

### **ASC Statement on Covid Restrictions for Day Services – 8<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

The 3 upper tier Councils met as part of the LRF Adult Social Care Cell on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and among other items we discussed the new tighter Covid-related restrictions established this week. We particularly discussed the application of the restrictions in relation to Adult Social Care Day Support Services. Overall we agreed there will need to be a risk based approach adopted by all Day services which should sit alongside individual risk based assessment for people who normally attend the service.

In Lancashire County Council's case we have also taken advice from our own Director of Public Health who has highlighted the increased spread and higher transmission rates arising from the recently discovered Covid virus mutation. The DPH has also reminded us of the likelihood of a further adverse impact on infection rates following the additional family gatherings that will have occurred over the Christmas period.

Understandably new measures are now being thought through and implemented across all public services in Lancashire as we re-evaluate the balance of risks involved in continuing to operate services as before.

In relation to Day Support Services these considerations have led Adult Social Care Senior managers to accept the advice of the DPH that the most prudent approach is for these Services either to close, severely curtail the numbers of people to whom they offer a service to or to reshape their service model to provide a remote or on-line service.

This is with the aim of reducing social contacts between individuals – whether they are service users, day support staff or transport staff - and hence further reduce the risk of transmission between them and possibly onwards to other members of their households.

We know when the vaccination programme has been rolled out much further across social care staff and service users, and then across the general population we will be in a much better position to re-open Day services swiftly than we were back in the summer of 2020. Day Services successfully designed and established many of the necessary infection control measures last year and they were clearly working. However there is already considerable evidence of the terrible impact the much higher transmission rates associated with the new Covid variant is having on the population – including our most vulnerable citizens - and on our health and social care services. We cannot assume that the current arrangements will suffice to prevent infections

We recognise the adverse impact that closing or reducing day services will have on people who use them and also on their families and carers. We know there will be some situations where the risks associated with higher covid transmission rates are outweighed by even greater risks to the individual's health and well-being if they do not continue to attend and benefit from some

or all of their day support service. But we do expect these situations to be the exception rather than the rule.

Our initial assumption is that these new measures – as applied to Day Services – will come into effect from early next week (w/c 11/1/21) and will last for at least the next four weeks taking us up to Friday 5th February. We will regularly review the position ahead of that date to see whether the measures can be relaxed and Day Support Services can begin to re-open.

For the independent sector providers of Day Services the County Council is urgently reviewing the financial package of support we can offer to you. We will arrange a further Zoom Meeting with you all to go through our proposals for next week, but as we did last year we will do as much as we can to ensure your business is sustainable. We do however also expect you to proactively explore the various Government Business Support schemes that may contribute towards meeting your costs.

We are also interested in understanding the extent to which these measures to close, curtail or reshape your services will release members of your workforce who can offer support other parts of the health and social care sector in the coming weeks – whether in the delivery of the vaccination programme, or delivery of support to people in their own homes.

In terms of communicating these new measures to staff, service users and families we believe it is best left to each provider to do that itself, but you are free to quote or share parts or all of this statement.