

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19): Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland stakeholder bulletin #11

Issued on behalf of the NHS in LLR

Date of issue: 7th May 2020



Through these bulletins we will keep you updated on the NHS response to Coronavirus in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

We will try to ensure you have the latest information, but as you are aware the situation is rapidly changing. If you have any questions or would like to ask about a topic please email us at: PressOfficeLLRCCGs@leicestershire.nhs.uk

Please continue to support the message on staying at home and in particular help us to tackle misinformation by promoting the official sources of information: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>.

Coronavirus cases in LLR

As at 6 May there were 1732 lab confirmed cases in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) and 265 people who tested positive with coronavirus have sadly died in Leicestershire's hospitals (University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust and Leicestershire Partnerships NHS Trust).

GP and Pharmacy opening times – get the help you need

We are pleased to say that all GP practices in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland will be open from 8am to 6:30pm to ensure people can get the care they need.

Patients should contact their practice by phone, where they will be assessed by phone or video and offered an appointment if necessary. Patients should not turn up at their practice without an agreed appointment time.

Seeking medical help is one of the four reasons that people can safely leave home, in line with government guidance. Patients may be offered an appointment at the surgery if this is necessary and if care cannot be offered remotely. Alternatively, if you have coronavirus symptoms and need to be seen in person you may be referred to one of our designated hubs.

In addition, many community pharmacies will also be open from 2pm-5pm and some will be open longer. People are advised to visit www.nhs.uk or their pharmacy's own website to check exact opening times.

Pharmacists can assess symptoms and manage minor illnesses and ailments. They can give clinical and practical medical advice or over-the-counter medicines to help safely manage minor health issues such as: sore throats, coughs, colds, tummy troubles, teething problems and aches and pains.

Look after your mental health

A reminder that Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (LPT) has launched a dedicated phone line 0116 295 3060 (local call rate) where people of all ages in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland can access NHS mental health support when they need it urgently.

Many people are feeling the impact of being isolated at home and it is important to know that support is available.

The new mental health central access point 'phone service links callers with call handlers and clinicians who can assess their needs and advise, support, signpost or refer them directly to the appropriate service.

The 0116 295 3060 service offers people with urgent mental health needs a local alternative to NHS 111, the emergency department, and other urgent and non-urgent services.

Please check out other information available at [Support for your wellbeing](#) on Leicester Partnership NHS Trust's website.

Also available is a downloadable guide [Downloadable guide](#) to local and national sources of support which you can access online or print off and share.

Dental help

If you need help with dental problems you should not visit a local NHS dental practice but instead phone their dental practice, between the hours of 9am -5pm, Monday to Friday, for information and advice on alternative arrangements in place. After 5pm weekday evenings, weekends and bank holidays people should contact NHS 111. People seeking help should not visit A&E departments or GP surgeries for dental care. You will not be seen and will be asked to call their own dental practice or to NHS 111.

Impact of Coronavirus on Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities

Many of you will be aware of the emerging evidence that shows coronavirus is having a disproportionate impact on BAME communities. This is very worrying for our colleagues within health and care sector as well as the wider community.

At a national level, this is being investigated by NHS England and Improvement and Public Health England. Some specific evidence to emerge which will form part of the national review is:

- Overrepresentation in Intensive Treatment Units (ITU) – BAME patients make up 35% of ITU occupancy nationally, but represent only 14% of the population UK population
- Ensuring BAME communities whose first language is not English have access to coronavirus information in their chosen language
- Potential indirect impact on BAME communities of clinical service changes for conditions e.g. diabetes, cardiovascular services
- Existing health inequalities experienced by BAME communities being compounded because of the coronavirus pandemic

Within the local NHS we want to understand the impact it is having on our colleagues, their families, and the communities.

Coronavirus is unprecedented and we are learning as we respond to the outbreak. It is important we deal with these challenges when they arise. This issue is no different, which is why we are taking steps to ensure all our colleagues and their families are supported to stay safe. Both LPT and UHL are running listening events and are encouraging employees from ethnic minority backgrounds to talk about their experiences and share any concerns they have.

We will be guided by the Government initiated inquiry into why people from BAME backgrounds seem to be disproportionately affected by coronavirus. This is being carried out by NHS England and Public Health England. We are also supporting the work of the BME Centre for Health here in Leicester, which is undertaking research to understand why Coronavirus is disproportionately impacting Black and Minority Ethnic people in the UK.

Extension in testing

From 30th April, people who work in the NHS, social care, education, food and drink production, transportation and many other essential services, as well as people in their households, will now be able to be quickly tested locally if they have symptoms of coronavirus. If the test is negative for everyone in the household, workers will be able to get back to carrying out their critical roles as soon as possible.

Appointments for testing must be made in advance. Some employers will choose to refer their employees for a test using an online portal or they may ask employees to refer themselves by visiting www.gov.uk/coronavirus.

After referral, essential workers will receive a text message containing a website link and a verification code for them to book a test for themselves and the people they live with. The results will be sent to the individual by text message within 48 hours. The test, which consists of a swab to the mouth and nose, should be carried out within the first three days of the onset of symptoms. Essential workers are therefore urged to get referred for a test as soon as they develop symptoms and begin self-isolating.

As part of the local plans, further mobile test centres will also be made available in line with local demand. This means people's appointments could be at Birstall Park and Ride or at other local sites.

Celebrating VE Day safely

Residents are being urged to mark the 75th anniversary of VE Day from the safety of their homes and continue to follow social distancing guidelines. For example People across the nation are being asked by local BBC radio stations to take part in the 'Great British Bunting' by creating their very own VE Day 75 bunting and displaying it in their windows. Why not make an afternoon tea using a 1940s recipe!

Residents can also get involved with national events which includes a two-minute silence at 11am, the 'Nations' Toast to the Heroes of World War 2' at 3pm and a televised address from The Queen at 9pm.

By taking these steps and adopting this approach to VE Day Celebrations people will be helping to ensure that our emergency services can be focused and prioritised on alleviating pressure on public services during this pandemic where it is most needed

We're also keen to gather photos, video, stories and artwork of people celebrating VE Day to form part of the [Isolated but Inspired project](#), a digital time capsule to document this time in social history which is being co-ordinated by Leicestershire's Museum Service. For more information about national events please see [Marking the 75th anniversary of VE Day](#)

Useful information

One Prepared is a local source of information for help and services in LLR <https://www.llrprepared.org.uk/one-prepared/>.

National information is available at <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

For health advice on coronavirus please visit: <https://www.nhs.uk/>

For local NHS information see <https://www.leicestercityccg.nhs.uk/my-health/coronavirus-advice/>