



Abbots Care

EST. 1995

COVID-19 Policy and Procedure

Version 6.0 Sept 2020

COVID-19 Policy and procedures	Policy and Procedure No.
Summary	<p>This policy highlights the home care practices in relation to coronavirus. It includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service users who have symptoms of COVID-19 Service users who do not have symptoms but someone in their household is isolating Neither the service user nor the care worker has symptoms of COVID-19 Visitors Service user letter added to the Forms section New and updated references have also been added to ensure the policy remains current.
Reason for Review	Policy reviewed in response to government updates on fine amounts and face coverings requirements 23/09/2020
Scope Roles affected by policy Service Users affected by policy Stakeholders affected by policy	<p>All Employees of Abbots Care Limited All Senior Managers and Directors</p> <p>All Service Users</p> <p>Family Commissioners NHS Local Authority</p>
AC Policies relating to procedure	COVID PPE Policy and Procedure Admissions to Service Policy and Procedure
CQC Outcomes relating to the procedure	<p>SAFE S2: How are risks to people assessed and their safety monitored and managed, so they are supported to stay safe and their freedom is respected?</p> <p>SAFE S3: How does the service make sure that there are sufficient numbers of suitable staff to support people to stay safe and meet their needs?</p> <p>SAFE S5: How well are people protected by the prevention and control of infection?</p> <p>WELL-LED W5: How does the service work in partnership with other agencies?</p>
Relevant Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coronavirus Act 2020 • The Health Protection (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020 • Civil Contingencies Act 2004 • Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 • Equality Act 2010 • Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Registration and Regulated Activities) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

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1.0 Actions	<p>1.1 Share with all Care workers and Office Staff</p> <p>1.2 Discuss changes with Care teams in their monthly team meetings to check understanding</p> <p>1.3 Ensure policy is discussed at supervisions</p> <p>1.4 Load policy on to the employee portal</p>
2.0 Objectives	<p>2.1 To ensure that safe, effective procedures are in place with staff and Service Users having information in an accessible format.</p> <p>2.2 As the spread of the virus is resulting in response requirements changing daily, Abbots Care Limited will ensure that it stays up to date with reliable sources of information and has the flexibility to respond when required.</p>
3.0 Policy	<p>3.1 Abbots Care Limited recognises that the outbreak of a new strain of coronavirus SARS coronavirus-2 (SARS-CoV-2) which results in the disease COVID-19 is a fast-moving situation. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has stated that this is a pandemic. As care providers, ensuring robust infection control and business continuity plans form part of preparing business at Abbots Care Limited for any events that can cause disruption to the normal business.</p> <p>3.2 Abbots Care Limited will ensure that staff are aware and understand the importance of pandemic preparedness and will carry out preparations by following the checklist in the Pandemic Policy and Procedure at Abbots Care Limited. Abbots Care Limited understands that business continuity planning involves all aspects of the business and to be effective Abbots Care Limited must work with their partners, suppliers, and commissioners to ensure that a safe and effective service can be maintained.</p> <p>3.3 Abbots Care Limited understands that they have a responsibility for ensuring that staff follow good infection control and prevention techniques and that they support Service Users with this too. Abbots Care Limited will ensure that staff have access to reliable information to reduce anxiety and dispel any myths and inaccurate information that may cause worry or distress to staff, Service Users or the wider public.</p>
Procedure	

