

## CORONA VIRUS PROTOCOL

Constantia Care Ltd

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### Policy Statement

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a new strain of coronavirus first identified in Wuhan City, China in December 2019. With a recent outbreak of Corona Virus (Covid-19) and additional confirmed cases and deaths in the UK it is important that Constantia Care employees, carers and clients are educated about the virus in order to reduce the possibility of contracting Covid-19.

### The Policy

This policy is intended to ensure awareness, understanding and adherence to the government protocols that have been put in place.

## Government Instructions as of 23.03.2020

### Stay at home

- Only go outside for food, health reasons or essential work
- Stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home
- If you are not considered to be a vulnerable person you can go out for one session of exercise daily, this must adhere to social distancing.

**Should the carer need to leave the home they are to wear gloves at all times. These gloves are to be disposed of in the clients outside bins or communal bins prior to entering the clients home. Upon entering the carer must wash their hands thoroughly with soap and warm water for a minimum of 20 seconds.**

### Symptoms

The symptoms of coronavirus are:

- a cough
- a high temperature
- shortness of breath

But these symptoms do not necessarily mean you have the illness.

The symptoms are similar to other illnesses that are much more common, such as cold and flu.

### What to do if you have symptoms

If you or a member of your household present with the symptoms below you are required to self-isolate for 14 days. Please see advice below for self-isolation guidance.

**You do not need to call NHS 111 to go into self-isolation. If your symptoms worsen during home isolation or are no better after 14 days, contact NHS 111 online. If you have no internet access, call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999.**

### How the virus is spread

Because it's a new illness, we do not know exactly how coronavirus spreads from person to person.

Similar viruses are spread in cough droplets.

It's very unlikely it can be spread through things like packages or food.

### Living with a vulnerable person

Minimise as much as possible the time any vulnerable family members spend in shared spaces such as kitchens, bathrooms and sitting areas, and keep shared spaces well ventilated.

Aim to keep 2 metres (3 steps) away from vulnerable people you live with and encourage them to sleep in a different bed where possible. If they can, they should use a separate bathroom from the rest of the household. Make sure they use separate towels from the other people in your house, both for drying themselves after bathing or showering and for hand-hygiene purposes.

If you do share a toilet and bathroom with a vulnerable person, it is important that you clean them every time you use them (for example, wiping surfaces you have come into contact with). Another tip is to consider drawing up a rota for bathing, with the vulnerable person using the facilities first.

If you share a kitchen with a vulnerable person, avoid using it while they are present. If they can, they should take their meals back to their room to eat. If you have one, use a dishwasher to clean and dry the family's used crockery and cutlery. If this is not possible, wash them using your usual washing up liquid and warm water and dry them thoroughly. If the vulnerable person is using their own utensils, remember to use a separate tea towel for drying these.

We understand that it will be difficult for some people to separate themselves from others at home. You should do your very best to follow this guidance and everyone in your household should regularly wash their hands, avoid touching their face, and clean frequently touched surfaces.

### **Self-Isolation**

If you or a member of your household present with the symptoms below you are required to self-isolate for 14 days.

- a high temperature – you feel hot to touch on your chest or back
- a new, continuous cough – this means you've started coughing repeatedly

Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital.

**You do not need to call NHS 111 to go into self-isolation. If your symptoms worsen during home isolation or are no better after 14 days, contact [NHS 111 online](#). If you have no internet access, call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999.**

**If you provide care to an elderly, vulnerable or pregnant person, follow this advice to the best of your ability.**

Testing for coronavirus is not needed if you're staying at home.

### **Ending self-isolation**

You should remain at home until 14 days after the onset of your symptoms. After 14 days, if you feel better and no longer have a high temperature, you can return the government's current advice. If you have not had any signs of improvement and have not already sought medical advice, contact [NHS 111 online](#). If you have no internet access, call NHS 111.

Coughing may persist for several weeks in some people, despite the coronavirus infection having cleared. A persistent cough alone does not mean you must continue to self-isolate for more than 14 days.

