



## COVID-19 VISITOR PROTOCOL

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Version	Date	Author	Review Details
4	09.03.21	Lindsay Fraser	Substantial update relates to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion of new Scottish Government guidance 'Open with Care: Resuming meaningful contact with care home residents'</li> <li>• Reference to visitor testing</li> <li>• Inclusion of essential visits</li> <li>• Location of indoor visits</li> </ul>
3	14.01.21	Miles Davies	Process diagram added for COVID Decision Panel
2	17.11.20	Lindsay Fraser	Extensive updates following new Scottish Government guidance
1	14.09.20	Lindsay Fraser	Added to DMS

Associated Documents		
Ref	Document Type	Title
FRM-OP-185	Form	Living My Life Activity Plan
FRM-HS-03	Form	General Risk Assessment
FRM-HS-32	Form	Risk Profiling and Assessment for People We Support
FRM-HS-339	Form	COVID-19 Services Visitor Checklist

### PRO-HS-111 COVID-19 Visitor Protocols



## Contents

Introduction .....	3
Visiting Decisions.....	4
Outdoor Visits .....	5
Indoor Visits .....	5
Scottish Government checklist for resuming indoor visiting .....	7
Prior to visiting .....	8
Measures to Support Safe Visiting.....	8
Outdoor Visits.....	8
Indoor Visits .....	9
Inspire Service Models.....	11
Care Home and Housing Support/Care at Home Services .....	11
Visiting Support Services .....	11
Indoor Visits to the Homes of Family/Friends .....	11
Risk Assessment for visiting homes of family/friends.....	12
Alternative Meeting Arrangements.....	12
Supporting Safe Visiting.....	13
Register of Visits.....	14
Updates to Visiting Protocols .....	15



## **Introduction**

At Inspire maintaining the safety and wellbeing of the people we support and our staff has been our fundamental concern since the start of the Coronavirus pandemic. However, as we move through the route map to recovery, it is important that we recognise that it is important to further support wellbeing by enabling and maximizing opportunities for safe and meaningful social contact for the people we support and their families and friends.

In this respect our approach is aligned to Scottish Government guidance: **Open with Care: resuming meaningful contact with care home residents (24.2.21)**

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-COVID-19-adult-care-homes-visiting-guidance/>

The guidance states that: As the evidence continues to evolve about how to deal with the virus, so have our safeguards and protections. Alongside risk based and proportionate infection prevention and control, recognised as a core approach that must be embedded in all our practice (Scottish Government, November 2020), multiple levels of wider protections are now in place. These include:

- adequate, available and properly used personal protective equipment (PPE) for care home staff and visitors;
- testing of residents prior to hospital discharge and admission to care homes;
- routine testing for all care home staff and visiting professionals;
- care home-based testing for all designated visitors;
- COVID-19 vaccination of care home residents and staff; and
- support from local oversight arrangements, public health and primary care.

With these levels of protection now in place, maintained and rigorously sustained, we can actively address the harms caused from prolonged isolation and absence of meaningful contact between residents and loved ones. So it is time to return to safe, managed indoor visiting so that everyone living in adult care homes, no matter their age, health, or otherwise, can have meaningful contact with their families and loved ones for the remainder of the pandemic and beyond - provided it is safe to do so.



## **Visiting Decisions**

Safe and meaningful visits are reliant upon our services and families working in partnership. Assessment and decision making must be based upon Scottish Government guidance and is applicable to all service models with the exception of visiting support services.

Visits can only be made at pre-arranged times jointly agreed between the family member or friend, the person we support (where applicable) and the manager/staff at the service. This arrangement is in place to ensure Inspire manage the number of people visiting the service at any one time in order to protect the people we support and staff. Arrangements may be subject to change, for example, in the event of a case of COVID-19 the service may need to rapidly impose visiting restrictions. Where this needs to happen, consideration and review of the continued necessity of restrictions will take place in line with the wider local measures for reviewing community transmission and any temporary, additional local measures. Local Health Protection Teams will guide and advise on this.

