

Health of Looked After Children During Covid-19

Role of the LAC Health team

Dr Anna Battersby - Interim Named Doctor for Looked After Children
Dr Rush Wickramasinghe – Medical Advisor for adoption and fostering
Dr Efun Johnson – Designated Doctor for Looked After Children
Yvette Newman – Looked After Children Nurse

Tuesday 31st March 2020



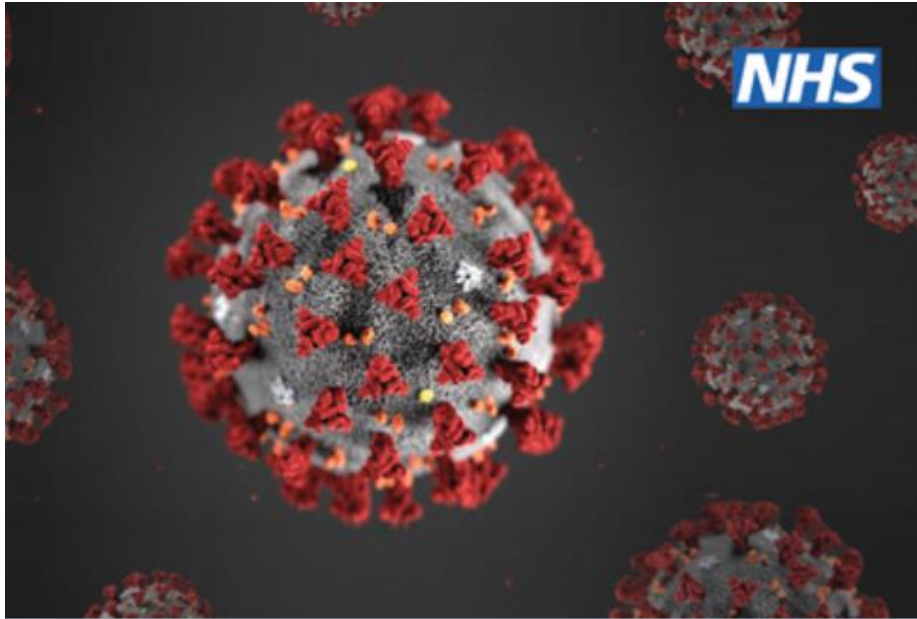
Guy's and St Thomas'
NHS Foundation Trust



Overview - Content

- Updates for carers during Covid-19
- Looked After Children – Care plan & health role
- Health assessment content
- After the assessment: Signposting/information sharing

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19): Background



- First described in Wuhan City, China, December 2019
- Coronaviruses: common cold, SARS, MERS, COVID-19
- Virus named SARS-CoV-2
- Incubation period: 4-6 days

- Transmission: probably large respiratory droplets, direct/indirect contact

Government action plan

Policy paper

Coronavirus action plan: a guide to what you can expect across the UK

Published 3 March 2020

- **Contain:** detect early cases, follow up close contacts, and prevent disease transmission
- **Delay:** slow the spread in-country, lowering the peak impact and pushing away from winter
- **Research:** understand virus transmission, diagnostics, drugs and vaccines
- **Mitigate:** support hospitals to maintain essential services

Social Distancing

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Social distancing

Please help us to keep our patients and staff safe by following the national guidelines on social distancing.

Please keep two metres apart from others at all times.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Prevent Spread

How can you stop coronaviruses spreading?

If you need to cough or sneeze



Catch it
with a tissue



Bin it



Kill it
by washing
your hands with
soap & water or
hand sanitiser

You should wash hands with soap & water or hand sanitiser



**After breaks
& sport
activities**



**Before
cooking
& eating**



**On arrival at
any childcare
or educational
setting**



**After using
the toilet**



**Before
leaving
home**



Try not to touch your
eyes, nose, and mouth
with unwashed hands



Do not share items that come
into contact with your mouth
such as cups & bottles



If unwell do not share items
such as bedding, dishes,
pencils & towels

Protect
yourself and
others

Coronavirus

Wash your hands more often



Coronavirus is a serious illness that can make you very ill.



The best way to not catch it is to wash your hands more often for 20 seconds.



Use soap and water or a hand sanitiser when you:

- Get home or into work
- Blow your nose, sneeze or cough
- Eat or touch food



Prevent Spread

Prevent
Spread:
Keep
frequently
touched
surfaces
clean



Issue#: MAR_V1.03
Date: 20MAR2020

Viral biology

survival data

 **3 HOURS**
as droplets

 **72 HOURS**
plastic and stainless steel

 **20 HOURS**
cardboard

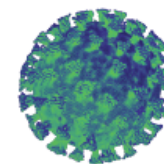
Continuous
cough or
high
temperature
?

