

Professor Martin Green OBE
Chief Executive: Care England

Telephone: 0300 061 6161
www.cqc.org.uk

Diane Mayhew and Jenny Morrison
Co-founders of Rights for Residents
Your ref: CE_MG_290721_227

20 August 2021

Dear Diane, Jenny and Martin,

Thank you for your letter of 29 July 2021 and for sharing your concerns around the implementation of the latest visiting guidance across adult social care services. As Kate Terroni is currently on annual leave I am responding to you on behalf of the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

I want to begin by saying that we completely agree about the importance of visiting and that the ability to see loved ones is crucial to wellbeing. As we have highlighted before, the impact of not being able to have important relationships maintained can be devastating to mental health, just like our physical health, when it is not attended to. We expect everyone to work together across their local system to enable visiting.

I would also like to stress the importance of providers following the latest government guidance, including enabling care home residents the choice to nominate an essential care giver.

We are continuing to actively monitor compliance with the guidance on care home visiting;

- through our inspections where we ask the mandatory question, '*Is the service facilitating visits to people living at the home in accordance with current guidance?*'
- through our ongoing monitoring conversations which asks the same question above
- by investigating concerns, including those related to potential visiting bans or refusal to designate essential care givers
- by working with our Experts by Experience to talk to residents, their loved ones and friends, to enhance our evidence through monitoring and inspection
- by developing a visiting questionnaire for all Experts by Experience who have family members using residential services. This is due to be issued shortly

We continue to encourage people to feedback on their experiences through our online Give Feedback on Care form or by phone via our contact centre. From 1 April 2020 – 18 August 2021 in adult social care 56% of our inspections were

triggered by information of concern. This includes safeguarding, whistleblowing, concerns and complaints.

We work with a number of national charities through our Tell us about your care programme, this includes Carers UK and Relatives and Residents Association. These partners support people to complete the [Give Feedback on Care form](#). Our campaign 'Because we all care', delivered in collaboration with Healthwatch over the last year, encouraged people using health and care services and their loved ones to give feedback to us. During the campaign we received over 74,000 pieces of feedback from the public, online, on the phone or by email.

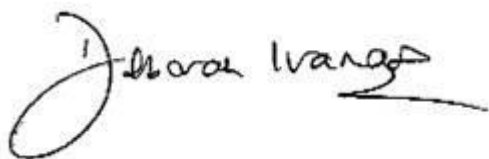
We really value Care England and Right's for Residents' support in encouraging feedback from people who draw on social care, their families, loved ones and carers so that we can continue to act on concerns. Thank you to Rights for Residents for the information they have provided to us so far which we are reviewing. Please continue to share details of concerns with us. It's important that enough information is shared so that we can identify individual services. The service name and the date a concern relates to are key in enabling us to investigate them. We will continue to escalate your concerns about the guidance to the Department of Health and Social Care and encourage you to continue doing so.

I want to reassure you that we will highlight the existing support tools which are available to providers through our provider bulletin at the end of the month, including the Care Provider Alliance visitors protocol and the joint statement published by Relatives and Residents Association, National Care Forum and the Care Provider Alliance. This statement is important to support regular communications between care providers and the families of their residents.

Thank you for your invitation to speak at an upcoming webinar on visiting. We would be delighted to take part and look forward to speaking to your members. Once we receive the completed speaking engagement form and the confirmed date, we will check diaries and let you know who is best placed to represent CQC.

Thank you again for highlighting your concerns. My colleagues in the Provider and Public engagement teams welcome ongoing conversations around this topic. Please let them know if a focused meeting would be helpful. You can contact colin.penning@cqc.org.uk or providerengagement@cqc.org.uk and they will be happy to help.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deborah Ivanova". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial 'D'.

Deborah Ivanova
Deputy Chief Inspector People with a learning disability and autistic people
Adult Social Care