4.0 Pandemic procedures	<p>4.1 Abbots Care Limited recognises that the WHO has declared COVID-19 can be characterised as a pandemic on 11 March 2020. Abbots Care Limited however, will ensure that it reviews the Pandemic Policy and Procedure and will complete the checklist to ensure that the business is prepared and that robust business continuity plans are in place. All lessons learned have been reflected on the updated policy in preparation for the second wave.</p> <p>4.2 Reducing the Risk of Contracting or Spreading the Virus</p> <p>Abbots Care Limited will ensure that staff, when not at work, follow the WHO and Public Health England advice to reduce the risk of contracting the virus and the risk of spreading it. They must also support Service Users to follow the government requirements and remind them that failure to follow this can result in a fine. <i>The revised social contact rules (from 14 September) and face covering rules (from 23 September) must be followed.</i> Where local lockdown measures are in place, these must be adhered to in line with local and government guidance.</p> <p>4.3 Fines</p> <p>From 14 September - when the new rules apply - it will be against the law to meet people you do not live with within a group larger than 6 (unless you are meeting as a household or support bubble). Further face covering rules have also been brought into force with people now required to wear them in private hire vehicles and taxis, as well as hospitality venues. The police will enforce these legal requirements, including the ability to issue fines (fixed penalty notice) of £200, doubling for further breaches up to a maximum of £6,400.</p> <p>4.4 Further measures: See Abbots Care Limited COVID PPE policy and procedure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash your hands regularly and properly for at least 20 seconds <p>Staff should wash their hands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before leaving home • On arrival at work • After using the toilet • After touching pets • After breaks and sporting activities • Before food preparation • After using public transport • Before eating any food, including snacks • Before leaving work • On arrival at home • Use hand sanitiser when it is not possible to wash hands with soap and water. Hand sanitiser must contain 60% alcohol to be effective • Maintain at least 2 metres (6 foot) distance between yourself and a Service User or family wherever possible. If you are too close, you can breathe in the droplets, including the COVID-19 virus if the person coughing has the disease • Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth. Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose, or mouth. From there, the virus can enter your body and can make you sick • Practice respiratory hygiene. Make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or
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tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you do not have a tissue, use your sleeve. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately and wash your hands or use hand sanitiser if you do not have immediate access to soap and running water. Droplets spread virus. By following good respiratory hygiene, you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and COVID-19

4.4 Confidentiality

Abbots Care Limited will follow confidentiality and GDPR policies and procedures to ensure that the details of staff involved in caring for Service Users with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 is kept

confidential. Employees should also respect each other's confidentially and take care not to inadvertently share information. Where staff are suspected or confirmed to have contracted COVID-19, their personal details should be treated as confidential, as they would be for any other Abbots Care Limited Service User.

4.5 Reducing the Risk of Stigmatization

Stigma occurs when people negatively associate an infectious disease, such as COVID-19, with a specific population. In the case of COVID-19, there are an increasing number of reports of public stigmatization against people from areas affected by the epidemic, this means that people are being labelled, stereotyped, separated, and/or experience loss of status and discrimination because of a potential negative affiliation with the disease. Abbots Care Limited will ensure that staff understand the importance of preventing and addressing social stigma by making sure facts are available to staff and Service Users

4.6 Actions if a Service User Meets the Criteria and Displays Symptoms

If the Service User receiving care and support has symptoms of COVID-19, then the risk of transmission should be minimised through safe working procedures, as detailed below and in Abbots Care Limited Policy and Procedure for PPE.

The symptoms of COVID-19 are:

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of:

- New continuous cough and/ or
- High temperature
- Anosmia – loss of smell or taste

If a Service Users has either of these symptoms, make sure that the Service Users is safe, let them know you are going to leave the room and call Abbots Care Limited for advice.

Call the office on **01727 891004** and a Care Manager will advise you of the next steps to follow, if out of hours please call **01923 634991**.

We will call one of our COVID teams who will come and check their symptoms, including their temperature.

The COVID team will call 111 with the Service Users for further advice.

If the Service User is confirmed as probable symptoms, and doesn't need hospital admission, and are flagged on the Abbots Care Limited Risk assessment as requiring essential support they will be supported by the COVID team for a period of 10 days on a separate Service by the Barrier (Rapid Response) Team. If the Service Users is non-essential, for example to take a Service User out and has been assessed as non-essential the care can be paused for the 10-day period with the consent of the Operations Manager and family.

For further information refer to the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Policy and Procedure at Abbots Care Limited.

4.7 Actions if a Service User Does Not have Symptoms but is Part of a Household that is Isolating

If the Service User being cared for is flagged in the Abbots Care Limited risk assessment as requiring essential support and their Care Worker can remain at a safe protected distance from the symptomatic member of the household, then Care can be provided with the standard PPE guidelines. This would apply, for example, where the symptomatic family member can remain in their own room, is using separate bathroom facilities and is observing robust isolation procedures, staying 2 metres away from other family members. Guidance for those under household isolation can be found [here](#).