Coronavirus

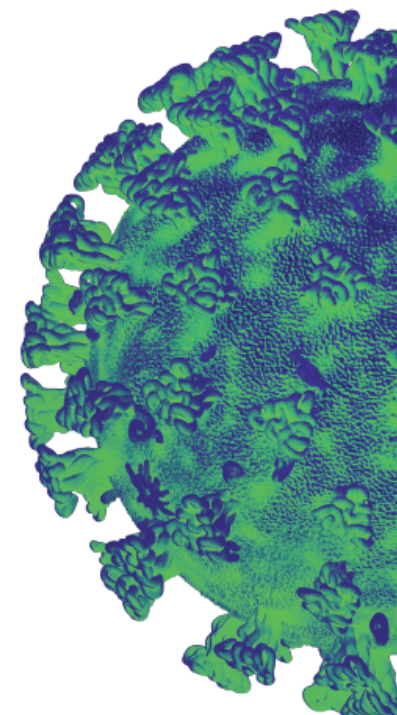
Isolate your household

Stay at home

If you or anyone in your household has a high temperature or a new and continuous cough – even if it's mild



- ✓ **Everyone in your household must stay at home** for 14 days and keep away from others.
- ✓ **Go to NHS.UK** to check your symptoms and follow the specialist medical advice. Only call NHS 111 if you can't get online or your symptoms worsen.
- ✓ **Protect** older people and those with existing health conditions by avoiding contact.
- ✗ Please **DO NOT** enter this building



Prevent Spread

Prevent
spread

CATCH IT

Germs spread easily. Always carry tissues and use them to catch your cough or sneeze.



BIN IT

Germs can live for several hours on tissues. Dispose of your tissue as soon as possible.



KILL IT

Hands can transfer germs to every surface you touch. Clean your hands as soon as you can.



Shielding

What is shielding?

- Extremely vulnerable people who may be sharing the foster home should:
 - Minimise time in shared spaces and keep them ventilated
 - Aim to keep 2 metres away from others
 - Sleep in a different bed
 - Use a separate bathroom where possible
 - Use separate towels
 - Clean the toilet/bathroom after each use wiping surfaces
 - Avoid using the kitchen whilst others present
 - Eat meals in your room
 - Use dishwasher if possible to clean and dry crockery and cutlery
 - Everyone should wash their hands, avoid touching their face, and clean frequently touched surfaces
 - NO NEED for other household members to shield alongside them



Social distancing, self isolation & shielding

- Vulnerable/high risk persons = stringent social distancing
- Extremely vulnerable/very high risk persons = shielding

Shielding, self-isolation & social distancing are very important in order to protect yourselves and others from covid-19.

Everyone in the UK should be social distancing/staying at home, as per government's announcement on 23 March. Some people are calling this "lockdown" = not going out to get essential supplies like food and medicine and once a day for exercise. You can go out for medical needs and for work if absolutely necessary. When out, **stay at least two metres away from people that you don't live with.**

• **Self-isolation is the most effective way of preventing coronavirus spreading.** Government advice is to self-isolate if you have any coronavirus symptoms, might have been exposed to it, or live with someone with symptoms.

• **Shielding is similar to self-isolating, but for longer (12-weeks)**, and is for people who are deemed extremely vulnerable due to a specific health condition.

Health pathway for emergency foster care placements during covid-19 pandemic

Child at high risk of mental health problems:

- Place with familiar carers e.g. connected person/ family/ teacher and/or with carers who have mental health awareness/ training or can be provided with safety plan and supports

Universal child health needs

- Ensure you are aware of the child's health needs through obtaining GP summary, current medication list and allergies: collect medicines
- Speak to the child about coronavirus using child friendly resources
- Obtain phone number for parents/family

• Universal carer recommendations

- Ideally have space for self-isolation capacity at home
- Written information + videos for foster carers and child
- Foster carers should minimise the child's anxiety about Covid-19 and seek support with their own worries
- Enable remote contact with family/friends
- Foster carers must be able to risk assess whether the child requires medical attention. NB/ Illness OTHER than Covid-19 must not be overlooked.

Key information:

Symptoms of suspected covid-19:

- new continuous cough, or
- high temperature (37.8°C)

Shielding extremely vulnerable persons:

Those who have: received an organ transplant and on ongoing immunosuppression medication; cancer and undergoing chemotherapy or radiotherapy; cancers of the blood or bone marrow e.g. leukaemia; severe chest conditions such as cystic fibrosis or severe asthma (requiring hospital admissions or courses of steroid tablets); severe diseases of body systems, such as severe kidney disease (dialysis) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

Social distancing:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection> **"Particularly stringent social distancing for vulnerable persons:** aged > 70 (regardless of medical conditions), < 70 with an underlying health condition listed below (ie anyone instructed to get a flu jab as an adult each year on medical grounds), long-term respiratory diseases, e.g. asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema or bronchitis; chronic heart disease, e.g. heart failure; chronic kidney disease; chronic liver disease, e.g. hepatitis; chronic neurological conditions, e.g. Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis (MS), a learning disability, cerebral palsy, diabetes, problems with your spleen – e.g. sickle cell disease or if you have had your spleen removed; a weakened immune system from HIV and AIDS, or medicines such as steroid tablets or chemotherapy, being overweight (body mass index (BMI) of 40 or above) or pregnant women

Self-isolation:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

Has this child been living in a household with someone who shows symptoms that may be caused by Covid-19?

