



# COVID-19 Advice & Support

Weekly Update – 6<sup>th</sup> July 2020

**From this week, these updates will be provided on a fortnightly basis. Rest assured, we will continue to ensure that you receive guidance and news of any developments on the workforce implications of COVID-19 as soon as they emerge.**

## Sharing Information

We have attached the latest weekly update compiled in conjunction with the other Regional Employers and the LGA. This includes updates on the following:-

- Covid-19 Additional Financial Support for local councils announced
- PM Announces “New Deal” for the economy to aid COVID-19 Recovery
- COVID-19 Local Authority Workforce Data latest report
- MHCLG Guidance on safe use of council buildings
- DfE Guidance for Parents & Carers of children attending out-of-school settings
- PPE Quality Assurance Guidelines Updated
- New Walk Through Testing Sites
- Regulatory status of face masks
- Helpful ADPH Info on Local Outbreak Plans
- Redeployment of nurses into social care 9th July webinar

It also contains information on a new LGA/NW Employers OD Project to support councils’ response to the crisis. EMC is exploring options for councils in the East Midlands to collaborate on OD projects in this way. If you’d like to be involved, email Lisa at [lisa.butterfill@emcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:lisa.butterfill@emcouncils.gov.uk)

**Tomorrow we will be meeting with national workforce leads at the LGA and with our counterparts in other regions tomorrow. There is still time to let us know if you have any issues you would like us to raise on your behalf – just email us by close of play today.**

## Accessing National Workforce Data

Your co-operation in providing data for the national workforce survey is much appreciated. You can access the latest summary report of the results here. We want to ensure you get the full benefit of providing this information and so we’re arranging a short virtual briefing on LG-Inform. This will show you how you can access the data to generate reports on workforce-related and other useful information about our sector.

If you would like to take up this offer, then please email Mila to book a place – [mila.pereira@emcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:mila.pereira@emcouncils.gov.uk)  
We will let you know the time and date as soon as its confirmed.

## Information Request – Sharing Your Approach: Working from Home

Following requests from a number of councils, we are revisiting an issue that we covered early on in the COVID response – home working allowances.

As time goes on and homeworking is continuing and potentially becoming a more common arrangement post-COVID, have you developed any new policies/approaches to cover homeworking? Are you providing any allowances to employees for homeworking? If so, please would you share what you are doing? Examples of policies and allowances being provided would be much appreciated. We are happy to anonymise the responses before sharing.

Please would you email your responses to Mila at [mila.pereira@emcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:mila.pereira@emcouncils.gov.uk) **by close of play on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> July.**

## Public Health England Chief Executive's Latest Weekly Message

**Please see below, COVID-related extracts from the message from Duncan Selbie, Chief Executive of Public Health England issued on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> July:-**

**“Keep on, keeping on**

PHE has been at the heart of tackling this global pandemic which is unprecedented in living memory. There are four behaviours which I have found to stand the test of time that define the most able teams and organisations. They go beyond structures, policies and mission statements and matter much more to trust and confidence. The first of these is to say and do the same thing – people notice when these are not aligned. Second, to be good to be around when things go wrong and to fix problems rather than blame. Anyone can be good to be around when things are going well but that is not when we get measured. Third, to keep promises and if you cannot, to explain why. And finally, the most able people, teams and organisations understand the importance of speaking well of each other in public and in private. This is not about not being accountable, but it is about getting the best from people. These are not in order of importance, but they are front of my mind at this moment of daily media criticism of PHE, much of it plain wrong.

Naturally there is much to learn about how we would do things differently for next time round, but these are for all of Government, including PHE, and of course we are adapting from experience as we speak. So I want to say thank you again to my PHE colleagues for their phenomenal individual and collective contributions and these are recognised by the Secretary of State.

### **Disease Detectives**

Hats off to Professor Kate Ardern, Director of Public Health for Wigan who made a fabulous contribution to the BBC Coronavirus Newscast on Wednesday evening, which was the clearest and most down to earth explanation of contact tracing and disease detection. Congratulations to Kate and to Greater Manchester and you can [hear the podcast here](#).

### **Leicester**

I would like to pay tribute to Ivan Browne and Mike Sandys, the respective Directors of Public Health for Leicester City Council and Leicestershire County Council for their superb response to the difficult decision to increase restrictions for at least the next two weeks. People are being urged to make essential journeys only and stay at home as much as they can. In addition, the restaurants, bars and hairdressers will not reopen tomorrow, and the non-essential shops that opened on 15 June have closed again.

This is undoubtedly a concerning time for the people of Leicester and Leicestershire. However, [these actions](#) are in everyone's interest to contain and stop the spread of the virus and most importantly save lives. The learning from this first experience will be invaluable as we seek to prevent and contain outbreaks in other areas.

### **Data on local outbreaks**

Obviously key to identifying and managing local outbreaks is data and surveillance, and so the addition of upper and lower tier local authority community testing data to our [online dashboard](#) is a further positive development. This is in addition to the data that we have been providing to local authorities and Directors of Public Health through the daily COVID-19 report and weekly summaries, which includes trends and demography at health protection team and local authority level of case data.

#### COVID-19 Local Outbreak Plans

It is very positive to see local authorities publishing their Local Outbreak Plans, which are designed to ensure that local systems are fully prepared and ready to respond, building on the tireless work that councils have been undertaking on this over recent months. Find out more on the [ADPH website](#).

### **Vitamin D**

Since early on in the pandemic, there has been speculation that Vitamin D supplementation could reduce the risk of COVID-19, and this prompted two evidence reviews carried out by the [Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition](#) (SACN) and the [National Institute for Health and Care Excellence](#) (NICE). Both concluded that there is not sufficient evidence to support the use of Vitamin D to specifically treat or prevent COVID-19. Nonetheless, Vitamin D remains important for bone and muscle health, and the [official guidance](#) still stands – to consider taking 10 micrograms of Vitamin D a day.”

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**We hope this update, providing a round-up of all recent COVID-19 guidance in one place is useful to you.**

**Contact Sam Maher and Lisa Butterfill at EMC with any workforce queries or issues relating to COVID-19 at:-**

[sam.maher@emcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:sam.maher@emcouncils.gov.uk) and [lisa.butterfill@emcouncils.gov.uk](mailto:lisa.butterfill@emcouncils.gov.uk)

All guidance relating to COVID-19 can also be found by visiting our website: [Workforce Information - COVID-19](#)