

Staying alert and safe (social distancing) – Guidance for England

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing>

New social distancing guidance was issued by the government on 31st May. This focused on guidance that from 1st June we can spend time outdoors in a group of up to six people from different households, following social distancing guidelines (2 metres apart). This guidance is for people who are fit and well. There is separate guidance for people with suspected or confirmed COVID-19, people who are clinically vulnerable (including being aged over 70 yrs), or in the 'shielded' category.

This means some people we support can meet with family and/or friends, maintaining social distancing in outdoor spaces. This should be carefully risk assessed by the manager, with the person and his/her family/care manager.

To be considered in terms of risk assessment:

- Avoid busy places/times of the day as many more people are accessing the community now
- If a person supported is visiting their family/friends and accessing their garden they should do so without entering the house, wherever possible. If needing to pass through the house to access the garden, avoid touching surfaces and go straight out into the garden.
- If a person's family/friends wish to visit, this should only be in the garden and planned in advance with the manager. This is to ensure risks can be considered and agreed, to protect everyone. Particular consideration needs to take place if there's a possible risk that the person supported and/or others who live in the service will struggle to maintain appropriate social distance with visitors, should family/friends visit in the garden. Risk considerations are below (Page 3).
- The person supported or their support staff should not share sports or garden equipment with anyone from outside the household
- Avoid sharing food or drink, if planning to have a picnic use your own food/drink and utensils
- Overnight stays away from home are not permitted by law
- If a person is supported to travel by car to their family home or to access the community generally, this will be in the house vehicle with accompanying staff wearing fluid resistant masks.

Please see point 9 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing> for a list of clinically vulnerable conditions that need to be considered by the manager when risk assessing access to the community.

Staying at home and away from others – Guidance for Wales

<https://gov.wales/coronavirus>

As of the 1st of June, people from one household can meet outdoors with people from one other household, as long as they stay local i.e. within 5 miles of home. Social distancing (at

least 2 metres apart) needs to be maintained. There is no limit to the numbers of people within each household who can meet, but the risk does increase with the more people involved. Gatherings of more than two households is illegal.

The same risk factors as above for England relate i.e. meeting in open spaces, avoiding entering enclosed spaces or buildings, not sharing food/utensils etc. Managers are asked to carefully risk assess community access with the person, and his/her family/care manager.

Separate advice is available for people or households who are isolating (Self-isolation: stay at home guidance for households with possible coronavirus, www.gov.wales) and the most vulnerable people who need to be shielded (Guidance on shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable from coronavirus, www.gov.wales)

If a person's family/friends wish to visit, this should only be in the garden and planned in advance with the manager. This is to ensure risks can be considered and agreed, to protect everyone. Particular consideration needs to take place if there's a possible risk that the person supported and/or others who live in the service will struggle to maintain appropriate social distance with visitors, should family/friends visit in the garden. Risk considerations are attached.

If a person is supported to travel by car to their family home or to access the community generally, this will be in the house vehicle with accompanying staff wearing fluid resistant masks.

Risk Considerations – family/friends visiting a person supported

Meeting people socially indoors is not allowed under government guidance in England or Wales. However, people are able to meet family/friends from different households in open spaces – managers of services in England and Wales must familiarise themselves with specific guidance.

In addition to people we support being able to meet family/friends in open spaces such as parks, they can also meet in private gardens, following social distancing guidelines at all times. If there are plans for a person supported to visit their family/friends, or for their family/friends to visit them this should be carefully risk assessed by the manager. The following risk considerations are important to include in risk assessing and planning for the person supported to receive visitors to their garden –

- If anyone in the household (the residential or supported living service) is self-isolating due to suspected or confirmed COVID-19, shielded or clinically vulnerable separate government advice must be followed. Those individuals would not be able to receive or have any form of contact with visitors to the garden.
- Any visits to the garden by family/friends must be pre-planned and agreed by the manager, to ensure the visit can be planned and discussion held about any risk concerns, timing and duration etc.
- The planned visitors will be asked to confirm in advance that they are not shielded or self-isolated themselves, and not presenting with any symptoms that would indicate COVID-19. When the visitor/s arrive, they will be asked to sign to confirm this.

- Visitors will be asked to ensure they plan ahead to avoid the need to access the building e.g. take any refreshments with them, use toilet facilities before setting off. We ask that visitors do not enter the building unless it is the only means of accessing the garden and in which case the visitor/s must not touch anything indoors and go straight to the garden, under the direction of a support staff who will ensure other people supported will be able to maintain at least 2 metres social distance as the visitor is passing through.
- Managers will need to carefully schedule visits, if more than one person supported is receiving visitors on the same day, to avoid any clash in timing. No more than one person supported should receive visitor/s at any given time. Visitors are asked to strictly follow the manager's guidance on planning visits, as well as the duration of these as the manager will need to consider the support for the person and others during the visit.
- The manager will discuss with the person supported, family/friends any potential risk that the person may not cope with social distancing rules and plan how that will be supported (e.g. may want to hug their visitor). If it is assessed that this cannot be safely risk-managed, then alternative contact/communication arrangements should be sought.
- Likewise, the manager needs to consider whether anyone else being supported may find it difficult to socially distance with the visitors and establish a means of risk managing that. For example, when a person is receiving a visitor in the garden, the manager coordinating that at a time when the other person is accessing the community.
- In order to assist people to understand and cope with social distancing, the manager can arrange easy read material, social stories, discussion and/or role-play to help the person understand the need to maintain social distance. In addition, in preparation for a visit to the garden the manager can arrange for picnic blankets, rugs, or exercise mats to be strategically placed to support people to maintain social distance.
- If there are concerns that anyone will still struggle with social distancing, visitors may be asked to wear PPE for the duration of the visit for the protection of all. If in this instance the visitor/s decline, alternative contact/communication arrangements will need to be made.
- While we wish for all visits to be enjoyable and successful for the person and their family/friends, if there is a breach of social distancing guidance during a visit, we will need to review the plans in place to safeguard all concerned.