Where this is not possible, and this will vary on a case-by-case basis, the same procedures should be adopted as if the Service User being cared for did have symptoms of COVID-19 (see above). Care should continue to be taken to limit contact with any household member that has symptoms. PPE procedures must also be followed as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Policy and Procedure at Abbots Care Limited.

4.8 Cleaning

If Care Workers undertake cleaning duties where a Service User has been confirmed as testing positive or they have symptoms and are waiting for a test or results care workers must use an effective Infection control measures when cleaning and disposing of waste.. Frequently touched surfaces must be cleaned regularly. Personal waste (for example, used tissues, continence pads and other items soiled with bodily fluids) and disposable cleaning cloths can be stored securely within disposable rubbish bags. These bags must be placed into another bag, tied securely, and kept separate from other waste. They should be put aside, labelled with the date, and stored for at least 72 hours before being put in the usual household waste bin for disposal as normal.

4.9 Laundry

If Care Workers support the Service User with laundry, then they must not shake dirty laundry before washing. This minimises the possibility of dispersing the virus through the air. Wash items as appropriate, in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Dirty laundry that has been in contact with an ill person can be washed with other people's items. If the Service User does not have a washing machine, wait a further 72 hours after the 10-day isolation period has ended; the laundry can then be taken to a public laundromat. Items heavily soiled with body fluids, for example, vomit or diarrhoea, or items that cannot be washed, must be disposed of, with the owner's consent, following the correct disposal procedures.

4.10 Actions if a Service User does not have symptoms but is part of a household that is isolating

The same procedures should be adopted as if the Service User being cared for did have symptoms of COVID-19 (see above). Care should continue to be taken to limit contact with any household member that has symptoms. PPE procedures must also be followed as per the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Policy and Procedure at Abbots Care Limited.

4.11 Action if a Member of Staff Reports Symptoms

Employees with Symptoms of COVID 19

Care Workers who have symptoms of COVID 19 should follow the government advice and go on line to confirm their COVID 19 symptoms using on line 111 Coronavirus questions at <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19>

As soon as you have confirmed your symptoms using the symptom check provider above, you must

- isolate: as soon as you experience coronavirus symptoms, medical advice is clear: you must self-isolate for at least 10 days. Anyone else in your household must self-isolate for 14 days from when you started having symptoms
 - test: order a test immediately at www.nhs.uk/coronavirus or call 119 if you have no internet access
 - Abbots Care Limited has access to local key worker tests if you are unable to get a test.
 - results: if your test is positive, you must complete the remainder of your 10-day self-isolation. Anyone in your household must also complete self-isolation for 14 days from when you started having symptoms. If your test is negative, you and other household members no longer need to self-isolate
 - share contacts: if you test positive for coronavirus, the NHS test and trace service will send you a text or email alert or call you with instructions of how to share details of people with whom you have had close, recent contact and places you have visited. It is important that you respond as soon as possible so that we can give appropriate advice to those who need it. You will be told to do this online via a secure website or you will be called by one of our contract tracers.
 - If employees are advised to self-isolate they need to go to <https://111.nhs.uk/isolation-note/> and complete the Isolation note and forward to Sarah.Hurley@abbotscare.com
- a. If the member of staff has no symptoms after their 10-day isolation they can return to work on day 11
 - b. Advice will be given to the member of staff if they need to self-isolate and what action will need to take place for any Service Users that they may have had contact with

- 4.12 Employees whose family they permanently live with have symptoms of COVID 19**
- c. Their family member should follow the guidance in 1a above and confirm their symptoms on <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19>
 - d. If their family member is advised to self-isolate, they must self-isolate with them for 14 days and go to <https://111.nhs.uk/isolation-note/> and complete the Isolation note and forward to Sarah.Hurley@abbotscare.com

4.13 Care Groups

To limit the contacts of Service Users who are vulnerable, have symptoms of COVID or have tested positive will be placed in separate Care Groups in line with DHSC COVID-19: Provision of home Care

- Abbots Care Limited will wherever practicably ensure that Service Users who are “Clinically Extremely Vulnerable “Are arranged into groups and supported by a small staff team to reduce contacts.
- All Service Users who are either diagnosed with or tested positive to COVID will be supported on Barrier Rounds with Care Workers who have received further IPC training.
- All Service Users who are admitted to the Service without evidence of a negative test will be supported on the Barrier Care Group for 14 days.