At all times Inspire is adhering to Scottish Government guidelines relating to visiting. Our protocols and associated documents including risk assessments will be subject to review in accordance with Scottish Government guidelines revisions. This could include the cessation of visiting if there is a spike in the virus in the location or a suspected/confirmed case/outbreak in the service, extending number of visitors or length of time, dependent upon a reduction in the virus 'R' (reproduction) number.

There is an expectation that visiting will increase over time. This adapted version of an NHS Inform table shows how contact between people we support and loved ones will increase over time.

	<b>Seeing loved ones inside</b>	<b>Seeing loved ones outside</b>
Initially	Up to two designated visitors per week visiting one at a time (or two visits per week) at all Levels	Meeting outdoors Leaving the care setting
Next	Increasing frequency of designated visitor visits, towards daily visits	Meeting outdoors Leaving the care home
Then	Increasing number of designated visitors per visit	Overnight stays

The frequency and duration of contact should increase gradually. The advice is illustrative rather than firm, so care settings can be flexible.



## Outdoor Visits

Meeting outdoors is regarded by health experts as being less risky than meeting indoors, this is due to the increased ability of virus particles to disperse in the air. In this respect it is recommended by Inspire that if families and people we support continue to be satisfied with this option and want to continue to meet in this way then, meetings take place in an outdoor, public space, such as a park, or in exceptional circumstances within a relative's private garden after a robust individual and service risk assessment has been carried out.

Only where it has been assessed that neither of these options are viable will we consider the possibility of such a meeting taking place outdoors in the garden of an Inspire service. This is a safety measure to protect the person being visited, the other people we support in the service (where applicable) and our staff.

## Indoor Visits

Inspire appreciates how challenging the lack of contact has been during the pandemic for people we support and their loved ones. Therefore where visiting indoors is deemed to be the most suitable option for contact to be enabled Inspire are committed to facilitating visits in the safest way possible. Indoor visits require rigorous management plans to ensure safety. This poses a particular challenge in our group living services where the service is not only the home of the person being visited but also the home of others for whom the visit may impact upon, for example, in relation to their freedom to move unrestricted in the communal areas of their home. In this respect to reduce risks relating to infection prevention and control and the potential for restrictions on the movements of others indoor visits must be carried out in people we support's bedrooms or individual flats as applicable. For indoor visits to occur in care homes, Scottish Government guidance requires that the service is participating in a weekly staff testing programme and given the introduction of testing for housing support/care at home services testing is a pre-requisite for visiting in this model also.

Decisions relating to the suitability of indoor visiting as opposed to an outdoors option may relate to considerations around choice, potential detriment to wellbeing, understanding and the frailty of the individuals involved in the visit and their ability to meet outdoors. .

An indoor visit can only be undertaken by a **designated** visitor. This could be a relative, next of kin, welfare guardian or a friend but would be the main link to the service for the person and where a person has capacity the person whom they chose as a visitor. Each person can have up to two designated visitors weekly with visits carried out one at a time. Children under 16 are **not** recommended as a designated visitor for routine indoor visiting, however



the Scottish Government does refer to discretion being applied should improvements in transmission rates continue. An **essential** visit where it is imperative that a friend or relative is supported to see their loved one will always be facilitated. An example of an essential visit is where end of life care is being provided or there is a clear indication of significant distress and negative impact on mental wellbeing due to a person we support being separated from their loved one. Scottish Government guidance: 'Open with Care: resuming meaningful contact with care home residents' provides further explanation in relation to essential visits.

All indoor visits require visitors, prior to each visit to complete *FRM-HS-339 COVID-19 Service Visitor Checklist* which requires the visitor to confirm that they have no coronavirus related health issues which would prevent the visit taking place.

Time limits for visits are not defined this is to enable people we support, families and services to work together to agree contact that accommodates individuals' needs and circumstances as well as practical issues to safely receiving visitors to all people we supported within a service.

Each person we support should have an individualised visiting plan within their Support Plan, this should be developed as an *FRM-OP-185 Living My Life Activity Plan*. In addition the person we support's *FRM-HS-32 Risk Profiling and Assessment for People We Support* must be completed with particular attention to the section on Indoor Visiting Inspire Services. Both documents must be shared and agreed with designated visitors prior to the visit.

