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Coronavirus update

Welcome to the sixth bulletin providing you with an update of what has been taking place across Morecambe Bay to tackle the current coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

We have now been tackling the coronavirus pandemic since March across all teams in health and social care. Even though we have now passed the longest day of the year and while we are seeing some normality return to daily lives, we are still seeing huge changes to the way we used to do things.

This is most noticeable now when you go to a healthcare setting, where you will be asked to wear a face covering (if you are visiting) or a surgical mask if you are a member of staff.

We also still have visiting restrictions in place for those attending hospitals, still have children not attending school, and still have pubs and restaurants closed. So even though we have seen non-essential shops start to reopen, social distancing is still the norm. However, we are beginning to reinstate services across the system and we talk more about that in the following pages.

We've including articles and updates in this newsletter from across our system, and hope you find it an enjoyable and interesting read.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your continued support and to pledge we will continue to keep you updated.



Aaron Cummins



Jerry Hawker

Joint Chief Operating Officers – Bay Health & Care Partners

Tackling the pandemic

Within the following pages you'll find out more about how we are continuing to respond to the pandemic, including an update on hospital visiting, face masks and more.

GP Practice changes

Face masks in general practice

If you visit your GP you may see some changes from the 15 June. From this date it is recommended that staff in primary care should wear a surgical face mask when not in PPE or in a part of the facility that is COVID-secure in line with the workplace definition set by the government.

Social distancing measures, where possible, are a critical part of controlling the virus in clinical and non-clinical areas. However, where it isn't always possible to maintain social distancing, public health advice is that wearing a face covering is an appropriate precautionary measure. Practices in our area are already contacting their patients about this.

GP appointments and bookings

To prevent the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) there have been changes to GP appointments, but it's still important to get help from a GP if you need it.

You can contact your GP surgery by:

- **visiting their website**
- **using the NHS App**
- **calling them**

For further information, visit [the NHS website](#).

Hospital visiting

Due to the ongoing risks associated with coronavirus (COVID-19), visiting at UHMBT will remain temporarily suspended.

In exceptional circumstances, one visitor (an immediate family member or carer) is permitted to visit if:

- The patient is receiving end-of-life care
- The visitor is a birthing partner accompanying a woman in labour
- The visitor is a parent or appropriate adult visiting their child
- The visitor is supporting someone with dementia, a learning disability, autism, or something similar - where not being present would cause the patient to be distressed

Visitors for the above must be agreed with the nurse in charge of the ward before attending the hospital.

To enable patients to keep that important contact with their family and friends, the Trust has put a number of things in place, including:

- Teams across the Trust are encouraging patients to keep in touch via their smartphone or tablet if they are able to
- A small supply of iPads is available in each hospital to allow patients to video call their family and friends
- Relatives and friends can share messages with their loved ones in hospital by filling in the form on the [Trust's website here](#). The message is then delivered directly to the patient.

Samaritans Wellbeing support line

A new confidential support line is available for NHS staff who need someone to talk to about how they're feeling.

The support line is run by Samaritans and all calls are answered by trained Samaritans volunteers, who provide confidential, non-judgemental support. Whether you've had a tough day, are feeling worried or overwhelmed, or just have a lot on your mind, the helpline is available to support you on 0300 131 7000 from 7am until 11pm, seven days a week.

Alternatively, you can text **FRONTLINE** to 85258 for support 24/7.

Face masks

Hospitals including UHMBT have also implemented new measures on the use of face masks and coverings. As part of the measures, visitors and patients coming to hospital for urgent, planned and outpatient care will need to wear face coverings to reduce the risk of spreading coronavirus to other patients and staff.

Patients are being encouraged to bring their own face coverings, which can be made of cloth and be reusable in line with government guidance. Face coverings worn as part of religious beliefs or cultural practice are also acceptable, providing they are not loose and cover the mouth and nose.

Face coverings are now required to travel on any public transport.

Patients and visitors will continue to be provided with face masks when entering clinical areas of the hospital. People who do not bring a face covering with them when attending hospital will be provided with one at the entrance.



Management of our hospitals

You may be aware that we have colour codes for wards across our hospitals. Areas where there is no coronavirus will now be green areas. This brings us into line with the rest of the Integrated Care System (ICS).

So the areas are now:

- **BLUE: COVID positive**
- **YELLOW: Suspected COVID**
- **GREEN: Non-COVID**
- **GREEN ELECTIVE: Non-COVID (elective shielded patients)**

Reinstating services at our hospitals

Some services that were postponed due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic will be restored across University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust (UHMBT) over the coming weeks and months, as the Trust moves into the second phase of its coronavirus response.