4.14 Reducing Contacts between staff

Abbots Care Limited will reduce contact between staff through:

- PPE Drive Through Hubs in community open air settings
- Team meetings via Zoom
- Supervisions and 121's through Zoom
- Learning and Development via Learn Upon and live training sessions

4.15 Visitors

The impact of the coronavirus is far greater for people with underlying health conditions and who are elderly. Abbots Care Limited will monitor the changing situation. All Service Users should adhere to the government guidance on what we need to do in relation to the coronavirus pandemic, including in relation to visitors to their homes.

Abbots Care Limited will ask all visitors including Care Workers to remain in the COVID safe reception area behind the screens if essential to visit the office.

See Covid secure Office below.

4.16 Shielding at Risk Groups

Abbots Care Limited needs to ensure that Service Users and staff who are considered particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 have a risk assessment in place. Abbots Care Limited must ensure that the Public Health England 'Guidance on shielding and protecting people who are clinically extremely vulnerable from COVID-19' is followed. Where local lockdowns are introduced or in place, Abbots Care Limited will need to ensure the additional guidance for vulnerable individuals is followed.

Where practicable we will ensure continuity of care with the least amount of Care workers' possible visiting.

4.17 Family members or carers

To minimize the risk of the infection being passed on and to meet government advice on social distancing all family members and carers must leave the area where care staff need to work in.

4.18 Supporting Hospital Discharge

Abbots will continue to support hospital discharges for all current and new Service Users. Where the Service Users have tested positive to COVID-19 they will be supported on the Rapid Response service where Care teams are specifically trained in managing PPE for COVID-19. If Service Users have a negative test result they can be supported in their usual group.

See Abbots Care Limited Admissions Policy

4.19 Working from Home

It is not possible for **all staff** roles at Abbots Care Limited to be able to work from home due to the business being defined as a critical business. All employees are expected to be open and transparent when working from home and produce work to the same standards and productivity as if they were in the office environment.

Working from home is agreed for staff who are classified as:

- Self-isolating following the government advice on potential Covid19 symptoms
- Being part of the extremely vulnerable group as outlined in the government advice
- Identified as being able to partially work from home to help reduce the numbers of staff in the office, reducing the likelihood of passing on infection.

Effective Communication: Is key to remote working and employees must make sure that they are communicating continuously with their office-based colleagues. They must be contactable and present on teams for the full time of their working hours.

Action for staff

- All employees will attend a morning meeting with their manager through Microsoft Teams.
- All employees will complete a plan of what they would like to achieve each day and share it with their manager using the work from home report. See appendix
- Work will be assigned by managers each day and targets agreed.
- Ongoing communication is key, and all employees will be expected to be live on their team's app or desktop for the duration of their working hours, cameras, and chat on so that they can communicate with their teams continuously.
- Team managers will agree any tea and lunch breaks for the day to fit in with the office-based team.
- Each home working team member will complete a report at the end of each day on the form attached and send it to their managers at the end of their working hours.
- Each team member must respond to phone calls from their team or manager within 15 mins.

- Emails must be responded swiftly and always by the end of each day.
- Managers will offer 30 mins weekly 121's to review productivity and to offer support.
- Employees will ensure that they work the hours agreed in their contracts and any variation needs to be discussed with their line manager.
- Any deviation from this process could result in disciplinary action in line with the Employee Handbook.

Where staff at Abbots Care Limited can work from home, and Abbots Care Limited has agreed to the arrangement, Abbots Care Limited has the following expectations.

