

## Health and Wellbeing Advisor

Health and Wellbeing Advisors offer an NHS Service called Social Prescribing which is part of the NHS Long-Term Plan to make personalised care prevalent across the health and care system.

Personalised Care means people have options and control over the way their care is delivered, based on 'what matters' to them and their individual strengths and needs. It provides a positive shift in power and decision-making that enables patients to feel informed, have a voice, be heard and be connected to each other and their communities.

Usually Social Prescribing can help patients connect to community groups, agencies and charities who will be able to offer support in making positive changes towards personalised goals.

Westrop Medical Practice is working with current guidance and taking the relevant precautions we need to keep people safe, currently we can offer telephone support if you are anxious about lockdown and shielding restrictions being lifted, or feel that you may need some additional support to help you make a plan for these uncertain times.

**This service is free and available to anyone.**

If you feel you or someone you know would benefit from speaking to a Health and Wellbeing Advisor please call Sophie Wilkins on **07307436443**, or email **swiccg.westrophealthandwellbeing@nhs.net**

Health and Wellbeing Advisor **are not** medically trained, and therefore cannot give any advice regarding symptoms, diagnoses, medications or results.

**Sophie Wilkins—Health and Wellbeing Advisor**  
**Westrop Surgery**



## A Guide for Carers during Coronavirus and the easing of Lockdown:

Details of what support is available to you and those that you care for.



**Sophie Wilkins**  
**Health and Wellbeing Advisor**  
**Westrop Medical Practice**



## Introduction

Dear Reader,

I hope you find this booklet useful. I know these uncertain times can be worrying for you and those you care for. I want to assure you that the GP Surgeries and all the staff in the health services are doing the best we can to support you and keep everyone as safe as possible.

In order to try and help reduce your concerns and stress during this time this booklet has been designed with the help of a registered carer, to provide you with a resource that provides information and advice on the support available to you.

We hope you will find this booklet a useful resource.

We also want to tell you about our Social Prescribing service. During this time our Health and Wellbeing Advisor is available to help you find the support to ensure you are able to keep yourself and the people you care for safe.

Our Health and Wellbeing Advisor can help find support to:

- Help you find someone to do your food shopping.
- Help you find a way to get your prescriptions.
- Have a chat with over the phone if you are feeling anxious or lonely.

If you would like some support please call Sophie Wilkins on **07307436443**, or email

**[iccg.westrophealthandwellbeing@nhs.net](mailto:iccg.westrophealthandwellbeing@nhs.net)**



## Taking Care of Your Mental Health

### Meditation Exercises

Meditation is a really useful to spend your time and to help reduce stress or anxiety and to promote emotional health.

There are a number of helpful apps you can download onto your phone such as CALM and Headspace. Alternatively there a number guided meditation videos on YouTube you can access for free.

Within this booklet there are a few basic breathing and meditation exercises that you may also find useful.



### Breathing Exercises

1. Inhale slowly and deeply through your nose. Keep your shoulders relaxed. Your abdomen should expand, and your chest should rise very little.
2. Exhale slowly through your mouth. As you blow air out, purse your lips slightly, but keep your jaw relaxed. You may hear a soft "whooshing" sound as you exhale.

## Taking Care of Your Mental Health

It's really important during such a stressful time that we prioritise our mental health. A lot of people as we begin to ease out of lockdown will be very nervous about the changes and will find getting back into the world upsetting and worrying. There is no right or wrong way to feel at all during this strange time. One way that you can take care of your mental health is to practice some basic breathing exercises.

**This calming breathing technique for stress, anxiety and panic takes just a few minutes and can be done anywhere.**

You will get the most benefit if you do it regularly, as part of your daily routine. You can do it standing up, sitting in a chair that supports your back, or lying on a bed or yoga mat on the floor.

Make yourself as comfortable as you can. If you can, loosen any clothes that restrict your breathing. If you're lying down, place your arms a little bit away from your sides, with the palms up. Let your legs be straight, or bend your knees so your feet are flat on the floor.

If you're sitting, place your arms on the chair arms.

If you're sitting or standing, place both feet flat on the ground. Whatever position you're in, place your feet roughly hip-width apart.