## **Do**

- Stay at home
- try to keep at least 2 metres (3 steps) from other people in your home, particularly older people or those with long-term health conditions
- only allow people who live with you to stay, sleep alone if possible
- stay in a well-ventilated room with a window that can be opened
- ask friends, family members or delivery services to carry out errands for you, such as getting groceries, medicines or other shopping- but avoid contact with them
- make sure you tell delivery drivers to leave items outside for collection if you order online
- clean toilets and bathrooms regularly
- think about a bathroom rota if a separate bathroom is not available, with the isolated person using the facilities last, before thoroughly cleaning the bathroom themselves
- use separate towels from anyone else in the household
- wash crockery and utensils thoroughly with soap and water; dishwashers may be used to clean crockery and cutlery
- regularly wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds
- try to stay away from older people and those with long-term health conditions
- drink plenty of water and take everyday painkillers, such as paracetamol and ibuprofen, to help with your symptoms
- stay away from your pets – if unavoidable, wash your hands before and after contact

## **Don't**

- do not invite visitors to your home or allow visitors to enter
- do not go to work, school or public areas
- do not use public transport like buses, trains, tubes or taxis
- do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding or other items with other people in your home

## **Social Distancing**

Social distancing measures are steps you can take to reduce the social interaction between people. This will help reduce the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).

They are:

1. Avoid contact with someone who is displaying symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19). These symptoms include high temperature and/or new and continuous cough
2. Avoid non-essential use of public transport.
3. Work from home, where possible. Your employer should support you to do this. Please refer to employer guidance for more information.
4. Do not gather with anyone other than in your household. Keep in touch using remote technology such as phone, internet, and social media

5. Use telephone or online services to contact your GP or other essential services

You should stay at home for 12 weeks if you meet the following categories:

- are over 70
- have an underlying health condition
- are pregnant.

### **How can I get assistance with foods and medicines if I am reducing my social contacts?**

Ask family, friends and neighbours to support you and use online services. If this is not possible, then the public sector, business, charities, and the general public are gearing up to help those advised to stay at home. It is important to speak to others and ask them to help you to make arrangements for the delivery of food, medicines and essential services and supplies, and look after your physical and mental health and wellbeing.

If you receive support from health and social care organisations, for example, if you have care provided for you through the local authority or health care system, this will continue as normal. Your health or social care provider will be asked to take additional precautions to make sure that you are protected. All Constantia Care Carers have access to PPE (Gloves, aprons etc) and have been trained in infection control.

### **Attending GP or hospital appointments during this period?**

We advise everyone to access medical assistance remotely, wherever possible. However, if you have a scheduled hospital or other medical appointment during this period, talk to your GP or clinician to ensure you continue to receive the care you need and consider whether appointments can be postponed.

### **What is the advice for visitors including those who are providing care for you?**

You should contact your regular social visitors such as friends and family to let them know that you are reducing social contacts and that they should not visit you during this time unless they are providing essential care for you. Essential care includes things like help with washing, dressing, or preparing meals.

If you receive regular health or social care from an organisation, either through your local authority or paid for by yourself, inform your care providers that you are reducing social contacts and agree on a plan for continuing your care. Carers are to facilitate this and ensure that non-essential visitors do not enter the clients home where possible.

### **Key Workers**

#### **Health and social care**

This includes but is not limited to doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, care workers, and other frontline health and social care staff including volunteers; the support and specialist staff required to maintain the UK's health and social care sector; those working as part of the health and social care supply chain,

including producers and distributors of medicines and medical and personal protective equipment.

### **Education and childcare**

This includes nursery and teaching staff, social workers and those specialist education professionals who must remain active during the COVID-19 response to deliver this approach.

### **Key public services**

This includes those essential to the running of the justice system, religious staff, charities and workers delivering key frontline services, those responsible for the management of the deceased, and journalists and broadcasters who are providing public service broadcasting.

### **Local and national government**

This only includes those administrative occupations essential to the effective delivery of the COVID-19 response or delivering essential public services such as the payment of benefits, including in government agencies and arms length bodies.

### **Food and other necessary goods**

This includes those involved in food production, processing, distribution, sale and delivery as well as those essential to the provision of other key goods (for example hygienic and veterinary medicines).

### **Public safety and national security**

This includes police and support staff, Ministry of Defence civilians, contractor and armed forces personnel (those critical to the delivery of key defence and national security outputs and essential to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic), fire and rescue service employees (including support staff), National Crime Agency staff, those maintaining border security, prison and probation staff and other national security roles, including those overseas.

### **Transport**

This includes those who will keep the air, water, road and rail passenger and freight transport modes operating during the COVID-19 response, including those working on transport systems through which supply chains pass.

### **Utilities, communication and financial services**

This includes staff needed for essential financial services provision (including but not limited to workers in banks, building societies and financial market infrastructure), the oil, gas, electricity and water sectors (including sewerage), information technology and data infrastructure sector and primary industry supplies to continue during the COVID-19 response, as well as key staff working in the civil nuclear, chemicals, telecommunications (including but not limited to network operations, field engineering, call centre staff, IT and data infrastructure, 999 and 111 critical services), postal services and delivery, payments providers and waste disposal sectors.

