



## COVID-19 briefing 4 June 2020

This briefing aims to provide you with the latest information on the measures we are putting into place across Frimley Health and Care to respond to the impact of Covid-19 and provide you with a key issues update of what is happening across the system.

We are working together across our organisations and with the NHS England team to ensure our communications are consistent and timely. For the latest local position on Covid-19 please visit this link <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

### Today's update covers:

1. **Volunteers Week**
2. **Updated important information about the coronavirus (COVID-19)**
3. **Ready for pregnancy campaign**
4. **Changes to primary care services**
5. **Communications**

### 1/ **Volunteers Week**

This week marks Volunteers' Week, and the NHS has echoed the thanks of the Duchess of Cornwall to the thousands of people who have supported the NHS and helped the most vulnerable during the pandemic, by signing up as Volunteer Responders. Together, they have carried out a quarter of a million tasks, aiding people who are self-isolating, by providing grocery and prescription deliveries, lifts to medical appointments and 'check-in and chat' calls to help combat social isolation.



As well as big pressures, the past few months have brought many reminders of the resilience and generosity of the British people. As Chief Nursing Officer for England, Ruth May said: "Thanks to the kindness of the British public at our greatest time of need, thousands of people across the country have been supported by our volunteers. We know that the smallest task has made a world of difference during these uncertain times - whether it's helping out a neighbour, supporting a local group or being part of a national organisation. Volunteers make a huge difference to the lives of millions of people and across Frimley Health and Care we've never seen it more than over recent weeks."

During the COVID-19 Pandemic the country has come together, demonstrating its willingness to volunteer in every form, from individual acts of kindness through to huge community responses, and we would like to take the opportunity this volunteer's week to say thank you to each and every one of you, no matter how small you feel your contribution may have been.





Across Frimley Health and Care we have relationships with a number of Councils for Voluntary Service and the local charities they support, so see first-hand the vital role that volunteers can play:

Volunteering contributes more than £22 billion to the UK economy, with nearly 20 million people volunteering at least once a year, but it's about more than money. Volunteering your time of course benefits others, a cause or the environment but did you know it's good for you too? This year's mental health awareness week (18th-24th May) focused on kindness and produced a [guide](#) which explains the benefits of volunteering too.

Within our own organisations we have many ways for local people to get involved, either within a regular opportunity at a clinical setting, like with [Frimley Park A&E volunteers](#) or by becoming involved with the decisions made about local [NHS services](#). To date the contribution that individuals and groups have made to these requests for involvement have really made a difference in the way services are delivered and the care that patients receive.

Just before lockdown was implemented we asked our Community Panel (a group of people who volunteer to complete surveys) about their experiences and views on volunteering. Of the respondents, 30% of people told us a lack of time was the main challenge or barrier to them volunteering. Has the current pandemic changed people's views of what volunteering is, and would more now consider small acts as volunteering? You can read more about our findings [HERE](#) and keep a look out for the results of our current survey, which will be testing these questions with the panel.

If you are looking for more information in your local area on volunteer organisations or opportunities please click [HERE](#).

## 2/ Updated important information about the coronavirus (COVID-19)

[For updates on specific areas affected by the coronavirus or on local response to the pandemic, check the news section of the website.](#)

The main **symptoms of coronavirus** are:

- high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

Most people with coronavirus have at least one of these symptoms. Find more information [here](#).

**What to do if you need medical help** - If you need medical help for any reason, do not go to places like a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital. If you have symptoms of coronavirus, use the [111 coronavirus service](#).

If you need help or advice not related to coronavirus:



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- for health information and advice, use the [NHS website](#) or your GP surgery website
- for urgent medical help, use the [NHS 111 online service](#) – only call 111 if you're unable to get help online
- for life-threatening emergencies, call 999 for an ambulance

Read more advice about [getting medical help at home](#).

**Self-isolation** - If you or anyone in your household is displaying coronavirus symptoms, or has tested positive for the virus, it is important that all members of the household self-isolate. This is to ensure that you do not infect anybody outside your household. You can find more information [here](#).

## Do

- stay at least 2 metres (3 steps) away from anyone you do not live with when outside your home
- wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- wash your hands as soon as you get home
- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards
- wear something that covers your nose and mouth when it's hard to stay away from people, such as in shops or on public transport

## Don't

- touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean

You can find more information and advice on social distancing [here](#), including how to access NHS services if you have, or think you have, coronavirus.