Yes

- Child to be placed with foster carer who does not meet the description of an "extremely vulnerable person" – check AH form/ urgent GP advice
- **14 days self isolation** (IF EXTREMELY VULNERABLE FOLLOW ADDITIONAL SHIELDING ADVICE + DO NOT PLACE WITH ANYONE SUSPECTED OF COVID-19)
- If becomes unwell SEE RED BOX
- Room essential for self-isolation – separate bathroom good, rigorous cleaning
- Carers should ensure that children are not stigmatised during this time, and advocate within their communities against unhelpful rumours

No

Is this child extremely vulnerable to Covid-19?

Yes

- Must NOT be placed with anyone with suspected COVID-19
- Foster carer must follow **shielding** advice (see PHE guidance) for 12 weeks

No

- Social distancing advice **"Particularly stringent social distancing for vulnerable persons – see key information"**
- Handwashing flagged as paramount
- <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/best-way-to-wash-your-hands/>
- If household member becomes ill follow pathway for 14 days self-isolation

Is this child extremely vulnerable to Covid-19?

Yes

- Must NOT be placed with anyone with suspected COVID-19
- If well after 14 days follow **shielding advice** (see PHE guidance) for 12 weeks
- If child becomes ill SEE RED BOX

No

- If well after 14 days continue **social distancing** see PHE guidance **"Particularly stringent social distancing for vulnerable persons – see key information"**
- Handwashing flagged as paramount
- <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/best-way-to-wash-your-hands/>
- If household member becomes ill follow pathway for 2 weeks self-isolation
- If child becomes ill SEE RED BOX

ANY CHILD UNWELL/ BECOMES UNWELL

Consider usual other causes of childhood illness as well as Corona and seek appropriate care/ advice

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms-and-what-to-do/>

- If seriously unwell ring 999
- ? mild enough to stay home – seek COVID 111 online if concerned about COVID type symptoms / ring 111
- Provide reassurance to child
- If COVID likely, isolate in household for 7 days from last fever day – 2 m distance if possible, own bedroom, bathroom. Will need flexibility with if younger child not able to keep 2 m needing a hug??
- Domestic cleaning advice and laundry advice <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

FAQs/ myth busting

- Can we test the child for COVID19 before placement?

If the child is well there is no current NHS offer as limited tests are available.

Also if negative does not guarantee ongoing negativity or may not have detected when it is actually present

FAQs/ myth busting

- Should I be issued with PPE if we take on a COVID high risk child/YP?

*The current advice is for the child to be self-isolated within the household – ideally own bedroom and bathroom with rigorous cleaning and special laundry considerations. **There is no PPE issued to families at present.***

In hospitals, and when health care staff are caring for children with additional needs where very close care and invasive procedures are needed warranting PPE. This needs to be ongoing from onset of symptoms to 7 days after the last fever. After that, they will have to social distance. Household members will need to self isolate for 14 days from exposure to child.

FAQs/ myth busting

- **Is the virus airborne?**

No, the virus is spread by large droplets. This means that it lands on surfaces and is spread by touching and touching the face. Bathrooms and kitchens are the highest risk areas for spreading the virus. Regular handwashing and surface cleaning reduces these risks. Do not touch your face unless you have just cleaned your hands!

FAQs/ myth busting

- Can you be certain that the risk a child is infected is low?

*A significant proportion of children will have no symptoms at all or minor symptoms. It is very difficult to know who has the infection in children. The best strategy is to assume all children **could** have the infection and practice excellent home hygiene, handwashing and social distancing as much as possible. This has to be balanced against the child's care needs – both physical and emotional. Many families are experiencing these challenges now and providing care for their children in the usual manner.*

carer

school

THE CARE PLAN

THE PLACEMENT PLAN

how that placement contributes to the care plan meets the child's needs

THE HEALTH PLAN

Health professionals

The child's care plan provides the overall vehicle for bringing together information from the assessment across the 7 dimensions of need, and how these will be met.

- a "**permanence plan**"- where the child will live in the long term
- Arrangements for promoting **health**
- Arrangements for promoting **educational achievement**
- **Emotional and behavioural development**
- **Identity**
- **Family and social relationships**. Including contact arrangements
- **Social presentation**
- **Self care skills**

An *integrated* plan that must take account of the wishes and feelings of the child and other relevant people about their immediate and long term arrangements.