If workers think they fall within the critical categories above they should confirm with their employer that, based on their business continuity arrangements, their specific role is necessary for the continuation of this essential public service.

## **Advice for travellers**

### **Return to the UK now if you're travelling abroad**

The Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) advises British people travelling abroad to return to the UK now, if commercial flights are still available. This advice was published on 23 March and takes effect immediately.

International travel is becoming very limited as air routes close, land borders close and new restrictions are put in place that prevent flights from leaving.

If you're travelling abroad, you should:

1. contact your airline or travel company now
2. keep up-to-date with our travel advice pages. We are updating information on returning from the country you're in as quickly as we can

We are working with airlines to keep routes open, and calling for international action to keep routes open to enable British people can return home on commercial flights. We are also working around the clock to support those British travellers who are already finding difficulties to come back to the UK.

If you are a permanent resident overseas, you should stay and follow the advice of the local authorities in the country you live in.

### **If you cannot return**

The government is in contact with airlines, foreign governments and local authorities to ensure British people travelling abroad can return to the UK as soon as possible. If you're unable to leave at this time, you should:

- follow the advice of local authorities, including local measures to help minimise your risk of exposure to coronavirus (COVID-19)
- find suitable accommodation
- keep up-to-date with our travel advice and the latest information from transport providers and local authorities on your departure options
- keep in regular contact with family and friends at home, so they know you are safe and well

You must follow the advice of local authorities. Your safety and security is the responsibility of the local authority where you are.

## **Quarantine while you are abroad**

If the local authority where you are proposes to quarantine you for your own protection, you should follow their advice. When you are abroad, your safety and security is their responsibility.

If there are suspected cases of coronavirus where you are, you may need to remain in your hotel room or accommodation for 14 days, move to quarantine facilities, take tests for coronavirus and, if positive in some cases, be hospitalised abroad.

You should also contact your airline or travel company, and your insurance provider as soon as you can. We only organise assisted departure in exceptional circumstances.

### **If your visa is running out**

Check the travel advice for the country you are in. If you have immigration enquiries, you need to contact either the local immigration authorities in the country or their UK-based embassy.

### **If your travel is essential Prepare for your travel**

If your travel is essential, follow our checklist before you travel:

- contact your airline, travel company, cruise line or other transport and accommodation providers to make sure you can still travel
- read the details of your travel insurance carefully, and check that you are covered, and contact your insurer if you are uncertain. You may need to consider a specialist policy
- make sure you can access money to cover emergencies and unexpected delays. Take more than one means of payment with you
- be prepared to follow the advice of local authorities abroad. Be ready to comply with local isolation or quarantine requirements, and to rely on the local health system
- make sure you have enough medication with you in case you are abroad longer than planned
- be prepared for logistical and financial disruption to your travel
- arrange extra support for family members, dependants or pets who may need care if you are abroad longer than planned
- check travel advice for your destination regularly and sign-up to email alerts
- visit this page regularly as it is constantly updated given the evolving situation overseas

If you are older, or if you have pre-existing medical conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease), you are more likely to become severely ill if you catch the virus. Check the NHS guidance before you travel.



## **Who is most vulnerable?**

**We are advising those who are at increased risk of severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19) to be particularly stringent in following social distancing measures.**

This group includes those who are:

- aged 70 or older (regardless of medical conditions)
- under 70 with an underlying health condition listed below (ie anyone instructed to get a flu jab as an adult each year on medical grounds):
  - chronic (long-term) respiratory diseases, such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema or bronchitis
  - chronic heart disease, such as heart failure
  - chronic kidney disease
  - chronic liver disease, such as hepatitis
  - chronic neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis (MS), a learning disability or cerebral palsy
  - diabetes
  - problems with your spleen – for example, sickle cell disease or if you have had your spleen removed
  - a weakened immune system as the result of conditions such as HIV and AIDS, or medicines such as steroid tablets or chemotherapy
  - being seriously overweight (a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or above)
- those who are pregnant

Note: there are some clinical conditions which put people at even higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19. If you are in this category, next week the NHS in England will directly contact you with advice the more stringent measures you should take in order to keep yourself and others safe. For now, you should rigorously follow the social distancing advice in full, outlined below.