### 3/ **Ready for pregnancy**

A campaign has been launched to encourage women across East Berkshire, Surrey Heath and North East Hampshire and Farnham to get fit and healthy before they try for a baby.

Launched on June 1, #ReadyforPregnancy aims to raise awareness of how women's health when they get pregnant affects them and their baby not only throughout their pregnancy, but also at birth.

Running across our local authorities, NHS organisations and local support groups, the campaign will focus on a different aspect of health each month.

Consultant Gynaecologist & Obstetrician, Dr Anne Deans, who is also the Chief of Service Obstetrics and Gynaecology for Frimley Health, said: "There is a clear link between a mother's health before pregnancy, the risks she is exposed to or exposes herself to, and her baby's health. We know that healthy women have fewer complications in pregnancy are more likely to have healthy babies, who grow into healthy children. Partners also have a role to play by staying healthy."





“We’re excited to be launching #ReadyforPregnancy, which will help raise awareness of things that women can do before conception to improve fertility, pregnancy health and their babies future health.



The campaign has been created with the help of local women and families via Maternity Voices Partnership, an independent NHS advisory group run by local women that works with staff at hospital maternity departments, and other bodies such as Healthwatch, to ensure the service is tailored to local need by listening to families’ feedback.

Emma Taylor, representing Maternity Voices Partnerships in the Thames Valley area and who represents women and families on the national Maternity Transformation Programme, said: “We are really excited about this campaign to raise awareness of the importance of becoming healthy before trying to have a baby. It’s so important that women have all the information they need to make their own informed choices before and during pregnancy, and this campaign will help them to make small changes that will make big differences to both them and their baby.”

In addition to the monthly focuses, the campaign will promote the ‘Planning for pregnancy’ online tool developed by Tommy’s charity to give women/couples all they need to know about how to improve the health of their future pregnancy and child.

The campaign will run on social media. Follow [twitter.com/FrimleyHC](https://twitter.com/FrimleyHC) or [www.facebook.com/FrimleyHealthandCare](https://www.facebook.com/FrimleyHealthandCare). For more information, [click here](#).

#### 4/ **Changes to primary care services**

Most GP practices now have the ability to have video and on-line appointments with patients, after a programme to introduce the technology was accelerated in response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

As part of the Long Term Plan for the NHS, NHS England and NHS Improvement’s [Digital First programme](#) was established to make use of technology to provide all patients with access to “digital first primary care”. The rollout of video consultation in response to coronavirus has allowed patients to easily access advice, support and treatment they need using digital and online tools. This means patients can now book and cancel appointments, have a consultation with a healthcare professional, receive a referral and obtain a prescription.

Changes that have been taking place across GP practices within Frimley Health and Care, and their work with other services, were featured by the BBC recently. The

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changes reflect what GP services nationwide have been doing in order to be able to continue to support their patients while also protecting them and practice staff.

The news crew from BBC South Today visited a local surgery to speak with one of its doctors, Dr Edward Wernick, about how primary care had changed to meet the Covid-19 challenge. Dr Wernick explained the adaptations that had been made, physically and systemically, to enable him and his colleagues to continue to deliver services to their patients while keeping patients and staff safe.

He and fellow GPs, Practice Nurses and other primary care clinicians have dramatically increased their use of technology - online, phone and video consultations - to 'see' patients while complying with the necessary social distancing restrictions. Also featured was Dr John Rose, a retired GP who had returned to practice, like many others nationwide, and was helping by using his medical experience to support community hospital patients.

Lucy Abbott, a Consultant Geriatrician at Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust, described how the support of Dr Rose and others at the community level had enabled her in turn to support the acute hospital Covid-19 effort. Another GP, Dr James Hubbard, was shown at his home, where he is shielding yet still able to support patients through the use of technology.



[You can see more on the report, including part of the broadcast, here.](#)

Video consultations are just a part of the digital offer available to patients. Patients can also use online consultations to ask questions, report symptoms and upload photos securely online and their GP practice can respond by phone or email or, in some cases, arrange a video consultation if the GP feels it is needed.

## 5/ **Communications - Are you following Frimley Health and Care social media accounts?**

Can't wait for our briefings to hit your inbox? Stay up to date with our latest information by following us on social media...

Frimley Health and Care website: [www.frimleyhealthandcare.org.uk/](http://www.frimleyhealthandcare.org.uk/)

Twitter - @FrimleyHC [twitter.com/FrimleyHC](https://twitter.com/FrimleyHC)

Facebook – Frimley Health and Care Integrated Care System

<https://www.facebook.com/FrimleyHealthandCare>

