**PANDEMIC INFLUENZA POLICY & PROCEDURES**

The trustees of DMC recognise their responsibilities in relation to the health and wellbeing of residents, employees, visitors and contractors in a pandemic situation.

The government recommends that all organisations adopt robust and flexible generic business continuity management arrangements which will help ensure that the impact of any disruptions will be minimised. With this in mind, precautions shall be taken to minimise the impact of an outbreak on these groups as they come into contact with DMC.

DMC takes action according to the latest advice from the UK government including the NHS and from Dorset Council.

**WHAT IS PANDEMIC INFLUENZA?**

Pandemic influenza emerges as a result of a new flu virus which is markedly different from recently circulating strains. Few, if any, people will have any immunity to this new virus thus allowing it to spread easily and to cause more serious illness. The recent Coronavirus is classified as a respiratory illness. The World Health Organisation’s influenza surveillance network monitors global viruses and advises governments when to plan.

**RELATED POLICIES**

The Management Team shall decide whether other relevant policies should be activated, such as the Serious Incident Reporting Policy.

**CO-ORDINATOR**

The General Manager shall co-ordinate the necessary procedures in liaison with the Management Team. If the General Manager is absent, the Warden acts as liaison.

**COMMUNICATION**

The Management Team and General Manager will maintain regular contact with residents, staff, trustees and contactors about the steps being taken to maintain the health and safety of these groups.

**CONTRACTORS**

Non-essential works may be cancelled if necessary through illness, infection risk or if recommended by government.

**STAFF**

* Staff may be advised to self-isolate if they have symptoms or to stay at home if the risks are considered high.
* Essential activities shall be maintained where possible by the member of staff usually responsible or another member of staff in their absence. Trustees may be asked to step in if required.
* Staff may be asked to undertake duties that are not usually in their job descriptions such as essential cleaning tasks to reduce infection.

**TRUSTEES**

Trustees may be asked to refrain from coming on site unless staff absences mean that essential activities cannot be undertaken.

**PROCEDURES**

When a pandemic situation is likely or established, the following procedures shall be instigated:

**PREPARATION PHASE: Initial measures**

1. **Contact information:** General Manager ensures that office, Warden and Management Team have up to date contact information for staff and residents plus latest information about our most vulnerable residents.
2. **Income:** General Manager ensures that contribution payments are set up as direct debits to secure income.
3. **Current advice:** General Manager checks current advice from national government, NHS, Dorset Council for sheltered housing providers and individuals including employees and advises staff and Management Team.
4. **Staff & trustees:** General Manager advises staff and trustees to familiarise themselves with this policy and checks current health of staff team.
5. **Newsletter:** Circulated to residents, copied to staff and trustees, to advise of current government recommendations and expectations according to this policy.
6. **Supplies:** Ensure supplies of liquid hand soap, paper towels, toilet rolls, tissues and antibacterial spray for office and Chubbs Room.

**PHASE 2: To prevent the spread of infection**

1. **Infection prevention:** Procedures to be instigated on site, in resident’s homes and in office and communal areas such as Chubbs Room – see Appendix 1
2. **Newsletters:** Continued communication with residents, staff and trustees about the latest advice. Remind residents to use Careline pendant in an emergency as usual.
3. **Social events:** To be cancelled
4. **Office closed:** To personal visitors without an appointment
5. **Maintenance:** Essential maintenance and health and safety work only continues
6. **Social distancing:** Staff stop social visits to residents and trustees stop attending the site. Staff visiting residents for emergencies keep a distance of at least 2 metres.
7. **Meetings:** All meetings are cancelled or postponed
8. **Home working:** It may be necessary for the General Manager to work from home with a laptop. This separation of staff will enable the essential work be carried out if the Warden has to be absent from work.
9. **Isolation:** The Financial Clerk and/or Cleaner may be asked to remain at home on full pay in order to prevent cross infection.

**PHASE 3: Maintenance of essential activities**

1. **Staff:** Staff leave may be cancelled if required.
2. **Infection control:** Continues as listed in the appendix.
3. **Other measures:** Continue as listed above
4. **Essential activities:** The General Manager shall ensure that essential activities listed in Appendix 2, shall continue where possible, in liaison with the Management Team.
5. **Chubbs Room:** The Management Team and General Manager will make a decision about closure of the community room.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

UK Government, Pandemic Flu guidance, 2013 updated November 2017 <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pandemic-flu> Accessed 16/3/2020

Cabinet Office, Pandemic influenza checklist for businesses

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/61986/060516flubcpchecklist.pdf> Accessed 16/3/2020

Department of Health, Infection Control in Care Homes, Hand Hygiene section, 2013

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/214929/Care-home-resource-18-February-2013.pdf> Accessed 17/3/2020

UK Government, Guidance for supported living provision, 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-residential-care-supported-living-and-home-care-guidance/covid-19-guidance-for-supported-living-provision> Accessed 18/3/2020

UK Government, Guidance on social distancing and for vulnerable people, 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people> Accessed 18/3/2020

**INFECTION CONTROL MEASURES Appendix 1**

Latest advice on infection control should be followed and this section amended as necessary. Additional measures will be required if infection has occurred and latest advice followed.