People falling into this group are those who may be at particular risk due to complex health problems such as:

- people who have received an organ transplant and remain on ongoing immunosuppression medication
- people with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy or radiotherapy
- people with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia who are at any stage of treatment
- people with severe chest conditions such as cystic fibrosis or severe asthma (requiring hospital admissions or courses of steroid tablets)
- people with severe diseases of body systems, such as severe kidney disease (dialysis)

For further information please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults>

## **Treatment for Corona Virus**

There is currently no specific treatment for coronavirus. Antibiotics do not help, as they do not work against viruses. Treatment aims to relieve the symptoms while your body fights the illness. You'll need to stay in isolation, away from other people, until you have recovered.

## **Preventative methods**

### **Personal Hygiene**

#### **Do**

- wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- always wash your hands when you get home or into work
- use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- put used tissues in the bin straight away and wash your hands afterwards
- try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell

#### **Don't**

- do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean

### **Cleaning and Disposal of Waste**

Use your usual household products, such as detergents and bleach, as these will be very effective at getting rid of the virus on surfaces. Clean frequently touched surfaces.

Personal waste (such as used tissues) and disposable cleaning cloths can be stored securely within disposable rubbish bags. These bags should be placed into a second bag, tied securely and kept separate from other waste in the room in which you are self-isolating. Keep aside for at least 72 hours before putting into your usual external household waste bin.

Other household waste can be disposed of as normal.

### **Laundry**

Do not shake dirty laundry; this minimises the possibility of dispersing virus through the air.

Wash items as appropriate in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Dirty laundry that has been in contact with an ill person can be washed with other people's items.

If you do not have a washing machine, wait a further 72 hours after your 14-day isolation period has ended before taking your laundry to a laundrette.

## **The Procedure**

### **Clients and carers**

Constantia Care Ltd have asked all carers to inform them if they are presenting with symptoms of the Corona virus. Because the virus has spread rapidly across all continents we are requesting that carers inform us if they are presenting symptoms.

Constantia Care Ltd will not place any carers that have informed us that they are experiencing symptoms.

If the carer or client was to exhibit symptoms relating to coronavirus while in a placement they would need to self-isolate and contact NHS 111 if they felt they required medical attention. The agency and NOK will be informed as soon as possible and both the client and carer will self-isolate in the clients home. In the event that the carer is unable to care due to the symptoms of the virus, NHS 111 should be called and advice sought.

The Agency and NOK would need to ensure food and relevant supplies including PPE (gloves, aprons) are delivered to the home and left outside for the carer to collect. The Agency will be in constant contact supporting client, carer and NOK via telephone or video call.

We would not be able to assign another carer to the placement during self-isolation on recommendation from the Government.

If the carer is unable to work the family would be credited for the time of self-isolation and the carer would not be paid.

NHS 111 will be contacted if necessary and health provisions for the client and carer will be met by them, that may mean the client and carer being moved to hospital for treatment/ isolation and the home deep cleaned by specialist services.

Should there be further advice from the NHS or government that goes against our procedure on this, we will update this accordingly, ensuring all relevant parties are informed.

### **Internal Office Staff**

All staff as of 17.03.2020 have been advised to work from home where possible. The office staff who are unable to work from home due to access to files etc have been given the option to take unpaid leave during this period if they would prefer not to travel into the office to complete their duties.

For clients, NOKs and carers they will still access Constantia Care in the same way by calling the office line on 02076249966.

If you are not fit to work and you are in your probation period, you will not be paid for the first three days of sickness (waiting), after this point you are entitled to statutory sick pay.

For those of you outside of the probation period, you will be paid in full for up to 10 days of sickness per annum, after this point you are entitled to statutory sick pay. In order to get statutory sick pay you will need a medical certificate from your GP or a health professional.

### **Spot checks, Care Reviews and Assessments**

Spot-checks and care reviews will be carried out at present over the phone in order to reduce external contact with our clients as they are vulnerable. Clients requiring an assessment who are currently in hospital, or a care facility will have a telephone assessment carried out and a home visit will take place once they have been discharged. Should the client present with a high fever or coughing, care will not be able to commence as unnecessary exposure to office staff or carers must be avoided as far as practically possible.

Should a member of office staff be required to attend a client's home they will ask to use the washing facilities to wash their hands and may choose to wear PPE. All office staff are to travel in private vehicles for their protection.

### **Related Policies**

**Infection Control**

**Spot-check**

**Adult Safeguarding**

### **Related Guidance**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-action-plan>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-residential-care-supported-living-and-home-care-guidance/covid-19-guidance-on-home-care-provision>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults>

Signed: **Ellie Edwards**

Date: 10.03.2020

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