- Let your breath flow as deep down into your belly as is comfortable, without forcing it.
- Try breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth.
- Breathe in gently and regularly. Some people find it helpful to count steadily from 1 to 5. You may not be able to reach 5 at first.
- Then, without pausing or holding your breath, let it flow out gently, counting from 1 to 5 again, if you find this helpful.
- Keep doing this for 3 to 5 minutes.

## Face covering guidance

One of the main concerns of our carer, who helped to design this booklet, was how the person they cares for would cope with face covering.

As we start to spend more time outside of our houses, the Government has implemented a new law. As of 15th June it is mandatory for most people to wear a face covering while using public transport or when in a healthcare setting. AgeUK has created a fantastic guide around face covering. Below is an extract of their guide but for more information please visit [ageuk.com](https://www.ageuk.com).

### What is a suitable face covering?

A face covering is anything that covers your mouth and nose while allowing you to breathe comfortably. It can be as simple as a scarf or bandana that ties behind your head. The government advises **against** using a surgical mask or high grade personal protective equipment as simple face coverings are sufficient for people in their day-to-day activities, and they want to ensure there is enough stock available for professionals such as health and care workers who need them.

### How many face coverings do I need?

It's important to think about how regularly you may need to use public transport, or visit a healthcare setting and how much of your day will be spent needing to wear a face covering.

For example, if you need to get public transport to work – you will need to ensure you have at least one face covering for each journey. If you were using public transport to visit a hospital, you would need at least three.

If you had a long day or journey ahead of you, it would be a good idea to have more than one face covering for each journey so that you can replace it when it begins to get damp.

## When is it mandatory to wear a face covering?



The only places where it is currently mandatory to wear a face covering is when you are using public transport and when in hospital for an outpatient's appointment, or while visiting a loved one. You must wear it at all times. These rules do not apply to everyone and you do not need to wear a face covering if you or the person you care for:

- Find it difficult to put on, wear or remove a face covering because of a physical or mental illness or impairment, or disability
- Find putting on, wearing or removing a face covering will cause you severe distress
- Are travelling with or providing assistance to someone who relies on lip reading to communicate
- Are using public transport to avoid harm or injury, or the risk of harm or injury, to yourself or others
- Are using public transport to avoid injury, or to escape a risk of harm, and you do not have a face covering with you
- Need to eat or drink during the journey
- Need to take medication during the journey

## Online Shopping

### Sainsbury's

Sainsbury's has set up a vulnerable persons care line to help those who need to access online shopping. Please call: 0800 052 5500.

### Tesco

Tesco have a customer service line where you may be able to request slots for online shopping for the vulnerable person you care for. Call: 0800 505555 or email: [customer.services@tesco.co.uk](mailto:customer.services@tesco.co.uk)

### Morrisons

Morrisons are offering a range of food boxes these range from £35 to £55 and come in a variety of different forms. [www.morrisons.com/food-boxes/boxes](http://www.morrisons.com/food-boxes/boxes)

Morrisons are also offering a range of 70 items available to order on the mobile app Deliveroo.

### ASDA

Asda are also offering a food box to order. The box is called the cupboard filler and offers a range of canned food, pasta, bread and other cupboard essentials The box is priced at £25. [foodboxes.asda.com/food-boxes/the-cupboard-filler-box/](http://foodboxes.asda.com/food-boxes/the-cupboard-filler-box/)

## Guidance on shielding and protecting people who are clinically extremely vulnerable from COVID-19

If you or the person who care for has been told shield during COVID you should have now received a letter from the government detailing the updated guidance for those who were shielding.

**From 6 July**, the government will be advising: You are allowed to meet in a group of up to 6 people outdoors, including people from different households, while maintaining strict social distancing.

You no longer need to observe social distancing with other members of your household. You may from this date also form a 'support bubble' with one other household. All those in a support bubble will be able to spend time together inside each other's homes, including overnight, without needing to socially distance

**From 1 August** the government will be advising that shielding will be paused. From this date, the government is advising you to adopt strict social distancing rather than full shielding measures. Strict social distancing means you may wish to go out to more places and see more people but you should take particular care to minimise contact with others outside your household or support bubble.