**OFFICE**

**Notices:** Infection control notices posted on the office door and inside eg hand washing

**Hand washing:** Visitors asked to wash hands on arrival; staff to wash hands often

**Tissues:** are available, to be binned if used, and hands washed

**Cleaning:** Disinfect all door handles, telephones, mobile phones, computer keyboards, printer, monitor on/off and computer on/off buttons, mouse, laptop and desks, daily, and coffee making area/fridge if used, followed by hand washing.

**CHUBBS ROOM**

**Notices:** Infection control notices posted on the Chubbs Room door and inside eg hand washing

**Hand washing:** Visitors asked to wash hands on arrival

**Cleaning:** Disinfect all door handles on working days, and tables/ kitchen area if used, followed by hand washing.

**RESIDENT FLATS**

**Hand washing:** Staff, trustees and contractors to wash hands on entering properties

**Visitors:** Residents advised to wash hands regularly and to request visitors wash hands on arrival.

**Visits:** Warden stops social visits to residents, emergency visits only.

**CASH HANDLING**

* Minimal cash handling is recommended.
* If residents offer cash for eg shopping, it should be given to staff in an envelope
* If staff receive cash they are requested to wash their hands immediately afterwards.

**WASTE MANAGEMENT in areas where infection is present**

**Personal waste (such as used tissues) and disposable cleaning cloths:** Can be stored securely within disposable rubbish bags. These bags should be placed into another bag, tied securely and kept separate from other waste. This should be put aside for at least 72 hours before being put in the usual external household rubbish bin or authorised blue sack.  
**Recycling, food, glass and garden waste:** Can be disposed of as normal.

**Appendix 2**

**ESSENTIAL ACTIVITIES**

These essential activities shall continue during a pandemic and other non-essential business may be suspended for the time being, if required:

**OFFICE**

**Banking:** Bills are usually paid online and if necessary, can be undertaken if home working is necessary for the General Manager and the Financial Clerk is unavailable.

**Petty cash:** Financial Clerk to ensure that at least £100 is available in the office safe.

**Debit card:** Ensure that at least £400 is available on the 2 cards, held in the safe and by the Warden

**Staff wages:** In the absence of the Financial Clerk, the General Manager shall pay staff salaries and pensions.

**Post:** A member of staff shall check post and discuss with the General Manager if working from home or in the absence of the General Manager, the Management Team.

**Telephone:** A member of staff shall check messages and discuss with the General Manager if working from home or in the absence of the General Manager, the Management Team.

**Emails:** A member of staff shall check emails in the absence of the General Manager.

**HEALTH & SAFETY**

**Daily tasks:** The Warden undertakes a number of daily tasks which will be completed by another member of staff if the warden is unavailable:

* AM: Ring Appello (Medvivo) Careline for information about overnight issues
* AM: Contact residents by phone (tick sheet in Warden’s Office). Appello (Medvivo) can do this in the Warden’s absence

**Weekly tasks:** The Warden undertakes a number of weekly tests which will be completed by another member of staff if the Warden is unavailable:

* Fire alarm testing (instructions in office filing cabinet. Record in log book in Warden’s Office)
* Visual defibrillator checks at each site (tick sheet on office noticeboard)
* Chubbs Room water flushing (list in kitchen meter cupboard)

**Monthly tasks**: The Warden undertakes a number of monthly tests which will be completed by another member of staff if the Warden is unavailable:

* Emergency light testing (instructions and record in fire log book in Warden’s office)
* Fire extinguisher checks (instructions and record in fire log book in Warden’s office) **Infection control:** Additional infection control measures shall be instigated by staff as listed in the appendix.

**Clear pathways:** Ensure roads and pathways are clear (gritting if necessary) as per Health & Safety policy and Procedures.

**Urgent contractual work:** Arrange urgent work eg plumbing, electrical, to maintain health and safety or essential services.

**Gardening and cleaning:** To continue as normal if safe to do so, with additional infection control measures as appropriate.

**RESIDENTS**

**Wellbeing:** Ensure wellbeing of residents - see health and safety above

**Home care support:** It may be necessary to liaise with family members if home care support is limited for vulnerable residents through home carer absence, to make alternative arrangements. In this case it may also be necessary to contact the Adult Social Care team.

**Shopping:** It may be necessary to provide essential shopping (eg food and medication) for some residents with no family or carers. If this is the case, staff who hold an enhanced DBS may undertake this activity using the charity payment cards or cash from the safe.

In the absence of staff, trustees may do essential shopping but cannot handle residents’ money.

A receipt should be requested from the shop and copied for the office. The resident will be asked to sign this to agree to being invoiced at a later date.

See Infection Control in the appendix for cash handling protocol.

**Dryer:** It may be necessary to take washed laundry to the dryer for residents if they cannot get out.

**Waste:** It may be necessary to take waste to the bin area for residents if they cannot get out.