

Update on Visiting Your Loved Ones

As I am sure you are aware, Covid-19 infections are currently increasing, and, as the colder weather approaches, it is quite possible that they could rise still further. I want to be sure that, at Bramley Care, we are doing our utmost for our residents and our staff, and that visits to our homes are handled as safely as possible. We fully appreciate that human contact is incredibly important for the wellbeing of our residents, but that keeping them safe from Covid-19 is also vital.

There has been a lot of media attention around visiting in care homes recently and how the guidance that was put in place on 22nd July 2020 has maybe not taken into account the human rights of your loved ones. The link below outlines the current government guidelines:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/visiting-care-homes-during-coronavirus/update-on-policies-for-visiting-arrangements-in-care-homes>

These guidelines are aimed at reducing the risk of coronavirus transmission and at preventing future outbreaks, and at Bramley Care we fully understand that we must respect and follow them. As I am sure you appreciate, our residents are amongst the most vulnerable in our society from this devastating viral infection and will remain so for the foreseeable future.

Throughout the summer, our new garden meeting rooms have been a great success in supporting visits in a safe, secure and comfortable way, and we aim to continue with these visits in the same way throughout the winter. The guidelines for these visits remain in place as follows:

- Visitors will need to phone ahead to book an appointment. We can only allow visitors from the same household to visit at the same time.
- The garden meeting rooms will be cleaned between each visit to reduce the likelihood of cross contamination.
- Visitors will be asked to confirm that they have been well, and that they have not been in contact with anyone with symptoms of the Coronavirus during the last 14 days.
- When visiting, you will need to come to the front door of either Bramley House or The Old Rectory and ring the bell. Your temperature will be taken and you will then be directed to the garden gate, which will lead you directly to the garden meeting room. Your loved one will be brought out to the garden meeting room and you will be able to spend quality time with them in private.
- Microphones and speakers are fitted so that you can communicate easily through the glass screen.
- The heating is always set to a comfortable temperature.
- There is a call bell for your use if you require the attention of a staff member.
- Staff will escort your loved one back into the home safely, once the visit is over.
- Refreshments are available for you to help yourself to in the garden meeting rooms.

Although these visits have been working wonderfully well, there may be times when your loved one is not well enough to come to the garden meeting room or maybe they just might not want to go outside as the cold weather approaches. In these cases, we will do our utmost to accommodate your visit safely within the care homes. In such events the following guidance must be followed:

- Visitors will need to phone ahead to book an appointment.
- We can only permit one visitor per resident, due to social distancing rules.
- The visitor will be asked to confirm that they have been well, and that they have not been in contact with anyone with symptoms of the Coronavirus during the last 14 days.

- When visiting, you will need to come to the front door of either Bramley House or The Old Rectory and ring the bell, your temperature will then be taken and you will be advised to put on the personal protective equipment provided to you. This will include face mask, disposable apron and disposable gloves.
- You will then be escorted to your loved one's private room where a seat will be ready for you. You will be able to spend quality time with them in private.
- During your visit you should remain at a safe distance and respect social distancing guidelines.
- There is a call bell for your use if you require the attention of a staff member.
- At the end of your visit, a staff member will guide you back to the front door where you will be able to dispose of your PPE and sanitize your hands.

I sincerely hope that you appreciate the dilemma that this hideous pandemic has placed us in at Bramley Care. On the one hand, having such restrictions on friends and relatives visiting their loved ones in our homes goes against everything we believe to be right, but, on the other hand, it is vital that we keep our residents safe from infection. Many of our residents live with dementia or frailty as well as terminal illnesses and they depend on us to ensure that their needs are met and that we make the right choices on their behalf. Our aim remains to support all of our residents to the very best of our abilities and to respect their needs and wishes at all times.

We will continue to provide regular updates on our Facebook page and on our website and encourage you to contact your loved ones using Skype or Zoom or by telephone.

I would like to thank you for your continued support in these extremely challenging times.

Yours sincerely

Richard Wagner

Director