VISITORS PROCEDURE

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<https://www.gov.scot/publications/health-social-care-standards-support-life/>* Visitors Checklist and the importance of recording of all visitors to service
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| 2 | 13.112.18 | Sarah Smith | Health and Social Care Standards updated in IntroductionSection on Different Types of Visitors expanded |
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| **Associated Documents** |
| **Ref** | **Document Type** | **Title** |
| FRM-HS-32 | Form  | Risk Profiling and Assessment for People we Support – Sample Indoor Visits with Family / Friends |
| FRM-OP-185 | Form | Living My Life Activity Plan |
| FRM-HS-339 | Form | Visitors Checklist |
|  | Scottish Government guidance  | <https://www.gov.scot/publications/open-care-adult-care-home-visiting-leaflet/><https://www.gov.scot/publications/open-care-adult-care-home-visiting-easy-read/><https://www.publichealthscotland.scot/publications/covid-19-information-and-guidance-for-social-community-and-residential-care-settings/covid-19-information-and-guidance-for-social-community-and-residential-care-settings-version-23/><https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-use-of-face-coverings-in-social-care-settings-including-adult-care-homes/pages/mask-wearing-guidance/><https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-social-care-testing-guidance/><https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested/pages/changes-from-1-may-2022/> |
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|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

**Contents**

[Introduction 4](#_Toc114748132)

[The Law 5](#_Toc114748133)

[The Adults with Incapacity Act (Scotland) 2000 5](#_Toc114748134)

[The Human Rights Act 1998 5](#_Toc114748135)

[Anne’s Law 6](#_Toc114748136)

[People We Support Receiving Visitors 6](#_Toc114748137)

[Visiting Arrangements for Symptomatic or Asymptomatic Visitors 7](#_Toc114748138)

[Symptomatic Visitors 7](#_Toc114748139)

[Visiting someone who is symptomatic or COVID-19 diagnosed (when no outbreak has been declared) 7](#_Toc114748140)

[Visiting someone who is symptomatic or during an outbreak 8](#_Toc114748141)

[Asymptomatic Visitors 9](#_Toc114748142)

[Promoting Successful Visiting 9](#_Toc114748143)

[Visitors Checklist 10](#_Toc114748144)

[Different Types of Visitors 10](#_Toc114748145)

[Visitors with a Specific Role: 10](#_Toc114748146)

[Children Visiting People We Support Homes 11](#_Toc114748147)

[Pets visiting individual’s homes 11](#_Toc114748148)

[Staff receiving personal visitors while on duty 12](#_Toc114748149)

[People we Support Visiting Staff Homes 12](#_Toc114748150)

# Introduction

Inspire expects all staff to maintain a high standard of ethical conduct and professional practice whilst undertaking work activities or having responsibility for the care of the people we support. Inspire aims to offer those we support opportunities for relationships and activities that enhance their quality of life; these include volunteers, befrienders, and people in the community, and this should be encouraged.

We must recognise that professional and personal relationships are different, and it is important that staff appreciate these differences. Having clear parameters is important for staff, the people we support and for the Organisation. It is essential, therefore, that we establish a clear balance between developing relationships and the professional constraints that may occur.

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 adapt to a ‘Living with Covid model’, it is important that we recognise that it is important to further support wellbeing by enabling and maximising opportunities for safe and meaningful social contact for the people we support and their families and friends. There should therefore be no restrictions to the frequency or length of visits or outings unless there is a COVID-19 or other infectious outbreak within the service.

<https://www.publichealthscotland.scot/publications/covid-19-information-and-guidance-for-social-community-and-residential-care-settings/covid-19-information-and-guidance-for-social-community-and-residential-care-settings-version-23/>

The overarching vision of the Scottish Government’s adult care home visiting guidance, “Open with Care” is that everyone who lives in an adult care home is supported to see and spend time with the people that are important to them and participate in activities within the home and in their communities. The Scottish Government has taken the following steps to promote and support visiting and outings in adult care homes sets out an approach to managing COVID-19 effectively but also sustainably for as long as necessary.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-scotlands-strategic-framework-update-february-2022/>

Additional publications include:

Open with Care: Supporting meaningful contact in Care Homes

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/open-with-care-supporting-meaningful-contact-in-adult-care-homes-principles/>

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the following Public Health and Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) guidance which provides details on measures required to support visits in and out of services, including during an outbreak situation.

The guidance states that:

*Providers should promote visiting and outings from the, wherever possible and proactively manage the risk so that this can happen.*

*There are no recommended limits around the number, frequency and length of visits or outings, as long as the visit or activity remains manageable for the resident and the care home staff.*

*Residents should be supported to undertake visits out of the care home in line with Public Health Scotland guidance.*

# The Law

## The Adults with Incapacity Act (Scotland) 2000

The Act aims to protect people who lack capacity to make decisions, but also to support their involvement in making decisions about their own lives as far as they are able to do so. Anyone authorised to make decisions or take actions on behalf of someone with impaired capacity must apply the principles outlines in the act:

Where a family member or other holds Welfare Guardianship staff should be aware of the scope of these powers. A copy of these powers should be held in the persons Support Plan and all staff need to be aware of these.

