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Hi everyone

5<sup>th</sup> October 2020

I hope that all is well. Please find below a few quick updates, now that we have had local restrictions in place for the last week.

### **Covid update**

Since I last wrote, we have had two people we support and 8 members of staff who have tested positive for the virus, though I am pleased to say that no-one has required hospital treatment. The virus can impact severely on anybody, but we know that the people we support are some of the most vulnerable people in the city – and keeping them and you safe continues to be our number one priority.

Given the continued rise of cases both nationally and locally, it continues to be essential that the use of PPE, social distancing and all Infection Prevention and Control practices are followed – as these are our best defences to keep you and the people we support safe. We have updated our [PPE guidance](#) to ensure that visors or goggles are now used in all instances where staff are within 2 metres of those people to whom we provide support. This step is above government guidance, but provides an additional barrier for staff, given the increased infection rates in Leeds. Mask wearing continues to be an absolute must in all care settings.

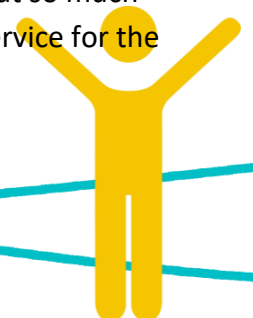
### **Antibody testing**

As per my email on Friday all social care staff can now get antibody testing. Here's the link to the way to get an antibody home testing kit <https://www.gov.uk/register-coronavirus-antibody-test>. I hope that it provides some reassurance for some of you.

### **Day services recovery**

We now have all our day services open that were planned to do so and these continue just to be open to people who live at home with family carers or with carers from the St. Anne's Community Carers scheme at present. Despite the local restrictions, we are keeping our buildings based day services open – though this decision is obviously under regular review, given the speed at which national and local restrictions can come into force. Thank you to everyone who has put so much work into helping get our day services up and running again – they are an essential service for the people who use them and for family carers.

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### **Family visiting to people in supported living and respite and crisis services**

Given the national and local restrictions we have had to once again update our [Family Visitor protocol](#) restricting visits to exceptional circumstances only, which I have sent to all family carers. I know this is a further wrench for the people we support and their families and I would like to thank you for your continued sensitive handling of some very difficult situations, as the people we support and their families have further visiting restrictions imposed upon them due to local and national restrictions.

### **Online activities**

We now have a weekly calendar of online activities which are open to everyone in Aspire that we support which can be found on the calendar on our web page [here](#). There are also loads of other uploaded activities for people to view [here](#) on our website which have been done by our staff or partner organisations such as Yorkshire Dance.

### **BAME Forum**

The BAME staff forum is now up and running and the steering group are putting on two sessions to launch the forum in October, which is Black History Month. To book yourself on one of the two sessions 1-3pm on Thursdays 22nd and 29th October please contact one of the people on the group flyer ([BAME group flyer](#)) or email [AspireBAMEforum@aspirecbs.org.uk](mailto:AspireBAMEforum@aspirecbs.org.uk) to book a place.

### **Surveys**

We will be undertaking the surveys with the people we support, family carers, staff and other stakeholders in the next few weeks. This year we are going to focus specifically on all things Covid in a much shorter survey than in previous years. Given the issues of Covid, we may well need your help to support customers to complete their surveys. As we did last year last year, we will provide each team £500 to spend on something for their service where they achieve 85% or higher number of returns. Additionally, we are going to try to do as many surveys online as possible this year, backed up with hard copy where people struggle with online form filling.

### **Staff Awards**

In the discussion with staff reps at the recent Future Matters the consensus was that we should not do the staff awards this year – but rather do something on a bit grander scale next year when people will hopefully be able to meet in person and we can celebrate in person together.

Thanks everyone – I know how tough it is during this most recent set of restrictions and we are all suffering from once again not being able to see the people we love.

Be kind to each other, keep well and stay safe.



**Andy Rawnsley**  
Chief Executive

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