

Groundswell

Out of homelessness



CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

For people in hostels or temporary accommodation

What is Coronavirus?

Coronavirus or COVID-19 is an illness that can **affect your lungs and airways.**

COVID-19 has symptoms similar to the flu. In almost all cases people will not die from having coronavirus. However, **for people with existing health conditions it can have increased risks.** Symptoms to be aware of are:

- a high temperature – you feel hot to touch on your chest or back
- a new, continuous cough – this means you've started coughing repeatedly

It's important that you take steps to **keep yourself and those around you safe and healthy.** It is particularly important for people who:

- are 70 or over.
- have a long-term health condition.
- are pregnant.
- have a weakened immune system.

Using day centres & support services

- Official guidance from Public Health England outlines that **hostels and day centres do not need to close** at the current time.
- Day centres and support services **will change** the way they are working, and this may have an impact on you.
- You don't need to stop using day centres or other services however **try to reduce the time you spend there and maintain physical distance** from other people.
- **If you have symptoms of COVID-19 you should not go to support services like day centres.**
- **If you have been using a support service or day centre and develop COVID-19 symptoms then contact them and let them know your situation and needs.**
- GP practices and other services are likely to have their own policies for managing coronavirus and may close, cancel appointments or not allow walk-in patients.

All NHS services for coronavirus are **free for everyone regardless of their immigration status** in the UK. This includes coronavirus testing and treatment, even if the result is negative. **You will not be reported to the Home Office for coronavirus testing or treatment.**

More information:

NHS Guidance:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Drug Treatment and COVID-19:

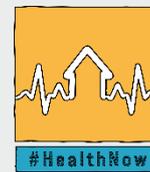
<https://www.release.org.uk/blog/drug-treatment-and-coronaviruscovid19>

Harm reduction and covid-19 for people who use drugs: <https://www.talkingdrugs.org/covid19-harm-reduction-for-people-who-use-drugs>

Version 1: The information in this document is correct as of the 17/03/2020. Guidance is likely to change and we will update as frequently as possible.

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Hostels & Temporary Accommodation



Looking after yourself & your community

To limit the risk of catching or spreading coronavirus follow these steps:

- **Wash your hands with soap and water often** – do this for at least 20 seconds. If there is no soap in the hostel talk to a member of staff immediately.
- Always wash your hands when you go in or out of your hostel and other buildings.
- **Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve** (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze. Toilet paper will do the job. If this is not available in your accommodation, then ask staff.
- Put used **tissues in the bin immediately** and wash your hands afterwards.
- **Avoid close contact with people who have symptoms of coronavirus.**
- Only travel on public transport **if you need to.**
- **Avoid social activities and areas with large groups of people** (see section on day centres and support services).
- Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean.
- **Avoid having visitors to your room** including friends and family.
- **Do not shake dirty laundry** – this can spread the virus.

What to do if you have symptoms in a hostel

The NHS recommends isolating yourself for 7 days if you have either:

- **a high temperature – you feel hot to touch on your chest or back.**
- **a new, continuous cough – this means you've started coughing repeatedly.**

Let staff know in your hostel or temporary accommodation know if you are feeling unwell. **Staff should make arrangements for you to isolate yourself** in your accommodation or work with the local authority to find alternative arrangements.

Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital.

You can contact NHS 111 for urgent advice if you are unable to get support from local support services or if:

- you feel you cannot cope with your symptoms.
- your condition gets worse.
- your symptoms do not get better after 7 days.

NHS 111 is a free service you can contact if you have an urgent medical problem and you're not sure what to do. You can contact it through: 111.nhs.uk or call 111. You can call NHS 111 free from a mobile or a pay phone. There may be a wait to speak to someone.

Important considerations and things to do when self-isolating in a hostel

- **Do not have visitors to your room.**
- If you have a shared bathroom and/or kitchen **speak to staff about how best to use these spaces.** Make sure the facilities are **cleaned** after using them with normal cleaning products.
- **Stay in contact** with friends and family by phone or through the internet.
- Ask someone to bring you things you need to entertain you i.e. books, papers, music, DVDs.
- If you need food or drink **think about where these are coming from.** You may need to make arrangements for it to be dropped off to you.
- If you need **drugs or alcohol**, consider how these can be delivered to you.
- If you need **medication/scripts then let your prescribing service or a support worker know.** You will need to make arrangements for having this dropped off.
- If you have a dog or another pet, try to keep it away from other people. Avoid interacting with other people's pets.
- **Don't share cigarettes, pipes or drink from the same bottles and cans.**