



## Facilitating Visits in our Care Homes - Essential Carer

At Brunelcare we understand how difficult this year has been for our residents, their families and friends, especially because of the restrictions placed on visiting in care homes. We also recognise that relatives and friends are our partners in the care of those living in our care homes.

We remain committed to enabling and supporting visiting that is meaningful, as safe as possible and we recognise that visiting is an essential and integral part of your loved ones care. **We will, from May 1st 2021, support the introduction of the “Essential Carer” role in our Care Homes.**

The essential carer role is intended as a way of supporting the relatively small proportion of residents who need some element of care and support that could only ever be provided by someone with a unique personal relationship with the resident, perhaps formed over many years eg a spouse, partner, family member or close friend. This is the type of care or support that could not be provided easily, or not in quite the same way, by even the most highly skilled and committed professional care home staff.

For example, this could be intimate care, such as help with washing and dressing, where the resident becomes highly distressed unless it is carried out by a familiar loved one.

There may also be some situations where it is not the close contact as such, but the presence of someone with a unique personal relationship to the resident, that is critical in providing emotional and mental support. For example, a resident who may be refusing to eat unless they do so in the company of a partner or loved one, and therefore at real risk of significant physical deterioration. Another example might be where someone with a close personal relationship is better able to calm behaviour that appears challenging or distress.

Decisions around essential carers should be based on an individualised assessment of the residents needs and in discussion with the home manager and the team. Please telephone the home to discuss if this role would be helpful to your loved one.



- In the essential carer role you will be undertaking support of your loved one in ways such as giving personal care, supporting with eating and drinking, providing emotional support and this will require much closer contact with your loved one, which is why we ask that you are part of the weekly testing programme alongside our staff.
- In the essential carer role you will be undertaking support of your loved one in ways such as giving personal care, supporting with eating and drinking, providing emotional support and this will require much closer contact with your loved one, which is why we ask that you are part of the weekly testing programme alongside our staff.

**You will be required to be part of the following testing programme:**

**Take a rapid lateral flow test before every visit. (except in the circumstances relating to testing following a prior positive PCR - described).**

**This must include a minimum of 2 lateral flow tests a week: one rapid lateral flow test on the same day as the PCR test, and one rapid flow test before each visit.**

**The PCR and rapid lateral flow tests to be completed on site.**

**Consistent return of a negative result required for visits to continue**

**Your results will be entered on to the system alongside our staff, and you will receive the result via text message or email. To reassure you, this is a secure system and complies with all aspects of Data Protection**

- If you have received a Positive Covid 19 test result in the last 90 days with a PCR test please inform the manager when you book your visit, and bring confirmation of this result with you. (usually this will be a message via Test and Trace text message or email).
- Prior to each visit you will be asked to complete a visitor checklist with a member of staff and undertake a Lateral Flow Device Test this test takes about half an hour and your visit will depend on receiving a negative result, we will ask you to wait in your car or another suitable area.
- On receipt of a negative result a member of staff will provide appropriate PPE, a mask which must be worn at all times, (covering your nose and mouth), in the home and an apron and gloves.
- We ask that you maintain physical distancing from all other residents and staff, and that access to communal areas must be kept to a minimum.
- Staff may be present during your visit supporting you with the care of your loved one. We ask that you are respectful of physical distancing with staff outside of direct care provision.