



MEMBERS BULLETIN

22nd June 2020

Dear All

***** The attached information is strictly embargoed until 17:00
Monday 22 June 2020 *****

Second email regarding shielding today.

It follows the earlier all member bulletin on the topic that went out about 1400 today, Monday 22nd June 2020.

This one adds to the earlier information. It starts with the press notice and includes attachments that give more detail and help charities communicate the changes.

In the interim could I ask again that the embargo is observed, with many thanks.

Best wishes,

Jane Lyons
CEO
Cancer52

PRESS NOTICE

PLANS TO EASE GUIDANCE FOR OVER 2 MILLION SHIELDING

- Advisory guidance to be eased for 2.2 million clinically extremely vulnerable people across England, as virus infection rates continue to fall;
- From Monday 6 July, those shielding from coronavirus can gather in groups of up to six people outdoors and form a 'support bubble' with another household;
- Government shielding support package will remain in place until the end of July when people will no longer be advised to shield.

Millions of people shielding from coronavirus will be advised they can spend more time outside their homes from Monday 6 July, the Health Secretary announced today (Monday 22 June).

Hailing the resilience of those who have been shielding, the Health Secretary confirmed from Monday 6 July they will be able to spend time outdoors in a group of up to six people including those outside of their household, while maintaining social distancing.

Those who are shielding and live alone or are single parents with children will also be able to create a 'support bubble' with one other household of any size, following the same rules already in place for the wider population.

This comes as the latest scientific evidence shows the chances of encountering the virus in the community continue to decline, but the Government is committed to continuing with the unprecedented package of support until the end of July to give those shielding time to adjust to these changes.

From Saturday 1 August, the guidance will then be relaxed so clinically extremely vulnerable people will no longer be advised to shield, but support will remain available from NHS volunteers and local councils. People will retain their priority for supermarket delivery slots, and still be able to access help with shopping, medication, phone calls and transport to medical appointments.

Whilst this group of clinically extremely vulnerable people should continue to follow strict social distancing measures, they will be able to participate in more activities such as visiting shops and places of worship.

From 1 August, those who need to work and cannot do so from home will be able to return to work as long as their workplace is COVID secure, adhering to the guidance available.

Deputy Chief Medical Officer Dr Jenny Harries said:

"Shielding was introduced to safeguard those who, at the start of the epidemic in the UK, were thought to be most clinically vulnerable in our communities. We know how difficult this period has been and the impact shielding has had on many people's mental health.

"The prevalence of the virus in the community is now lower and chances of getting infected are reduced, so we believe it is the right time to relax some of the advice so people can start to regain a degree of normality once more in their daily lives.

"People should continue to follow social distancing guidance when outside their homes, as well as frequently washing their hands, to minimise the risk of becoming infected. We will continue to monitor the evidence closely and adjust the advice accordingly if there are any changes in the rates of infection that could impact on this group."

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said:

"I want to thank all those who have been shielding for so many weeks for their commitment to the shielding programme. I know this has been incredibly tough. Shielding has involved not leaving your house for months, not seeing people you care about, not being able to wander to the park for some fresh air, or even pop to the shops for something you need. This sacrifice has been for a purpose, and I want to thank every single one of you.

"We knew it was a difficult ask, but these measures have been vital in saving lives. Now, with infection rates continuing to fall in our communities, our medical experts have advised that we can now ease some of these measures, while keeping people safe."

The Government has worked closely with clinicians, GPs, charities, the voluntary sector and patient groups to consult on these changes and will continue to do so to provide support and advice to those they represent.

Following this review of the shielding measures, the government will be writing to all individuals on the Shielded Patient List with updated information on shielding advice and the ongoing support that will be available to them.

Communities Secretary Robert Jenrick said:

"The resilience and fortitude shown by those that have needed to shield has been

inspiring. It's good news that we are now in a position to start easing some of the restrictions, which I know will be welcomed by many.

"I also want to reassure everyone that we will continue to deliver the unprecedented package of support including food and medicine deliveries until the end of July. You will be sent information that will explain what support is available after that, you will not be on your own.

"I want to thank councils, health and care professionals, the food industry, key workers and volunteers for their staggering effort to deliver a programme on a scale not seen since the Second World War. Your combined efforts have supported millions of people during this difficult time."

The rates of the virus are now low enough to allow for our advice to be carefully and safely eased, as on average less than 1 in 1,700 in our communities are estimated to have the virus, down from 1 in 500 four weeks ago.

Those identified as clinically extremely vulnerable should continue to remain at home as much as possible, taking particular care to minimise contact with others outside their household and practise good, frequent handwashing.

We recognise that individuals unable to work from home, may feel uncertain about returning to work. Mindful of this, the Government is asking employers to ease the transition for their clinically extremely vulnerable employees, ensuring robust measures are put in place for those currently shielding to return to work when they are able to do so.