*FRM-HS-03 General Risk Assessment* will also require to include assessments relating to visiting where this is applicable to the people we support living in the service.

Assessment decisions relating to indoor visits are based upon the Scottish Governments 'Conditions for resuming indoor visiting checklist.

## Scottish Government checklist for resuming indoor visiting

### Checklist: Conditions for resuming indoor visiting

 <b>1</b> <b>No Outbreak</b>	No active outbreak in the home or outbreak declared over and Health Protection Team sign off	<input type="checkbox"/>
 <b>2</b> <b>IPC Compliance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Compliance with Infection Prevention Control measures</li> <li>▪ Physical distancing in place</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 <b>3</b> <b>PPE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Adequate supplies of Personal Protective Equipment in place</li> <li>▪ Visitors supervised for donning and doffing</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 <b>4</b> <b>Visitor Screening</b>	Exclusion of visitors with COVID symptoms	<input type="checkbox"/>
 <b>5</b> <b>Visitor Testing</b>	Lateral Flow Device testing of asymptomatic designated visitors	<input type="checkbox"/>
 <b>6</b> <b>Staff Testing</b>	Testing of staff as recommended	<input type="checkbox"/>
 <b>7</b> <b>Designated Visitors Agreed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Agreed between care home and resident/proxy</li> <li>▪ Individualised visiting care plan agreed</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 <b>8</b> <b>Residents' Vaccination</b>	High level coverage and a robust process to ensure continued coverage of staff and residents	<input type="checkbox"/>
 <b>9</b> <b>Clinical Oversight Team</b>	No concerns about care home quality assurance indicators	<input type="checkbox"/>
 <b>10</b> <b>Directors of Public Health</b>	Local public health oversight and advice on visiting policies	<input type="checkbox"/>

Proceed with visiting 



## **Prior to visiting**

It is critically important for the health and wellbeing of the people we support and our staff that the family member/friend **does not visit** if they are feeling unwell. Notably:

- Have a new or continuous cough
- Have noticed a change in your temperature
- Have noticed a change to your normal senses of taste or smell
- Have been in contact with anyone suspected as having, or who has tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 14 days.
- Have been contacted by test and protect Scotland and asked by public health to self-isolate
- Have had sickness or diarrhoea within the last 48hrs

## **Measures to Support Safe Visiting**

### **Outdoor Visits**

1. Visits can only occur if they are prearranged with managers to allow for the appropriate permission to be in place as well as robust risk assessment.
2. Visits will be cancelled if the visitor, person we support or any others with whom either live have any of the symptoms noted in the **Prior to Visiting section** above.
3. Visitors will be asked to sign *FRM-HS-339 COVID-19 Services Visitor Checklist* within which you will be asked to confirm that you have read this Visiting Protocol.
4. Visitors will be required to wear a face mask supplied by the service. Masks must be disposed of in the bin provided. In some instances, visitors may be asked to put on other Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Staff will be show visitors you how to put any PPE on and more importantly how to take PPE off safely, thereby reducing any infection risk.
5. Appreciating that recommendations for social distancing remain in place for the general population, Inspire recognise that there are occasions when touch will be valuable for both people we support and visitors. To support touch to happen safely, visitors should be supported to have regular training and supervision from staff to put on and take off PPE, in line with the national guidance, as well as to ensure other infection prevention and control recommendations are met. If there are queries or

concerns around supporting touch to happen safely, Inspire managers will consult with Public Health Grampian. Where touch is to be a feature of a visit visitors must wear a face mask, apron and gloves and wherever possible people we support should be supported to wear a mask (noting circumstances for exemptions in existing guidance). These arrangements are recommended for both indoor and outdoor visiting.

