

21st December 2020

Dear family member,

In my last letter to you I was happy to be able to set out how we planned to facilitate visits over the Christmas period. By making use of rapid 'lateral flow' coronavirus tests, we hoped that as many people we support as possible would either be able to visit family members or have family members visit them over the five day window during which restrictions were to be eased.

However, it is with a very heavy heart that I must let you know that our guidance on visits over Christmas has had to change due to the surge in coronavirus cases and the new rules issued by the governments in both Wales and England. You can read about the latest rules in Wales [here on the Welsh government's website](#).

In Wales, two households plus one other single-person household can still mix indoors on Christmas Day but not at other times and no overnight stays are allowed (unless you are in an agreed support bubble). It may, therefore, be possible to arrange for your loved one to visit you on Christmas Day. However, in most cases it won't be possible for any family member to visit a loved one in one of our services, unless it is a single-person service and you have formed an extended household with your loved one.

I know this will cause a lot of pain, sadness and frustration. It really isn't where we should be now, nine months into this pandemic. But I do still firmly believe that things will get better in 2021. The roll-out of the vaccine is continuing at pace and we hope that as many people as possible will take up the vaccine. I would also like to reassure you that we will have adequate numbers of colleagues on duty to support your loved one over Christmas and make it special for them, and we will do all we can to facilitate virtual ways for you to keep in touch with them – such as by Zoom calls, etc.

If you have any questions about Christmas, or have any other questions about how we are supporting your loved one, please liaise with your Locality Manager or contact our helpline for families (open from 9.30am to 1.30pm, Monday to Friday) on 0300 303 9161 or email the team at family.helpline@dimensions-uk.org. The helpline will close from 1.30pm on Wednesday 23rd December and re-open on Tuesday 5th January.

Despite it all, I would like to wish you a peaceful Christmas.

Best wishes,

Regards,



Steve Scown
Chief Executive
Dimensions Group (including Dimensions Cymru)

Yn profi gall bywyd wella

Proving life can get better

Key points from the letter

- The government has changed the rules about meeting up with family and friends over Christmas.
- Lots more people are infected with the virus and a new type of coronavirus is easier to pass on to others.

These are the new rules:

- Your relative may be able to visit you but only on Christmas Day.
- You cannot visit your relative in their Dimensions home on Christmas Day.
- In exceptional circumstance your relative may be able to go to your home on Christmas day.

- We are sorry we have to change the rules at short notice
- Our staff have cancelled their own holiday plans and will make sure your relative has a good day.
- We will make sure you can speak to your relative on the phone or in a video call.
- We hope everyone will get the vaccination as soon as it is available to them.