Teams across the Trust have been working hard to respond to the coronavirus pandemic and ensure the safety and quality of services for all patients. Along with the rest of the NHS, the number one priority for the last few months has been ensuring that all those who need urgent care - not just those with coronavirus - have been able to get it when they need it.

To allow this to happen and to help reduce the spread of the virus, some non-urgent appointments and surgeries were postponed and other appointments were delivered in a different way, such as via telephone or video clinics.

The Trust is now in the position to be able to restore some of the services that were changed or postponed whilst teams were focused on dealing with the outbreak.

The Trust has already started to see some of the patients awaiting urgent elective procedures, e.g. for suspected or confirmed cancer, and from next week, is looking to restore some clinical investigations such as endoscopy, colposcopy and some bowel screening. The aim is to start seeing patients who have been waiting for their elective procedures towards the end of this month and into early July.

Telephone and video clinics will continue wherever possible to prevent people making unnecessary trips to hospitals.

Clinicians across the Trust are currently reviewing relevant patients awaiting an appointment against national guidance to allow them to determine which patients should be offered an appointment now and who can be deferred to a later date. The plans are also being produced in partnership with the Healthier Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care System to ensure all patients in the area have fair and equal access to care.

The Trust has put measures into place to support the safety of staff, patients and visitors who need to attend its hospitals and community settings, including:

- **Ensuring patients with suspected or confirmed cases of coronavirus will continue to be cared for on designated wards across the Trust**
- **Patients awaiting planned surgery will be required to self-isolate for 14 days prior to coming into hospital and will be tested for coronavirus before their procedure goes ahead in line with the Trust's policy to test all patients on admission or before surgery.**
- **Hand washing facilities and hand gel are available at all of the Trust's main hospitals and community settings**
- **Schedules of enhanced cleaning of public areas have been increased**
- **Relevant wards have been reviewed to ensure there is at least 2m between the beds to allow for social distancing**
- **Testing of symptomatic staff and family will continue as per current guidelines, and additional capacity is in place to allow routine testing of staff in frontline roles showing no symptoms (asymptomatic) will support infection prevention and control measures**
- **Access to antibody testing is also available to Trust staff and so far, over 5,000 members of staff have registered to take part in the initiative. This will help to build understanding and knowledge of coronavirus and inform the clinical approach**

Support bubbles FAQ's

The Public Health team at Cumbria County Council has shared some helpful information about support bubbles and what this means in practice. The document is laid out as frequently asked questions and covers the basics of how this will affect people.

[Support bubbles information from Cumbria County Council.](#)

You can find the national guidance about meeting people outside your household [here](#).



Diabetes support

A national programme to prevent residents in Lancashire and South Cumbria from developing diabetes has continued to provide support throughout the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic thanks to remote meeting roll-out.

Every two minutes someone finds out that they have Type 2 diabetes. There are 3.9 million people living with diabetes in the UK. This figure has more than doubled since 1996, when there were 1.4 million. If current trends persist, one in five people will develop Type 2 diabetes by 2025.

The Healthier You: NHS Diabetes Prevention Programme (NHS DPP) is a service that helps people to put their health back into their hands and reduce the risk of developing this very serious health condition

Normally the programme involves a series of face to face group sessions but during the pandemic this has not been possible. Instead, the operators of the programme, Ingeus, has taken steps to set up virtual meetings using online technology.

Using online technology more than 200 people have been able to attend meetings from their own homes since March and have reported high levels of satisfaction with 96 per cent saying they have been able to achieve their personal goals and reduce their likelihood of developing diabetes.

For more information [click this link](#).

Commissioner's £250,000 boost for local charities and community groups

Cumbria's Police and Crime Commissioner, Peter McCall has launched the COVID-19 Community Recovery Fund aimed at supporting local charities and community groups in Cumbria to enable them to cope with the financial impact of COVID-19 on their organisations.

The COVID-19 Community Recovery Fund will be able to provide short term funding of up to £5,000 to charities, clubs and groups where it is needed most. The funding can also be used for those who are looking at different ways of working due to the COVID-19 restrictions still being in place for many vulnerable groups.

You can find out more about how to apply and the full criteria [here](#).

Lancashire Women online groups and self-referrals now available

[Lancashire Women](#) is a charity for women over 16 in Lancashire. The charity aims to empower women and bring them together to:

- Improve mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Get advice on managing money, benefits and debt
- Improve skills, knowledge and gain employment
- Meet others and build friendships
- Live safer, happier and more positive lives.

It is now possible for women to self-refer using [the online form](#). There are also two online groups available:

- **MindFit** - MindFit groups aim to build self-esteem and confidence and reduce worry and stress.
- **CBT Learning Pods** - support for coping during Covid-19, covering topics such as stress & anxiety, worry, poor sleep, low-mood & depression and challenging negative thoughts.