6. Visitors are able to bring gifts (kept to a minimum unless they are essential), and agree arrangements to do so with the manager ahead of visits. Items such as books and magazines or helium balloons should be wiped by staff before passing them to people we support. Any items that cannot be wiped clean (for example, wrapped presents, clothing, cushions) should be put in a sealed plastic bag for 72 hours by staff, to quarantine items, before removing and passing them to people we support) Visitors bringing in gifts are advised to observe strict hand hygiene measures throughout. For infection prevention and control reasons non-helium balloons or home prepared food or baking should not be exchanged.
7. If a visitor needs to use the toilet Inspire will ask that they use hand sanitiser before entering the house or flat to visit the bathroom, and wash their hands and wipe down any surfaces they have touched with the anti-bacterial wipes provided in the bathroom. Inspire will provide paper towels for hand drying.
8. No blankets will be provided for outdoor visits. If these are required visitors should bring their own freshly laundered blankets.
9. Eating or drinking is not permitted whilst visiting.

### **Indoor Visits**

1. Visitors will be asked, to clean their hands with hand sanitiser which will be provided at the entrance to the service.
2. Visitors will be asked to sign *FRM-HS-339 COVID-19 Services Visitor Checklist* within which you will be asked to confirm that you have read this Visiting Protocol
3. Visitors will be supplied with PPE, a face mask, gloves and apron these are all single use and staff will direct the visitor to where this will be disposed of when they leave. Staff will also show visitors how to put PPE on safely and most importantly how to remove safely, thereby reducing the infection risk. Visitors must dispose of these items in the bin provided and perform hand hygiene using the alcohol-based hand sanitising gel immediately on PPE removal.



4. Visitors will be asked to carry out a Lateral Flow Device Test. If the test is negative the visit can proceed. If positive the visitor is asked to return home and book a PCR test for confirmation of this result through the NHS site.
5. Appreciating that recommendations for social distancing remain in place for the general population, Inspire recognise that there are occasions when touch will be valuable for both people we support and visitors. To support touch to happen safely, visitors should be supported to have regular training and supervision from staff to put on and take off PPE, in line with the national guidance, as well as to ensure other infection prevention and control recommendations are met. If there are queries or concerns around supporting touch to happen safely, Inspire managers will consult with Public Health Grampian. Where touch is to be a feature of a visit visitors must wear a face mask, apron and gloves and wherever possible people we support should be supported to wear a mask (noting circumstances for exemptions in existing guidance). These arrangements are recommended for both indoor and outdoor visiting.
6. Measures should be in place to ensure visitors' stringent handwashing and safe disposal of PPE on exiting the service.
7. Visitors are able to bring gifts (kept to a minimum unless they are essential), and agree arrangements to do so with the manager ahead of visits. Items such as books and magazines or helium balloons should be wiped by staff before passing them to residents. Any items that cannot be wiped clean (for example, wrapped presents, clothing, cushions) should be put in a sealed plastic bag for 72 hours by staff, to quarantine items, before removing and passing them to people we support) Visitors bringing in gifts are advised to observe strict hand hygiene measures throughout. For infections prevention and control reasons non-helium balloons or home prepared food or baking should not be exchanged.
8. Staff will accompany visitors to the designated visiting area (person we support's bedroom or individual flat) and where it is risk assessed to be necessary staff will be present with the visitor and the person we support during the meeting to advise on infection control measures and provide support if needed.
9. Eating or drinking is not permitted whilst visiting.



10. Staff will accompany visitors as they leave the visiting area with alcohol-based hand sanitising gel provided to clean visitor's hands before leaving.

## **Inspire Service Models**

The main guidance documents pertaining to Inspires service models are the following Scottish Government publications:

- Open with Care: resuming meaningful contact with care home residents (24.2.21)
- COVID 19: Information and Guidance for Care Home Settings (Adults and Older People) Applies to Inspire care home services.
- COVID 19: Information and Guidance for Social, Community and Residential Care Settings. Applies to Inspire Housing Support/Care at Home Services
- COVID 19: Guidance for Domiciliary Care. Applies to Inspire Housing Support/Care at Home services where visiting support is provided (Inspire Community Living Project (CLP))

## **Care Home and Housing Support/Care at Home Services**

Public Health Grampian have agreed that there is a parity in the visiting arrangements across all of Inspires residential service models. This includes the suspension of visiting where there are any positive cases relating to staff members or people we support for **14 days** since the last exposure (in the case of a staff member this is their last working day). Where visiting is suspended Public Health advice should be sought regarding the continuation of outdoor visiting to ensure all aspects of infection prevention and control have been attended to.