For anyone concerned about returning to work once the guidance has eased, we recommend they speak with their employer to understand their specific policies in relation to COVID-19. We advise they discuss their situation, agree a plan for returning to work and adjustments that may be needed before they return.

The NHS will maintain the Shielded Patient List to ensure we continue to provide the best advice to those identified as clinically extremely vulnerable. Should the level of the disease in the community rise in the future it may be necessary to advise that more restrictive measures should be taken in order for those at highest risk to keep themselves safe.

Notes to editors

The updated guidance for those classed as clinically extremely vulnerable will be published on 6 July and 1 August as these measures come into force. The dates allow for a gradual return to normality for people who have been shielding strictly and for careful monitoring of the epidemiology of disease during wider easing policies, with two to three weeks being required to observe clear changes in hospitalisation or intensive care use if population rates were to rise.

There are around 2.2 million people in England with underlying severe health conditions who have been advised to stay at home and avoid non-essential face to face contact. These are people of all ages – with specific medical conditions identified by senior UK Clinicians – who are at greater risk of severe illness from coronavirus. (See the full list of conditions.)

There are a number of ways that those who are identified as clinically extremely vulnerable can access food and other essentials:

- Make use of the supermarket priority delivery slots that are available for this group. When a clinically extremely vulnerable person registers online as needing support with food, their data is shared with supermarkets. This means if they make an online order with a supermarket (as both a new or existing customer), they will be eligible for a priority slot.

- If a person meets the criteria to get support from the NHS Volunteer Responders programme, they can call 0808 196 3646 to be linked with a volunteer who can do a food shop for them. A carer or family member can also do this on their behalf.
- If they need urgent help and have no other means of support, they can contact their local council to find out what support services are available in their area.
- Use the many commercial options now available for accessing food, including telephone ordering, food box delivery, prepared meal delivery and other non-supermarket food delivery providers. Local authorities and charities are able to provide a list of commercial food access options.

Support will continue to be available through the NHS Volunteer Responder Scheme beyond the end of July. NHS Volunteer Responders can support with:

- collecting shopping, medication (if your friends and family cannot collect them for you) or other essential supplies;
- a regular, friendly phone call which can be provided by different volunteers each time or by someone who is also shielding and will stay in contact for several weeks; and
- transport to medical appointments.

In addition the unprecedented economic support package, for anyone facing financial hardship the government has made £63 million available to local councils in England to help those who are struggling to afford food and other essentials.

If someone who is shielding doesn't need the free government food box anymore, including because they have started to get online supermarket deliveries, they should re-register through the gov.uk website as no longer needing a food delivery. Alternatively, they can inform their delivery driver at the door that they no longer require these food parcels.

To date, support for those shielding includes:

- Over 3 million free boxes of essential food have now been delivered by wholesalers to those at highest risk across England, with around 300,000 boxes being distributed every week.
- Seven major supermarkets signed up to providing priority delivery slot access to those shielding
- Up to 200,000 calls a day have been made to the shielded to confirm their support needs, and councils are helping to support them in other ways - including organising regular calls from volunteers to those isolated.
- Over one million free medicine deliveries provided by community pharmacies in April and May to those who have been advised to shield.
- Support from over 500,000 NHS volunteers including telephone calls to shielding individuals and others who are at risk of loneliness as a consequence of self-isolation.

People in the clinically extremely vulnerable group should continue to access the NHS services they need during this time. This may be delivered in a different way or in a different place than they are used to, for example via an online consultation, but if they do need to go to hospital or attend another health facility for planned care, extra planning and protection will be put in place.

An NHS Medicine Delivery Service is available from community pharmacies and dispensing doctors. It ensures the delivery of medicines to shielded patients where family, friends or volunteers cannot collect them.

From 6 July, in line with the wider guidance for single people in the general population, those shielding may form a 'support bubble' with one other household. This means single adults or single parents who are shielding can create a 'support bubble' with any

household, and households with a shielded person in it can also form a 'support bubble' with any single person (or single adult with children).

Anyone not already in contact with mental health services seeking urgent help for their mental health can visit the NHS.UK 'Where to get urgent help for mental health' webpage, which lists a range of options that can be accessed, including local 24/7 NHS urgent mental health telephone helplines.

[ENDS]

From: North, Kelly

Sent: 22 June 2020 14:15

Subject: Shielding announcement information and assets *EMBARGOED UNTIL 17:00 TODAY*

***** The attached information is strictly embargoed until 17:00 Monday 22 June 2020 *****

Dear all,

With apologies for the delay, please find the [toolkit](#) and annexes A-D.