For more information and how to refer women in to the service, [visit the website](#).

Children and young people's mental health

The coronavirus pandemic and lockdown restrictions can be especially tough for children and young people. Parents and carers in Lancashire and South Cumbria have been reminded that there is support for them.

Some mental health services may be accessed a bit differently at the moment to keep patients and staff safe, but they remain open to support young people. It is now more important than ever to look out for children and young people and to help them access the support they need. We know it is not easy to talk about mental health, we would really like to encourage young people to have open conversations about their wellbeing, and to reach out for help when they need it.

The following mental health support is available:

- The new **NHS Mental Health Urgent Response Line** (for all ages) is staffed by medical professionals to help people who need immediate advice or assistance, for themselves or a friend or family member: call 0800 953 0110 (24/7)
- The **Healthy Young Minds** website focuses on many common issues such as anxiety or low mood. There are resources for children and young people, parents and carers and professionals

The following national helplines and websites are also available:

- **Childline** call 0800 1111
- The **Samaritans** call 116 123
- **YoungMinds Crisis Messenger**: text YM to 85258
- **Papyrus Hopeline** UK suicide prevention helpline: call 0800 068 4141 or text 07860 039967
- **The Mix** call 0808 808 4994 (Sunday to Friday 2pm til 11pm)

If you identify as male, you can call the **Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM)** on 0800 58 58 58 (5pm to midnight every day).

Men's health week: take action on COVID-19

It's Men's Health Week and the focus for 2020 is to Take Action on COVID-19.

The awareness campaign, focusing on men's health, runs every year, just before Father's Day and highlights the health issues that affect men. It also aims to encourage men to seek help and advice when needed.

Run by the Men's Health Forum, this year's theme has been inspired by the fact that men are twice as likely to die from COVID-19 than women.

This is believed to be due to a number of factors, both biological and behavioural.

Read [the full press release](#) for more information about these factors.

Blue Light Card thank you

Blue Light Card has recently issued a big thank you on Youtube to all NHS and emergency services workers as well as social care sector employees for their continued outstanding efforts to go above and beyond.

[Watch the video here.](#)



School Nurses Back to the Classroom



School nurses from Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust are planning to resume school-based work where it is possible and safe to do so, as pupils across the county return to school.

The nurses will be observing appropriate social distancing or wearing the necessary PPE to maintain the safety of all involved. Some schools wish to limit numbers of visitors and in those circumstances, remote working will continue.

Flexible approach offered by Lancashire and South Cumbria NHSFT

Lancashire and south Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust is taking a flexible approach to their policy for discharging service users who have missed appointments to take into consideration the additional factors that may contribute at this current time.

Usually, people who have not attended two appointments are discharged from services but clinicians are taking extra consideration in relation to these decisions and only taking action where absolutely necessary.

Cervical screening

During Cervical Screening Awareness Week in June, people in Lancashire and South Cumbria are being urged to book their cervical screening appointments.

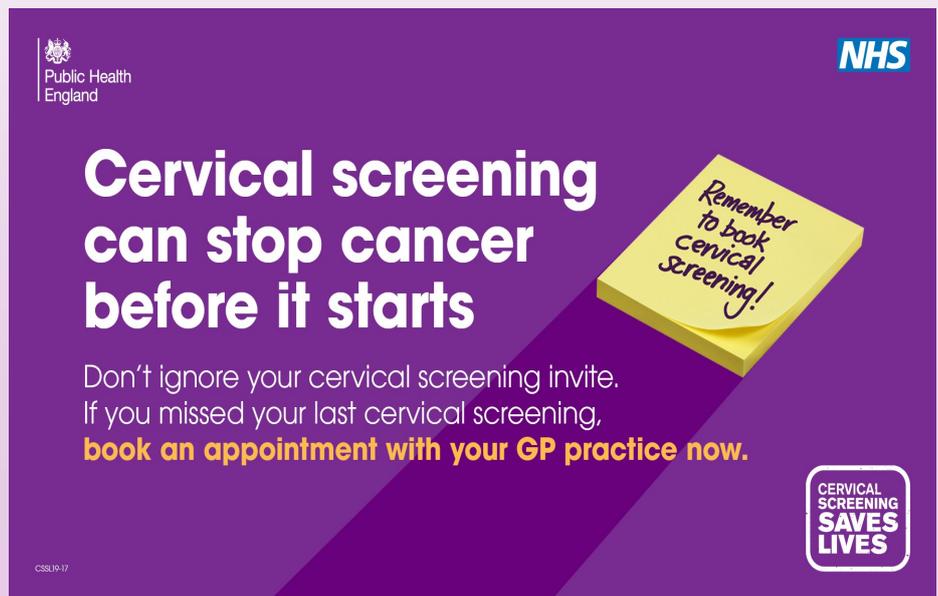
At the height of the coronavirus (COVID-19) lockdown, many services took the decision to reschedule cervical screening (or smear test) appointments to respond to the pandemic and protect patients from the virus.