This means that from 1 August you can go to work, if you cannot work from home, as long as the business is COVID-safe. Children who are clinically extremely vulnerable can return to their education settings if they are eligible and in line with their peers. Where possible children should practise frequent hand washing and social distancing. You can go outside to buy food, to places of worship and for exercise but you should maintain strict social distancing. You should remain cautious as you are still at risk of severe illness if you catch coronavirus, so the advice is to stay at home where possible and, if you do go out, follow strict social distancing.

**The information in this booklet was correct at time of writing. It may change or be updated so make sure you check online or on the news if you have any concerns.**

## How do I alert someone to the reason why I am not wearing a face covering?

If you or the person you care for aren't able to wear a face covering that is allowed and government guidance states this, as above. You may be asked by public transport or hospital staff about why you are not wearing one, and before you travel it might be a good idea to think about how you can communicate this. There is no requirement to provide medical evidence of your reason for not wearing a face covering.

It might be a good idea to write or print out a note that you can show to someone which tells them why you aren't wearing a face covering. Some transport operators have print out journey assistance cards on their websites that people can use to show operators that they are unable to wear a face covering. All companies will accept any exemption card or note.

The Hidden Disabilities programme which supports people living with non-visible disabilities to discreetly indicate that they may need additional support has produced a 'Face Covering Exempt' card which is available to purchase online for 55p and could be used to show transport and hospital staff. You can find these cards on the: [www.hiddendisabilitiesstore.com](http://www.hiddendisabilitiesstore.com)



Ultimately, it is up to you to decide whether you wish to travel with a card or something similar to indicate your reason for not wearing a face covering. There is no requirement for you to carry one.



## Creating an Emergency Plan



We advise all carers to create an emergency plan – for you and all those you look after. Having a plan in place can help ease your worries if you are not able to care for those you look after at any point in the future. This is especially important during the Coronavirus Pandemic as if you need to self-isolate for 14 days you may not be able to provide care for the person you look after.

In order to create an emergency plan that meets your needs, we recommend you consider bringing together these details:

- details of the name, address and contact details of the person you look after
- who you and the person you look after would like to be contacted in an emergency – this might include friends, family or professionals
- details of any medication the person you look after is taking and where it is stored
- details of any ongoing treatment they need
- noting details of any allergies
- details of their GP and pharmacy
- any ongoing treatment they need
- any care and support services they receive
- any continence products needed and who supplies them
- any mobility challenges and mobility aids such as a wheelchair or hoist
- anything behavioural others need to be aware of.

Having this important information in one place could be of immense support and help when needed at a critical time, when time might be limited. Talk about the plan with the person you care for, if possible, and also with those you would like to be named emergency contacts.

It would also be useful to share it with trusted family members or friends and healthcare professionals. Give people a copy of the plan – or let them know where they can find it and make sure the information is regularly updated.

For more information on Emergency Care planning please visit [www.carersuk.org/search/planning-for-emergencies](http://www.carersuk.org/search/planning-for-emergencies)

## What Support is available for me?

### The Live Well Hub

The Live Well Hub are able to offer help getting food packages, medication as well as providing advice and guidance with any concerns you have around COVID-19. Call them on 01793 445500.

### GP Surgery

At your GP surgery you will be put in touch with me the Health and Wellbeing Advisor. My name is Caitlin and I will be able to offer you support in getting supplies and additional support as needed.

### Updates

A Whatsapp service can allow you to find out the latest updates around COVID-19. Text 'Hi' in a Whatsapp message to the coronavirus info number: 07860 064 422.

### Swindon Carers Centre

Call : 01793 531133 Email: [carers@swindoncarers.org.uk](mailto:carers@swindoncarers.org.uk)  
[www.swindoncarers.org.uk/adult-carers/](http://www.swindoncarers.org.uk/adult-carers/)

### Resources for people with Learning Disabilities

Mencap has a number of excellent resources aimed at helping to explain a number of topics around coronavirus such as social distancing and self isolating. All of there information is in easy read format to ensure it is accessible for all learning abilities. Please visit [www.mencap.org.uk/](http://www.mencap.org.uk/) to access these resources. Printed leaflets can be provided upon request.

### Resources for people with Dementia

The Alzheimer's society website advice and tips on how to support and explain to someone with Dementia Coronavirus. Such as how to help someone with Dementia socially distance. Please visit [www.alzheimers.org.uk/](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk/) for more information. Printed leaflets can be provided upon request.