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Hi everyone

Just dropping you a line with a quick update about our services as we continue to ease out of restrictions.

Supported Living

I am pleased to be able to confirm that no-one we support has tested positive for covid-19 since February and that 96% of the people we support have had their first job, with 80% also having had their second job.

With the national easing of restrictions combined with the high level of take up of vaccinations, we are now in a position to further support visiting, both inside and outside of properties. Whilst outside visits continue to be the safest way to visit someone, we recognise that this is very difficult for some people we support and for family carers. We are asking that anyone who does visit continues to do so safely, with a risk assessment (completed with a member of the management team) in place and testing. I appreciate that taking these tests can be a bit of an inconvenience for family carers, but they do provide further mitigation against the possible spread of the virus and will hopefully help us all be more confident about giving hugs to those we most love.

Respite and emergency services

We continue to see an increase in take up of respite services and have had no-one in respite test positive this year.

We are taking the same approach to visiting people in our respite and emergency services as we do in our supported living services. The only difference being that should any family members need to visit any of the respite services, the lateral flow tests are compulsory, in line with government guidance for visits to care homes.

Day services

We are now starting to prepare for the full re-opening of all our day services, though this will be very much dependent upon what is permissible by the next stage of the government's roadmap on 21st June, as well as what is practically possible with issues like transport. Much will depend on the government's view about vaccine rollout and whether or not the new variant can be controlled. That said, we are hopefully moving to a time when our day services can again be fully operational and welcome back those people who have not accessed day services for over a year.

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Currently staff in services are making contact with families to check the level of service they would want to take back up, in the event that we are able to fully open. We anticipate that should all restrictions be lifted on 21st June we would then start to reintroduce more people into our day services in a phased way over a number of weeks after that date. All this is however very much dependent upon all restrictions being eased, particularly those about social distancing – which have had a severe limiting impact on the number of people we can support in any given space.

I hope that these are all positive steps in the right direction – and I remain cautiously optimistic for services re-opening fully and safely, particularly as we now have 82% staff who have had their first vaccination and 74% have had their second jab.

A quick reminder also, that whilst infection rates in our services are extremely low and vaccination levels are high, the use of PPE is still our critical defense against the spread of the virus. Whilst I appreciate that in hot weather the wearing of PPE is even more difficult – it is still vitally important. To that end here's a link to the donning and doffing video for anyone who wants a quick reminder: [donning and doffing of PPE](#).

Lastly, I just wanted wish everyone well. I hope that you have managed to enjoy some of the improved weather and that you are looking forward to learning disability week - for which many of you are planning events of which to be proud. Here are the links to [whats on in Aspire](#) and [what is on through other partners](#) across the city.

Take the best of care everyone

Keep well and stay safe



Andy Rawnsley
Chief Executive

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