Cervical screening is now resuming, with health leaders across Lancashire and South Cumbria encouraging women and people with a cervix to attend screening if they receive an appointment invitation.

Cervical screening is a free health test that helps prevent cervical cancer. It checks for a virus called human papillomavirus (HPV) and, if you have HPV, cervical cell changes (abnormal cells).

Women and people with a cervix aged 25 to 49 are screened every three years, and those aged 50 to 64 every five years. People aged over 65 are only screened if one of their last three tests was abnormal.

If you are due for cervical screening, you will receive an invitation to book an appointment. If your appointment was cancelled during the lockdown, contact your GP practice



The poster features a purple background with white and yellow text. At the top left is the Public Health England logo, and at the top right is the NHS logo. The main headline reads 'Cervical screening can stop cancer before it starts'. Below this, it says 'Don't ignore your cervical screening invite. If you missed your last cervical screening, book an appointment with your GP practice now.' A yellow sticky note graphic on the right says 'Remember to book cervical screening!'. At the bottom right is a circular logo that says 'CERVICAL SCREENING SAVES LIVES'. A small code 'CSL19-17' is visible at the bottom left of the poster.

Recovery centres

In our last issue we explained that the Recovery Centre which was created in Barrow had been returned to its owners.

Now, Kendal's Recovery centre (in Kendal Leisure Centre) is being transformed back to become a sports hall once again.

Cumbria's Local Resilience Forum partners, including the NHS, came together in early April, at a time when hospital admissions were rising rapidly, to ensure that Kendal and Barrow would be ready to meet any future need.

Kendal Leisure Centre was transformed into wards with privacy screening, hospital standard beds with bedside lockers with arrangements for appropriate catering and sanitation facilities. The centres were planned for use by patients medically fit to leave hospital, but needing a little extra time and care before going back to their homes.

Thanks to the overwhelming response from people living in Cumbria respecting guidance around social distancing and handwashing, our local hospitals have been able to maintain enough capacity to care for all Covid-19 positive patients requiring a hospital admission.

We are now in the very fortunate position of not needing to use the centres, as the number of people becoming ill with Covid-19 has gradually reduced.

Dental support

Publicity about what to do if you have a dental issue during the COVID-19 pandemic has been made available across the area.

Dental services in Lancashire and South Cumbria are still available and NHS commissioners in the North West team are working with Local Dental Committees and dental practices across the region to consider how we can safely restore dental provision.

A number of options are being considered to ensure this can be done safely for staff and patients, as this remains our top priority.

When they do open, services may not be restored to normal for some time.

In the meantime, all high street dental and orthodontic practices can give advice, guidance and prescriptions, which you can collect from your local pharmacy.

If you are in pain or in need of support and need help or advice, please telephone your dental practice in the usual way.

Register for a dentist [here](#) or call your local dental helpline:

- Lancashire 0300 1234 010
- South Cumbria 01539 716 822

This may be for severe toothache or a dental infection, or other changes inside your mouth such as a white or red patch, a lump or an ulcer that won't heal.

People calling will be assessed and given advice over the phone, which may result in a remote consultation with a dentist.

To support NHS services, it is important that people do not visit hospitals or doctors' surgeries with dental problems.

Paediatric inpatient services

Following a positive test result of staff within the hospital and in line with government guidance, 38 members of staff from the Paediatrics (Children's) department at the Royal Lancaster Infirmary (RLI) were advised to self-isolate at home. As a result, paediatric inpatients at the Royal Lancaster Infirmary were transferred to Furness General Hospital.

From last Wednesday children that arrived at the RLI Emergency Department were treated and if they required admission were then transferred to Furness General Hospital (FGH). From Thursday existing patients at the RLI were also transferred to FGH.

The intention is to review the situation this week and reopen fully.

We will keep you updated.



Keep up to date

We are keeping staff, stakeholders and the public up to date in various ways, including a daily email bulletin for staff, this e-update for stakeholders and regular information for the public.

If you want to keep up to date, you can access recent news on our website:

www.healthierlsc.co.uk/morecambe-bay

Or social media:

Twitter: @MorecambeBHCP

Facebook: UHMBT



This newsletter has been created by the Bay Health and Care Partners:

University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust (UHMBT); Morecambe Bay Clinical Commissioning Group (MBCCG); Morecambe Bay Primary Care Collaborative; Lancashire and South Cumbria Care NHS Foundation Trust; Cumbria County Council; Lancashire County Council; North West Ambulance Service (NWS).