- [Annex A](#) – Core Narrative (for your internal use)
- [Annex B](#) – Clinical advice and support offer explainers (to use on your websites, if you wish)
- [Annex C](#) – Q&A (for your internal use, e.g. for helplines)
- [Annex D](#) – Suggested social media copy

Additional digital assets and the press notice to follow.

Best wishes,
Kelly

From: North, Kelly

Sent: 22 June 2020 10:57

Subject: Shielding announcement information and assets *EMBARGOED UNTIL 17:00 TODAY*

***** The below information is strictly embargoed until 17:00 Monday 22 June 2020 *****

Good morning all,

As promised, I am emailing to brief you on today's announcement on shielding, to be delivered by the Secretary of State at the press conference. The DCMO, Jenny Harries, will be alongside the Secretary of State to provide clinical background.

The Secretary of State will set out a roadmap for the future of shielding. The key points are:

- Shielding guidance will be relaxed in stages, subject to clinical evidence. The new advice to patients will now be:
 - From **6 July**:
 - "You may, if you wish, meet in a group of up to 6 people outdoors, including people from different households, while maintaining strict social distancing;

- You no longer need to observe social distancing with other members of your household;
- In line with the wider guidance for single adult households (either an adult living alone or with dependent children under 18) in the general population, you may from this date, if you wish, also form a 'support bubble' with one other household. All those in a support bubble will be able to spend time together inside each other's homes, including overnight, without needing to socially distance. This is a small advisory change that brings those affected a step nearer others in their communities. However, all the other current shielding advice will remain unchanged at this time. the guidance for the clinically extremely vulnerable will be relaxed to allow shielded individuals to meet up to 5 people from other households outdoors, socially distanced, and to form support bubbles if they live alone or are a lone adult with a dependent under 18."
- From **1 August**:
 - "The advice to 'shield' will be paused. From this date, the Government is advising you to adopt strict social distancing rather than full shielding measures. Strict social distancing means you may wish to go out to more places and see more people but you should take particular care to minimise contact with others outside your household or support bubble.
 - You can go to work, if you cannot work from home, as long as the business is COVID-safe;
 - Children who are clinically extremely vulnerable can return to their education settings if they are eligible and in line with their peers. Where possible children should practise frequent hand washing and social distancing;
 - You can go outside to buy food, to places of worship and for exercise but you should maintain strict social distancing; and
 - You should remain cautious as you are still at risk of severe illness if you catch Coronavirus, so the advice is to stay at home where possible and, if you do go out, follow strict social distancing."
- The food and medicine boxes facilitated by the National Shielding Service will stop as of **1 August** as individuals are advised they can visit shops and pharmacies. However, other forms of support – such as priority supermarket delivery slots and the NHS Volunteers Scheme, amongst a range of local volunteer schemes – will continue. If an individual is concerned about support after 1 August, they should contact their local authority.
- The categorisation of 'clinically extremely vulnerable' will remain in place and people in this cohort should continue to follow the guidance specific to them, available [here](#). After 1 August we will continue to maintain the Shielded Patient List. We will monitor the virus continuously over coming months and if it spreads too much, we may need to advise this group to shield again.
- Shielding guidance has been and continues to be **advisory**.
- Everybody in the 'clinically extremely vulnerable' categorisation will be written to from today outlining these steps.

Why we are announcing these changes now

All Government decisions on shielding advice are led by the latest scientific evidence. The latest evidence shows that the chance of encountering Coronavirus in the community has continued to decline. Four weeks ago, around one person in 500 had the virus. Last week it was even lower with less than one in 1,700 people having the virus. As a result, we believe that the time is now right to relax our advice to those shielding further, but we understand that it might take a while to get back to routine daily life again.

Following the announcement at the end of May, allowing shielded individuals to take steps to go outside safely, we heard the feedback from charities, patient groups and social care stakeholders that lifting measures without a lead-in time caused anxiety and confusion. As such, this time we are allowing two weeks before the first guidance changes, during which we are prepared to engage with you as much as possible and use your expertise to ensure the transition for people who are shielding is done with trust in the government's guidance

and with clarity. We are aware that trust is a key issue for shielding individuals so, as trusted voices amongst patients and their families, your support for this roadmap would be invaluable. With sustained engagement with the department, we hope you feel confident to share information on this announcement and advocate for the roadmap.

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We are endeavouring to make your preparation for today's announcement as easy as possible. As such, this email will shortly be followed by:

- **A communications toolkit**, including more information on the announcement and how you can help, assets for your websites and social media, and a Q&A for your helplines
- **An embargoed press notice**

As written above, this information is **embargoed till 17:00 today** so please do not put anything out externally until then. If you could send me any prepared comms for my information that would be extremely helpful, and let me know if you have any questions.

Best wishes,
Kelly

Kelly North

External Affairs Officer

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