

## Somerset Learning Disabilities Day Services Guidance

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### Overview:

In March of this year most day services for adults with learning disabilities closed their doors due to COVID-19. As a local authority we have supported each individual provider decision and been grateful for all the support that has been offered whether that was face to face, through activity boxes or virtual contact. We hope that providers will continue to be innovative and retain activities that have been successful such as the teams sessions and skype meetups.

As England starts to come out of lockdown many providers and service users have asked when day services might be up and running, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of July SCIE released [this](#) guidance commissioned by DHSC to support day services for vulnerable adults to re-open or continue to operate in a safe manner.

## Position of Somerset County Council

SCC would ask that all day service providers follow the guidance released by SCIE, drawing attention to the request for transparency with service users, families, the local authority and other providers regarding risk assessments both business wide and individuals.

As a local authority any *commissioned services* are required to provide a copy of their business risk assessment and proof of relevant insurance for any business premises and vehicles used in the transportation of service users. These documents need to be sent to Hellen Turner ([HFTurner@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:HFTurner@somerset.gov.uk)) no later than the 31<sup>st</sup> of August and prior to opening your service. If you are already offering a service, please provide these documents on receipt of this paper.

For services purchased through a Direct Payment (DP) the relevant paperwork needs to be available for service users and families so that they can make an informed decision about returning to day services. SCC would also appreciate a copy of this information however there is no obligation to provide it as there is with commissioned services.

If you have any questions about the guidance or service specific queries, please feel free to contact Hellen Turner or James Cawley – contact details at the end of this paper.

## Funding

As you will be aware from communications from myself and your link commissioner there is no additional funding available for day services at this point. At the start of this financial year a 4% uplift was awarded to the basic rate of day services and there is no intention to increase this further. SCC expect that providers can operate within the current budget and offer an equitable service to all previous clients. If your service is not able to do this, please contact Hellen Turner or James Cawley directly. We appreciate this will require creative thinking! In line with the SCIE guidance we

encourage all providers to communicate with SCC, families, service users and our colleagues in the social work teams. Services will need to be flexible in their approach however a *significant* change to an individual's package of care will require a review from adult social care. An example of this may be someone who no longer wants to go to a day service and wishes to have 1-1 support instead. You can request a review by contacting Somerset Direct on 0300 123 2224.

SCC have a small amount of infection control grant funding which has been set aside to support day service providers. If you feel that your business would benefit from this to cover one off infection control costs, then please submit a written proposal to James Cawley. This is not a commitment to funding however all proposals will be considered and monies awarded accordingly.

### PPE/Masks

'PPE is required for staff when they are providing close personal care in direct contact with the person they are supporting – this refers to touching and to supporting personal care. It is also recommended when working with someone who is coughing.

Government [recommendations for domiciliary or home care are relevant to day care settings](#), and should be followed where possible. Information and posters for staff on putting on and taking off PPE can also be found with this guidance.

It is understood that there will be exceptions in relation to the wearing of PPE, in particular face masks where it is distressing, prevents communication or poses an additional risk of items being grabbed. Staff should assess the risk for each activity where PPE is problematic for the person being supported.

PPE can be accessed through your business-as-usual (BAU) channels. This may be your local authority or through public sector buying organisations, or other commercial routes you may have already established.'- – [SCIE Guidance](#)

As of the 24<sup>th</sup> of July, Central Government have instructed that face masks should be worn when accessing in-door public spaces and where social distancing is difficult. In regard to day services SCIE have given the following guidance:

'Where social distancing is not possible (e.g. on transport), **face coverings should be used**. These do not need to be to a clinical standard, but they reduce the risk of the wearer spreading the infection if they have COVID-19.' – [SCIE Guidance](#)

Face masks are not the same as PPE and for several individuals it may not be possible for them to use a face mask due to behaviour, sensory needs or health needs. In these cases, it is imperative that hygiene protocols are in place, individual risk management plans and social distancing wherever possible. Prior to service users returning it would be beneficial to have a plan in place where service users can be supported to understand how the service may be different and what they may be required to do. Families and home care providers will be essential in preparing individuals to return safely so again sharing of relevant risk information will be key.

### Transport

SCIE have covered transport in their [guidance](#) and SCC reiterate the following points from the government guidance around transport.

1. People from the same household or [support bubble](#) can travel together in one vehicle.
2. If you normally share a vehicle with people from other households or support bubbles for essential journeys, we recommend you find a different way to travel so that you can maintain [social distancing](#). For example, consider walking, cycling or using your own vehicle if you can.
3. If you do have to travel with people outside your household or support bubble try to:
  - share the transport with the same people each time
  - keep to small groups of people at any one time
  - open windows for ventilation

- travel side by side or behind other people, rather than facing them, where seating arrangements allow
- face away from each other
- consider seating arrangements to maximise distance between people in the vehicle
- clean your car between journeys using standard cleaning products - make sure you clean door handles and other areas that people may touch
- ask the driver and passengers to [wear a face covering](#)
- When finishing your journey wash your hands for at least 20 seconds or sanitise your hands as soon as possible

#### Taxis and private hire vehicles

1. You should wear a [face covering](#) when using taxis or private hire vehicles. A taxi driver or private hire vehicle operator may be entitled to refuse to accept you if you do not wear a face covering.
2. From 4 July 2020, government guidance on [social distancing](#) is changing.
3. If you cannot keep a 2-metre distance, reduce the risk to yourself and others by maintaining a 1 metre distance where possible, and taking suitable precautions.
4. Follow the advice of the driver. For example, you may be asked to sit in the back left-hand seat if travelling alone. You may want to check with your taxi or private hire operator before travelling if they have put any additional measures in place.
5. You should use contactless payment if possible or find out if you can pay online in advance.
6. Be aware of the surfaces you touch. Be careful not to touch your face. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or the inside of your elbow when coughing or sneezing.
7. When finishing your journey wash your hands for at least 20 seconds or sanitise your hands as soon as possible

For day services the first option should be if the service user can travel with their family to and from day services. This will not be possible for all families and adult social care can review individual transport requirements as needed and provide SCC transport if this is required. Alternatively, day services may have their own transport and offer this to service users. Be mindful of capacity and try to have bubbles and keep those the same. If you have concerns about transport, please contact Hellen Turner or James Cawley.

### Service Users Who Attend More Than One Day Provision/Live with people not going to Day Services

This is a concern that has been raised by day providers and homecare/residential providers. SCC ask that all providers are transparent with risk assessments and safety plans both for the individual and business wide. The only way to mitigate risk is to follow the guidance and sharing information is central to ensuring all services are safe. SCC advise all home care and residential providers to request business wide risk assessments from day services that their service users attend and to have clear safety plans in place for when service users return from day services. SCC also advise that safety plans should be shared with the day providers.

If you have concerns about a service, please contact Hellen Turner or James Cawley to discuss this in confidence.

#### Contact Information

Hellen Turner – [HFTurner@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:HFTurner@somerset.gov.uk) 07811308711

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