## **Visiting Support Services**

People living in these services are obliged to adhere to Scottish Government advice pertaining to the general population in relation to visiting and meeting with others. For people in receipt of visiting support within an Inspire residential complex (CLP- St James's Court) refer to the section relating to residential complexes.

## **Indoor Visits to the Homes of Family/Friends**

COVID-19: Information and Guidance for Social, Community and Residential Care Settings applicable to Inspire Housing Support/Care at Home Services makes provision for the



gradual return of individuals visiting family and friends in their homes including overnight as long as Scottish Government advice on staying safe and protecting others is followed. A risk assessment and consideration on current travel guidance for the area is required and it is important to ensure that the individual will not be visiting a household where a household member has COVID-19 symptoms or diagnosed with COVID-19 (whether they have symptoms or not)

Indoor visits by people we support to the homes of family/friends require rigorous management planning and associated risk assessments to ensure safety. Due to the potential for infection spread, this poses a particular challenge in our services where people we support are returning to a group, shared living household.

Indoor visits to the homes of family/friends will be subject to the agreement of Inspire and the Health and Social Care professionals involved with the individual as well as external sign-off from Public Health Grampian. This option is not deemed suitable in 'lockdown' circumstances.

### **Risk Assessment for visiting homes of family/friends**

An individualised risk assessment will be compiled by the Support Manager in partnership with the family member/friend to whom the visit applies and with the agreement of other health and social care professionals involved. Depending on support arrangements a member of staff may not always be risk assessed as required to be present. The visit will be subject to the authorisation of this risk assessment by Public Health Grampian. In facilitating these visits Inspire trusts that family and friends will adhere to the terms of the agreed risk assessment throughout the duration and that should any deviations occur these are raised with us in order that the assessment can be reviewed and revised to support future visits.

### **Alternative Meeting Arrangements**

It may be that the safest and preferred option for a person we support meeting with a family member or friend is at a café when hospitality is legally able to open. Depending on support arrangements a member of staff may not always be risk assessed as required to be present. For a person we support to meet visit a café they must be risk assessed as either being able to understand physical distancing requirements or their mobility is such that there is no issue in relation (e.g. the person we support uses a wheelchair which they are unable to self-propel).



For people we support who are able to undertake a café meeting it may be a safer alternative to an indoor visit in a group living service or care home due to the ability to mitigate contact with other people we support.

Meeting in a café also enables more than one designated visitor i.e. both parents which serves to enhance the wellbeing of the person we support.

When meeting in a café, a large table should be pre-booked to enable maximum social distancing between the person we support and the person they are meeting.

