

28th January 2022

You can read a summary of this letter in bullet points on page 2.

Dear family member,

My final letter to family members (before I hand the reins over to my successor, Rachael Dodgson) is now scheduled for next week, but given the changes to rules on visits to Registered Care Homes in England announced yesterday and taking effect from Monday 31st January, I wanted to write to you immediately as your loved one is supported in one of our Registered Care Homes.

You will remember the rather chaotic situation before Christmas when initially there were no restrictions on visits either to Registered Care Homes or to shared supported living services, but then only a few days before Christmas the government changed the rules so that people living in Registered Care Homes could nominate three visitors who could enter for regular visits, not including essential care givers or pre-school age children.

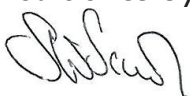
We were quick to let you know about this change, and so now the rules are being relaxed, I wanted to let you know equally quickly. From Monday, there will be no limit on the number of visitors allowed at Registered Care Homes. Please do book visits with the locality manager in advance, though. Self-isolation periods will also be cut so that outbreak management rules will last for 14 days, not 28 days.

Furthermore, from 16th February, workers in Registered Care Homes will be asked to take lateral flow tests before each shift, replacing the current system which includes weekly asymptomatic PCR tests. Self-isolation periods will be reduced from 14 to 10 days for those who test positive, with further reductions if they test negative on days five and six.

Now, despite the relaxation of the rules, the virus is still with us and keeping your loved one safe remains our top priority. Therefore, all of our infection control measures are remaining in place for now. These include requiring visitors to obtain a negative lateral flow test result on the day of the visit, temperature checks for all visitors before they enter and PPE for visitors and colleagues alike. In Registered Care Homes, all visitors will also have to sign the visitors' book, and visitors other than friends and family members will have to prove their vaccination status.

I hope the relaxation of rules on visitor numbers will be welcome, and also that our continuing infection control measure will be reassuring. As ever, you can contact our helpline for families on 0300 303 9161 or by email at family.helpline@dimensions-uk.org if you have any questions about our rules.

Yours sincerely,



Steve Scown
Chief Executive

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Key points from the letter

- There are no longer any limits on the number of people who can visit Registered Care Homes.
- Restrictions on visits following an outbreak are also being reduced from 28 days to 14 days.
- All of our infection control measures are staying in place to keep people as safe as possible.
- These include negative lateral flow tests, temperature checks and the use of PPE.
- You can contact our helpline for families on 0300 303 9161 or by email at family.helpline@dimensions-uk.org for help with the Family Portal, or if you have a question about anything else.

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