

## **The Dower House Visiting Guidelines**

**From 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021**

Following a thorough risk assessment and review of the facilities within our home, we are now able to offer a weekly visit of approximately 40 minutes per resident to all of our residents. These visits are subject to the home remaining free of the Covid Virus or any other infection which would require us to close the door to visitors. We will continue to maintain the very high levels of cleanliness our residents and staff have become accustomed to and ask that all visitors take heed of these guidelines.

These are in place to ensure the safety and welfare of all who live, work and visit The Dower House. For this reason, if any visitor does not adhere to these guidelines they will be asked to leave immediately.

### **Visitors to our home.**

1. In line with national and local guidelines which state, "Visitor numbers should be limited to a single constant visitor where possible, with an absolute maximum of two constant visitors per resident. This, for example, means the same family member visiting each time to limit the number of different individuals coming into contact. This is in order to limit the number of different visitors to the care home and/or to the individual, and the consequent risk of disease transmission from multiple different routes."
2. Each resident has nominated two people with whom they wish to have visits. These are recorded with administrators who will receive the requests for visits. Appointments will only be made for nominated visitors, any other requests for visits will be respectfully declined.
3. Each resident will be able to book one visit per week. Visits will be booked on a first come first served basis.
4. A nominated visitor should contact the admin office on 01962 882848 between the hours of 10:30am and 16:30 pm to book any available slot for visiting.
5. All visiting slots will be booked for on the hour at 11:00, 14:00, 15:00 and 16:00hrs.
- 6.** We are now able to offer the opportunity for residents to have a second visit in the week, subject to availability. A nominated visitor can request another visit by ringing on the day, before 11 am, to see if there are any available slots for visiting. We cannot guarantee any availability for these visits and preference will always be given to residents who have not already got a planned booked visit on the day.

### **Regular weekly visits**

1. These will be facilitated in Room 15 of our home which is a ground floor room with immediate access from outside for visitors and internal access for residents.
2. No visitors will be permitted to enter any other area of the home during these planned visits. All visitors must be aware that they will be required to move around the outside of the building to access the visiting room, even in inclement weather.
3. All visitors will be greeted by a member of staff who will explain how the visit will be supported.
4. Visitors will be required to complete and sign a questionnaire on their arrival. A copy of this questionnaire is attached. We respectfully request that no visitors attend the home if they are unwell or are not able to respond to the risk assessment questions in a safe way.

5. Any visitor who is not able to complete this form satisfactorily will be asked to leave the home without the visit having taken place. Any questions about suitability to visit must be directed to Matron, the General Manager or Sister-in- Charge.
6. All visitors will be required to have their temperature recorded and to wear a mask while moving around the home or grounds. These will be provided by the member of staff supporting the visit and visitors will not be permitted to wear their own masks.
7. It is important that visitors do not arrive before the allocated hour as this will increase the risk of meeting other relatives or residents around the building.
8. There will be hand gel available for visitors to support good hand hygiene practices in our home.
9. Visitors **must not bring any unnecessary items to the home**, including handbags. They cannot be taken into the visiting room and there is nowhere for them to be stored securely during the visit. Electronic devices such as phones and tablets will be permitted so long as they are cleaned before taking into the room.
- 10.** Any gifts, parcels or other items for residents which are required to be isolated for 72 hours before being given to residents should be placed in the crate at the front door of the home for staff to deal with. Items such as flowers, chocolates or other items which can be cleaned and then given to the resident will be dealt with by the staff member supporting the visit. **No packages, gifts or other items can be taken to the visitors' room.**
11. Visitors must call ahead if they have any doubts about visiting and seek advice from Matron, the General Manager or Sister-in-Charge before leaving their home.
12. The visiting room will be separated into two separate sections with a screen between any visitor and resident. Visitors must follow all instruction provided by staff to ensure their safety and that of the people who live and work at our home.
13. The room will remain well ventilated with an open window and the internal door open at all times.
14. Social distancing must be maintained at all times between staff, visitors and residents. Visitors can remove their masks when sitting in the visitor's room behind the screen.
15. The visitor's side of the room will be furnished with one chair and a small table to hold hand gel and tissues. No other furniture will be allowed in this area of the room. This is to assist in the cleaning of surfaces between each visit.
16. Supporting staff will be available throughout the visit if a resident or visitor should need any assistant although they will not be in the room at all times. A call bell will be available for use should assistance be required, and no staff present.
17. All visits will end at 45 minutes past the hour to ensure there is sufficient time for cleaning of the visiting area for the next visit. This will not alter- even if the visitor is late in arriving.
18. When visitors exit the visit room, they must go directly to their car/leave the grounds of the home. This will reduce the risk of multiple visitors being on site at any one time.
19. Planned fire drills will not be held during visiting times. If the fire alarm should go off when you are visiting, then please stay in the room with your relative and a member of staff will advise you on any actions required. Under these exceptional circumstances we would ask that visitors ensure the patio door and window are closed and wait for staff to advise them.

### **Room Cleaning**

Following each visit every surface on both the visitor's side and the resident's side of the room will be cleaned with appropriate cleaning materials.

1. The room will be cleaned using a fogging device at the end of the last visit of the day.

### **Infection control concerns and actions.**

1. If there is any concern about a risk of infection within the room then Matron or the Sister-in-Charge must be informed immediately, and appropriate actions will be taken to ensure the safety and welfare of residents, visitors and staff. This may mean closing the room to visits until suitable cleaning or infection control procedures can be followed.
2. It is important to reiterate that should there be any outbreak of infection or risk of infection in the home all visits will cease until appropriate support and guidance has been sought

### **Moving Forward**

1. Future on site Covid testing will be available to visitors later in 2021. This will result in a significant change in our visiting policy and further information on this will be circulated when possible.
2. Whilst we recognise the impact the current vaccination programme may have on visiting in care homes we will be guided by national and local guidelines before any changes are made to visiting restrictions in our home.
3. As we move further into 2021, we will continue to review all local and national guidelines on visiting and ensure our policies and guidelines reflect these in line with our own risk assessments.

With the support of all residents, visitors and staff in following these guidelines, we look forward to being able to facilitate visits for our residents. This will help to improve and support their general health and wellbeing.