THE PERSONAL EDUCATION PLAN

SEN or IEP if child has one

Child Protection Plan is separate from the Care Plan If the child has one

Health assessments

Modified
offer during
Covid-19
responses

- Video consults
where possible
- Use of “attend
anywhere”
consultations
- Telephone reviews

Face to face consultations can be offered
when necessary – or future appointment
after restrictions are lifted - to ensure
health needs met

Health assessments

Health Assessment role

Important not to neglect other health needs during COVID-19

- Holistic assessment (Not just a “Medical”)
- Familiarisation with health service
- Diagnosis & monitoring
- Promote health seeking behaviours
- Single point of health contact – continuity of care
- Immunisations
- Lifestyle health: weight/height/BMI
- Health promotion inc Smoking cessation
- Sexual and reproductive health

Health assessments

Health Assessment Service

- What we do
 - Assessment & advice
 - Mental health liason
 - Specialist referrals
 - E.g. infectious diseases/genetics /nneurology etc.
 - Blood requests for health risks e.g. bloodborne viruses
 - New immunisations service
- What we don't do
 - Manage acute illnesses/conditions
 - Prescribe medications
 - STI screening/contraception

Information leaflets



LAMBETH LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN HEALTH TEAM



INFORMATION FOR PROFESSIONALS INVOLVED WITH LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

We can also provide:

- ❖ Information for those that look after you so that they can help and support you
- Sexual health advice and support
- Information about diet, exercise and healthy lifestyles including smoking
- Advice about immunisations that will help you to be healthy. If necessary we can give immunisations
- We can attend meetings or health appointments with you if you wish
- See you outside of your yearly health assessment if you wish.

Help for foster carers during Covid-19

- <https://www.thefosteringnetwork.org.uk/covid-19-support-foster-carers>

Health Promotion and Advocacy resources for children and their carers

These online resources are self-accessible for over 10 years olds. However, carers are advised to explore the resources to see if accessible and appropriate for their particular child if under 14 years of age.

- Mental health and wellbeing

<https://www.childline.org.uk/toolbox/>

www.kooth.com

For carers:

<https://www.minded.org.uk/>



- Diet

https://www.nhs.uk/change4life?gclid=Ci0KCOiwicfzBRCHARisAQ-1_Op9k_YOh-hBHmLxbvVpxbnVSz-drogkTLtV2ta01dE-9MJPJOALUYaAuKJEALw_wcB&gclid=aw.ds

<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/kids-healthy-eating-plate/>



- Exercise

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/physical-activity-guidelines-children-and-young-people/>



- Keeping safe

<https://www.childline.org.uk/>



For carers:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak

Child/ YPs wishes and feelings

- Voice of C/YP is paramount
- In the HA we consider
 - Their thoughts and feelings
 - Physical & Mental Health & Safety (including safeguarding)
 - Placement issues

'I have just moved in with a foster family. It's really nice. They are nice people: it's a nice house. I am being looked after.' (A aged 9)

'I feel angry at having to be in care. I feel isolated and sad...I feel powerless. I have bottled up my emotions. I cannot trust anyone or build relationships as I am moved about so much.' (S aged 15)

Key messages

- Rights of the child to be paramount whilst promoting health & wellbeing during Covid-19 responses
- Health assessments provide a holistic framework
- Enabling participation – voice of C/YP
- Safeguarding function
- Information sharing between professionals

How can you stop coronaviruses spreading?

If you need to cough or sneeze



Catch it
with a tissue



Bin it



Kill it
by washing
your hands with
soap & water or
hand sanitiser

You should wash hands with soap & water or hand sanitiser



After breaks
& sport
activities



Before
cooking
& eating



On arrival at
any childcare
or educational
setting



After using
the toilet



Before
leaving
home



Try not to touch your
eyes, nose, and mouth
with unwashed hands



Do not share items that come
into contact with your mouth
such as cups & bottles



If unwell do not share items
such as bedding, dishes,
pencils & towels

Children's commissioner resources

- <https://imohub.org.uk/what-you-should-know-about-kai/>
- <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/our-work/children-in-care/>
- Digital hub for LAC and care leavers
<https://imohub.org.uk/>

References

- Bazalgette, L., Rahilly, T., & Trevelyan, G. (2015). Achieving emotional wellbeing for looked after children. *National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children*.
- Children's Commissioner (2019). Children's Voices- children's experiences of instability in the care system
- Curtis, K., Liabo, K., Roberts, H., & Barker, M. (2004). Consulted but not heard: a qualitative study of young people's views of their local health service. *Health Expectations*, 7(2), 149-156.
- Davies, J., & Wright, J. (2008). Children's voices: A review of the literature pertinent to looked-after children's views of mental health services. *Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, 13(1), 26-31.