- Staff can work independently and on their own initiative
- Staff can motivate themselves
- Complete agreed work within set deadlines
- Staff can manage their workload effectively
- Staff can cope well under any new pressure posed by working at home
- Staff will adopt healthy work from home practices which includes compliance with Health and Safety
- Staff will maintain contact with Abbots Care Limited and colleagues with whom they would usually interact with
- Confidentiality will be maintained in line with the Data Protection Act
- Any concerns will be raised immediately with Helen Sinden
- Meeting with Service Users or external organisations will not take place with the employees at home unless teleconferencing facilities are used

Abbots Care Limited understands during the coronavirus outbreak, that where the employee's role makes home working feasible, working from home will be supported. The decision to temporarily allow home working is not a contractual change.

4.20 Working from Home - Health and Safety Considerations

Abbots Care Limited has a duty of care for all their employees, and the requirements of the health and safety legislation apply to homeworkers. Abbots Care Limited is responsible for carrying out a risk assessment to check whether the proposed home workplace's ventilation, temperature, lighting, space, chair, desk and computer, or any kind of workstation, and floor are suitable for the tasks the homeworker will be carrying out.

Abbots Care Limited is responsible for the equipment it supplies, but it is the employee's responsibility to rectify any flaws in the home highlighted by the assessment. Once the home workplace has passed the assessment, it is the employee who is responsible for keeping it that way. Abbots Care Limited will refer to the Home Working Policy and Procedure.

4.21 Managing the risk of working in the office environment

Abbots Care Limited have completed a full risk assessment of what the risks are and how they should be mitigated in the COVID Risk assessment.

4.22 Who should come to the office to work ?

As a critical business Abbots Care Limited office need to be open to support the safe management of the SU's and care teams in the community and to meet our regulatory body CQC standards. Although some roles can be worked from home many of the customer facing roles are always critical and need to be managed and supervised. The likelihood of missed visits resulting in injury or even death of a Service User is possible.

4.23 Protecting People who are at higher risk

All staff providing care will have a COVID Risk Assessment carried out to determine their health and characteristics and risk of providing care during the pandemic.

The Operations Director will risk assess the impact of each employee to establish if they are able to carry out their role from home safely.

4.24 Social Distancing in the office

All staff must maintain a social distance of 2m wherever possible in the office. This includes all areas including the entrances and outside of the building.

- Only one member of staff should enter the kitchen at a time.
- All desks will be 2m apart and screens will be placed between desks to reduce risk of transmission.
- Staff whose desks are in Unit 5 and 6 should only use the toilet and kitchen area in that office.
- Staff must wash hands and use hand sanitiser when entering the office and take a temperature check

4.26 Coming to work and leaving work

We will stagger start and finish times so that staff are working on a rota to reduce the number of staff arriving and leaving the office at one time.

On arrival in the office all staff must wash their hands and use hand sanitiser including after leaving the office for a break and for lunch.

Staff must only use the lift one person at a time.

4.27 Maintaining social distancing whilst working at desks

Desks will be moved to ensure a 2M distance and screens installed

Markings will be added to the floor to remind staff of the 2M distance

We will manage occupancy levels in accordance with the floor plan in the appendix with a maximum of xx to be in the office at any one time.

Community Facilitators will work in the community and from home mostly with a rota for coming into the office.

Induction and Update Training will continue to be run via Zoom.

4.28 Community work – All Community Facilitators should deliver supervision and support remotely using telephone or Zoom. If a face to face meeting is essential, they should maintain the 2M distance and wear PPE in the COVID PPE policy and procedure.

Tasks including assessments, risk assessments, observations and supervisions can be carried remotely and where essential face to face from a 2 M distance. Where demonstrating or carrying out care they should refer to the policy above and PPE COVID policy and procedure.

4.29 Meetings

All meetings should take place face to face only where the 2M rule can be applied and are necessary. Rooms should be well ventilated and sharing of pens or equipment should be avoided. Hand sanitiser should be available in the meeting room.

Where the 2M rule cannot be applied staff should carry out meetings via Zoom or Teams.

4.30 Common Areas

Only essential visitors attend the office and remain in the reception area.

All visitors to record names in the visitor book.

Kitchen areas are limited to one person at a time

2M distance must be maintained.

