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Care Home Providers  
Chief Social Work Officers  
Local Authority Chief Executives  
Integration Authority Chief Officers  
NHS Board Chief Executives  
Primary Care Leads  
NHS Board Medical Directors, Nurse Directors  
IJB Nurse Leads

15 May 2020

Dear Colleagues

### **Updated Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance for Care Homes**

Firstly, we would like to thank you for your response in providing care and support to so many of our most vulnerable citizens in these unprecedented times. Your commitment and dedication in providing quality care during these most difficult circumstances is greatly valued.

We are writing to inform you that we have today published updated COVID-19 national clinical and practice guidance on care homes which will be of interest to all care homes and those working alongside the sector to protect residents and staff. The guidance, which is based on Health Protection Scotland updated [infection control guidance](#) for care homes, considers some of the practical steps that are required to support good infection control within care homes. The guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-clinical-guidance-for-nursing-home-and-residential-care-residents/>

We wish to draw your attention to the following areas which have been updated or added to in the guidance.

- supporting staff and resident wellbeing;
- ensuring adequate staffing during the COVID outbreak to ensure the safety and wellbeing of residents;
- updates on testing arrangements following recent announcements on care home admissions and enhanced surveillance testing;
- education and training;
- role of all partners – providers, Health and Social Care Partnerships Local Authorities and NHS Boards, to ensure that the care home sector is supported at this time.

The guidance has been updated by the Care Homes Clinical and Professional Advisory Group (CPAG), a short life multi-disciplinary group, which has been established to provide clinical and professional advice throughout the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic.

It's recognised that COVID-19 presents in an atypical fashion and affects the most vulnerable and therefore requires a different clinical model for care homes, a different staff complement and different approaches to supporting residents. This updated guidance provides advice on the approaches for doing that, recognising that enhanced mutual support for care homes is essential at this time.

The Care Homes CPAG will continue to review the guidance taking account of changes in the emerging picture around COVID-19.

The care home sector is absolutely critical in ensuring Scotland's effective response to COVID-19 and we would like again to express our thanks to you for all the work you are doing to support the care home sector at this time.

I hope this is useful.

Yours sincerely

**Professor Graham Ellis,**  
National Clinical Advisor for Ageing and Health to the Chief Medical Officer in NHS Scotland

**Diane Murray,** Depute Chief Nursing Officer, Scottish Government