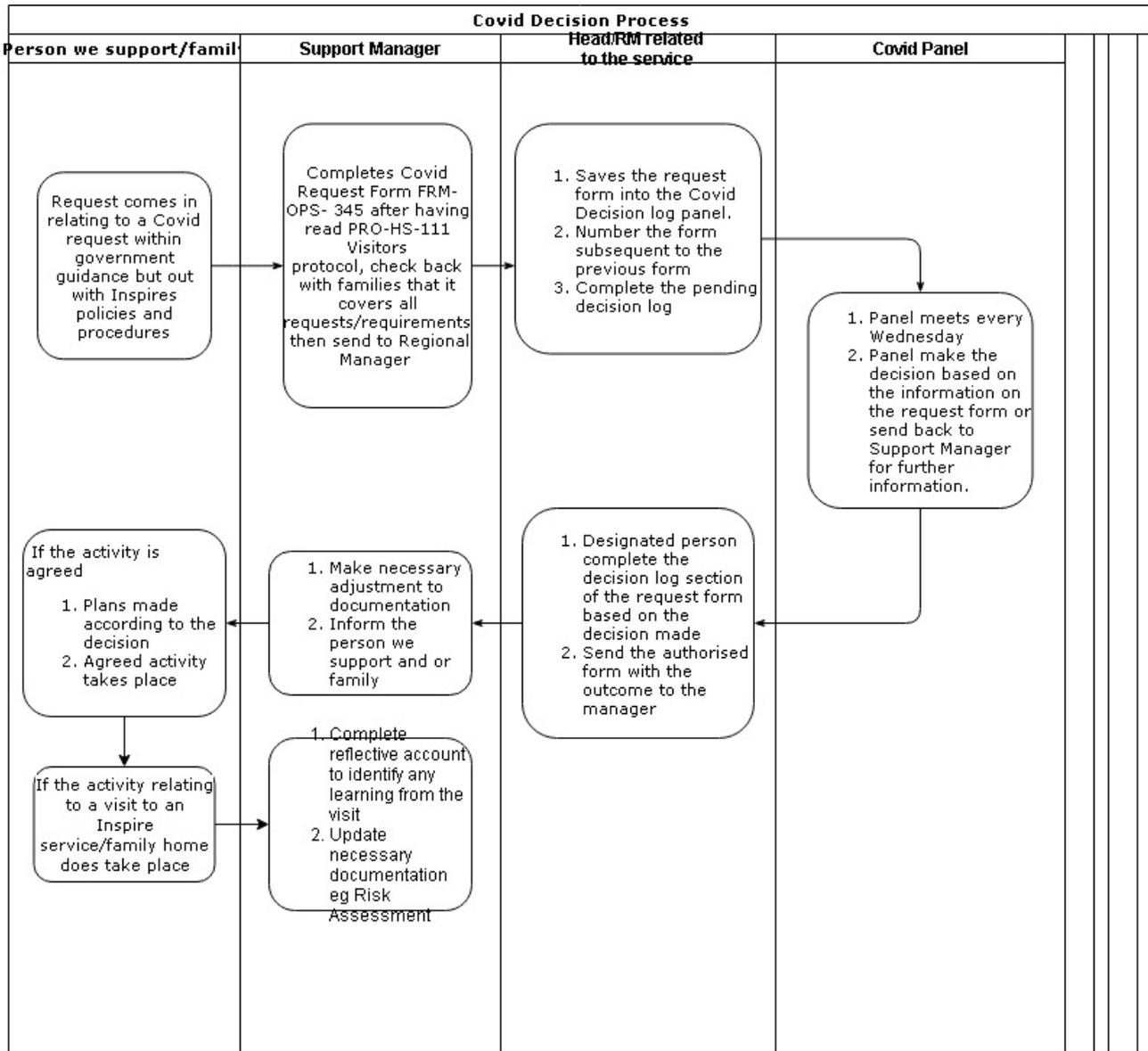
When accompanying a person we support to a café visit a face mask is required to be worn by Inspire staff at all times as per our PPE requirement within the community and no food or drink should be consumed.

### **Supporting Safe Visiting**

Safe visiting in Inspire is supported by our COVID Decision Making Panel which meets weekly comprising of a quorum of 4 members from our Senior Operations Team. With a primary focus on safety the panel aims to make decisions which are person centred, support mental wellbeing and maintain and enhance relationships between the person we support and their family and friends.

This panel consists of a Head of Operations or Head of Quality and Compliance along with other Senior Operational colleagues where the request would be considered balancing the best interests of the person and the impact the decision would have on the health and safety of the individual and others.

The diagram below indicates the steps in the decision process.



There is provision within this panel to escalate decision making both to Public Health Grampian and Inspires Chief Executive and Board of Directors.

## Register of Visits

In order to track indoor and outdoor visits to services Inspire will maintain a register in order that organisational oversight is maintained servicing both to ensure that all services are supporting meaningful contact between people we support and their loved ones and that all checklist conditions regarding indoor visiting have been met.



## **Updates to Visiting Protocols**

Please note this information and associated documentation is subject to change as the Scottish Government and Health Protection Scotland respond to any local developments including implementing additional control measures to reduce the risk of transmission.