Deliveries must be left in the reception area.

4.31 Cleaning of office area

Frequent cleaning of work areas and equipment between uses, using your usual cleaning products. Each staff member must clean desks, keyboards, and own area at the start of each day and after lunch break, and the end of each day

Frequent cleaning of objects and surfaces that are touched regularly, such as door handles and keyboards, and making sure there are adequate disposal arrangements

Clearing workspaces and removing waste and belongings from the work area at the end of a shift –.

Limiting or restricting use of high-touch items and equipment – the photo copier should be cleaned after each use.

4.32 Handling deliveries

Staff handling deliveries should ensure that they wash their hands following handling of goods.

Personal deliveries for non-business deliveries are restricted during the pandemic.

4.33 PPE

Facemasks and PPE are not required in the office working environment unless supporting a SU.

4.34 Communication and Training

Policy and procedure to be sent to all office and management staff and zoom training sessions to be recorded and sent out.

Clear signage to be displayed at the office and on our website.

4.35 If staff have been notified that they are a contact of a confirmed case in the community but not at work as a Care Worker:

Staff who have been notified by text message or email through the [NHS Test and Trace](#) contact tracing service that they are a contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the community but outside the Health or Social Care setting, or their place of work, they should inform their line manager and self-isolate for 14 days, in line with the [NHS Test and Trace guidance](#).

This advice should be followed regardless of the results of any SARS-CoV-2 antibody testing. A positive antibody result signifies previous exposure, but it is currently unknown whether this correlates with immunity, including protection against future infections.

Employees should forward the email or text to their line manager.

If you have not been notified that you are a contact, this means you do not need to self-isolate and should follow the general guidance.

4.36 Supporting the NHS Test and Trace Service

Staff from [NHS Test and Trace](#) or other public health professionals may contact Abbots Care Limited if a member of their staff or a Service User has tested positive for coronavirus in order to alert those who have been in close contact with them.

Abbots Care Limited will assist the NHS Test and Trace by ensuring that robust records are kept of all Care Workers and Service Users in line with the Record Keeping Policy and Procedure at Abbots Care Limited.

Records are not required to be duplicated but information should be provided upon request and be sufficiently detailed to effectively support NHS Test and Trace in a timely manner. Mrs Kelly-Jo Wagg will ensure that this information is available at short notice if required by NHS Test and Trace and may include a request for:

- The name and telephone number of a Care Worker
- The dates and times that a Care Worker is at work
- A log of the Care Worker's visits to Service Users receiving care for the previous 21 days. This should include, where possible, arrival and departure times of their visit, as well as a record of the name and residence of any Service User(s) they provided care to
- The name and telephone number of the Service User and/or the Service User's representative
- The names and telephone numbers of other Care Workers when working in proximity (for example, during a 'double up' visit)

NHS Test and Trace will ask for these records only where it is necessary. Reports to NHS Test and Trace must not contain data that goes beyond what is requested. All collected data must comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and must not be kept for longer than is necessary. Abbots Care Limited will make staff and Service Users aware that their contact information may now also be shared with NHS Test and Trace.

Any records or reports produced specifically for NHS Test and Trace should only be held for 21 days. After 21 days, this information must be securely disposed of or deleted as per the Archiving, Disposal and Storing of Records Policy and Procedure at Abbots Care Limited.

4.37 If staff have been notified that they are a contact of a co-worker who is a confirmed case at work

If a staff member has been notified that they are a contact of a co-worker who has been confirmed as a COVID-19 case, **and they were wearing the correct PPE as advised in the Abbots Care Limited COVID PPE policy and procedure** they do not need to self-isolate. If they had contact with a co-worker and were not wearing the recommended PPE, the 14-day isolation period also applies.

4.38 Risk assessment for staff exposures in the workplace

If any employees have come into close contact with a confirmed COVID-19 SU a symptomatic SU suspected of having COVID-19 while not wearing PPE, or had a breach in their PPE then the care worker should self-isolate and contact their line manager who will carry out a risk assessment and working with Public Health Hertfordshire to determine whether they need to isolate.