benefits of quitting.
4. Protect the health of others. Exposure to secondhand smoke also increases the risk of complications from respiratory infections, especially in children. It also increases the risk of heart attacks, strokes and cancer. See also [guidance for smokers and vapers from Public Health England](#).

For advice and support on how to quit visit: <https://www.todayistheday.co.uk/the-story/>

Other useful links and resources:

- One You: <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/for-your-body/quit-smoking/9-tips-to-help-you-quit-smoking/>
- NHS smoke free: <https://www.nhs.uk/smokefree/help-and-advice/local-support-services-helplines>
- ASH: <https://ash.org.uk/home/>
- Smoke Free App: <https://smokefreeapp.com/>
- Today is the Day: www.todayistheday.co.uk
- Smoke Free Devon: <https://www.smokefreedevon.org.uk/support-to-quit-smoking/quit-smoking-through-the-devon-stop-smoking-service/>

Update: Torbay Pregnancy Advisory Service

Devon Sexual Health would like to confirm that the Torbay Pregnancy Advisory Service (ToPAS) continues to run its clinics out of Castle Circus Health Centre in Torquay and will accept referrals directly from patients or from any GP practice. Call 01803-656500 to make an appointment.

Latest guidance on identifying COVID-19 in children

Children can get coronavirus (COVID-19), but they seem to get it less often than adults and it's usually less serious. The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- A high temperature
- A new, continuous cough
- A loss or change to sense of smell or taste

If a child has symptoms they should:

- Stay at home (self-isolate) do not leave home or have visitors. All members of the household and support bubble must also self-isolate.
- Get a test to check if they have coronavirus as soon as possible. All members of the household and support bubble must also get a test.

For children under 5 years old, NHS 111 online should be contacted in the first instance, or NHS 119 if the child's parent or guardian are unable to access the internet.

All acute hospitals in Devon and the testing facilities in Plymouth (Seaton Barracks) and Exeter (Honiton Road Park & Ride) can offer testing facilities to children under 5 years old.

Update from Torbay Public Health

In May we reviewed the projected implications of increasing tourism numbers. At that time we predicted that the number of cases of Covid-19 across the whole of Devon would increase during June, but we are not sure how much of any increase would be attributable to tourism. Despite the increasing tourist footfall in June the number of new COVID19 cases has continued to fall.

Overall tourism in June is expected to be lower compared with previous years (a drop of 50-80%) due to the removal of the option for overnight accommodation. This means tourism had a lesser impact on healthcare demand in June – in a usual year it would account for 10-15% of demand in summer months. We have not seen COVID19 cases entering the hospital through non-residents.

With the easing of restrictions during July we are expecting more 'day trip' visitors and overnight visitors. This may lead to an increase in the number of cases in the community, due to local residents mingling with visitors, for example at popular outdoor destinations like beaches and Dartmoor. If our local residents and visitors continue to follow social distancing guidelines then they are at very low risk from catching COVID19 from any infected persons whether they are visitors or local residents. We are working in partnership through our Torbay Local Outbreak Management Plan to support the national test, trace and contain programme, working with local settings both to prevent outbreaks and respond quickly and effectively where suspected or confirmed cases are identified.

Applying for a Journey Assistance Card

Councils in Devon are helping to promote a new campaign from Stagecoach to encourage people who cannot wear a face mask on transport to carry a journey assistance card.

You do not need to wear face-covering if you have a good reason not to. Exemptions include:

- You have a physical or mental illness or impairment, or a disability that means you cannot put on, wear or remove a face covering
- Putting on, wearing or removing a face covering would cause you severe distress
- You are travelling with, or providing assistance to, someone who relies on lip-reading to communicate
- You are travelling to avoid injury or escape the risk of harm, and you do not have a face-covering with you
- You need to remove it during your journey to avoid harm or injury or the risk of harm or injury to yourself or others
- If you need to eat, drink, or take medication
- You are asked to remove your face covering by a police officer or other official, for example, to check your railcard

There is also a special card available if you need the driver to lower their face-covering because you are hearing impaired and need to lip-read.

Details of how to apply for a card can be found on the link below

<https://r1.dotdigital-pages.com/p/50SA-3WG/journey-assistance-card-application-form>

Test and Trace

We all want Devon to recover from this pandemic as quickly and as safely as possible, and for that to happen we all need to do our bit to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

It's really important that if you develop coronavirus symptoms you get a free NHS test to check if you have it.

You can find out more about how to get a test, what happens if your result is positive and if you're contacted by the [NHS Test and Trace service on the NHS website.](#)

Watch NHS Devon CCG annual general meeting

Many people joined NHS Devon CCG annual general meeting (AGM) last Thursday, as they looked back on our first year as the Devon-wide CCG.

Hosted by Clinical Chair Dr Paul Johnson and Accountable Officer Simon Tapley, the event covered CCG successes, the coronavirus response, and considered what healthcare may look like locally in the future. Watch the [full meeting](#)

Help Us Help You South West Survey

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many health and care services have needed to be delivered differently. You may, for example, have accessed the health service online or over the telephone.

The NHS would like to know what you think about these new ways of working to help them understand how they can best meet people's needs in future.

If you have ten to fifteen minutes, [please complete this survey, and share your views about your experience of accessing health services differently.](#)

The information you provide will be used by health and care organisations and commissioners at NHS England and NHS Improvement in the South West to help understand what suits different people best in different parts of our region.

The survey is open until 31 July, 2020. A report with the results of the survey will be published on the NHS England and NHS Improvement South West website and shared with participating health and care organisations and those who provide their email addresses.

Testing facilities extended in England

The number of mobile testing units is set to [rise from the current 146 units to 236 by the end of this month.](#)

Home testing kits are also available, allowing people to test at home and post back via any of the 30,000 Royal Mail priority postboxes across the UK, which are marked by a regionalised NHS logo. [Check where your nearest priority postbox is.](#)

"If you have a high temperature, a new continuous cough, or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste, you should book a test immediately," said Dr Virginia

Pearson, Devon's Director of Public Health Devon and Chair of the new multi-agency COVID-19 Health Protection Board.

"Everyone with symptoms can book or order a free test at nhs.uk/coronavirus or by calling 119.

["Essential workers and members of their households can access priority testing on GOV.UK.](https://www.gov.uk)

"Anyone testing positive in England will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace, to help identify and trace people who they have been in contact with, to control the spread of the virus."

Happy 72nd Birthday to the NHS

As part of the NHS 72nd birthday celebrations at the weekend, former Torbay Hospital nurse, Monica Bulman, spoke to the Prime Minister about her long career with the NHS and how much she loved nursing!

Monica retired in 2018 after clocking up an astounding 66 years' service for the NHS. She worked on Hutchings ward at Torbay Hospital as part of the specialist outpatient surgical clinic team for Endoscopy - she was one of the oldest and longest serving nurses in Britain.