## The Human Rights Act 1998

Particularly relevant is Article 8: The right to private and family life. Family life can be interpreted in the broadest sense to reflect an individual service user’s personal sense of family (i.e., it covers more than the “inner circle” of an individual’s life and includes the right to establish and develop relations with others, including personal relationships established in a home, hospital, or workplace).

## Anne’s Law

Anne’s Law has its basis in campaign by a daughter who was unable to see her mother during the Covid-19 pandemic. The law gives nominated relatives the same access rights as staff even when restrictions are in place. Anne’s Law is to be incorporated in statute into new National Care Service legislation.

## People We Support Receiving Visitors

Inspire promotes that the people we support should be in a position to welcome guests into their home and staff will ensure that these visitors have permission before they enter the people we support’s home. They will also protect those we support from unwanted attention.

Staff will assist and encourage the people we support to arrange meetings with visitors, and to provide refreshments and meals as appropriate. Staff will ensure that the people we support can entertain visitors and friends in private if appropriate.

Updated Health & Social Care Standards published by the Scottish Government on the

31st March 2022 reinforced the rights of people to have visits and support from loved ones and brought Anne’s Law into practical effect while legislation is being prepared.

Two new Standards set out the expectation that people living in care homes should have the right to see someone who is dear to them, even during a Covid-19 outbreak, and be able to name a person or persons who can directly participate in meeting their care needs.

The new standards are:

* If I am an adult living in a care home and restrictions to routine visiting are needed to prevent infection, I can nominate relatives/friends (and substitutes) to visit me.  My nominated relatives/friends will be supported by the care home to see me in person day-to-day and to be directly involved in providing my care and support if that is what I want
* If I am an adult living in a care home, I can nominate relatives/friends (and substitutes), who will be supported by the care home to be directly involved in providing my day-to-day care and support if that is what I want

Further guidance can be found at:

https://www.gov.scot/publications/health-social-care-standards-support-life/

# Visiting Arrangements for Symptomatic or Asymptomatic Visitors

## Symptomatic Visitors

Visitors should not visit a service if they have symptoms of Covid-19, flu or other respiratory infection (listed below) or if they have tested positive for Covid-19. Under any of these circumstances they should follow the Scottish Government “stay at home guidance”. <https://www.nhsinform.scot/campaigns/covid-sense>.

Symptoms of COVID-19, flu and other common respiratory infections include:

* continuous cough (this means the person will be coughing a lot for more than an hour or have three or more coughing episodes in 24 hours).
* high temperature (over 37.8oC), fever or chills
* loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell
* shortness of breath
* unexplained tiredness, lack of energy
* muscle aches or pains that are not due to exercise
* not wanting to eat or not feeling hungry
* headache that is unusual or longer lasting than usual
* sore throat, stuffy or runny nose
* diarrhoea, feeling sick or being sick

Visitors should not visit for 10 days from the date of positive COVID-19 test or from the date of symptom onset, whichever comes first. A visit may take place once symptoms are beginning to resolve, including fever where this has been present and the visitor is generally feeling well again.

# Visiting someone who is symptomatic or COVID-19 diagnosed (when no outbreak has been declared)

If a service user has tested positive for COVID-19 or has symptoms consistent with COVID-19 infection, visiting can be supported, following a risk assessment involving Public Health. People we support can receive one visitor per day in their private room during the stay at home period. The visitor must adhere to IPC measures and only enter the person we support’s private room. They should avoid other areas of the setting and minimise the time spent passing through corridors as much as possible. The visitor should not be symptomatic of COVID-19, or a confirmed case themselves, during the period they are visiting. They should avoid visiting the setting if they live with someone following the stay at home guidance for people with respiratory symptoms.

## Visiting someone who is symptomatic or during an outbreak

Visiting a person we support who is symptomatic or during an outbreak, which has been advised by Public Health, should continue to be supported following a risk assessment. Arrangements for visitors during an outbreak is through the “named Visitor Initiative” as referred to in “People We Support Receiving Visitors” section above.

The “named visitor” policy is a framework which allows the people we support to nominate three named visitors, one of whom may visit the service in their private room each day during periods of restricted visiting (if the person we support is self-isolating or during an outbreak). If visiting is allowed the named visitor can choose not to wear a face covering within the people we support’s personal room, however if the person we support wishes face masks to be worn this should be supported. . During an outbreak visitors should wear a face mask at all times and also maintain physical distancing as advised in the . <https://www.nipcm.hps.scot.nhs.uk/web-resources-container/appendix-22-community-ipc-covid-19/>

In the event of an outbreak the local HPT will advise on appropriate restrictions to visiting and attendance at the service. The “named visitor policy” may be deemed appropriate. In some instances, HPT may risk assess that it is necessary to pause this initiative during an outbreak if there are key concerns which could jeopardise effective outbreak management. If this arises, resuming the named visitor initiative is encouraged as soon as possible. Essential visiting should continue regardless.

Visitor eligibility for a named visitor includes:

* the named visitor is asymptomatic and not known to be COVID-19 positive
* the named visitor has not been identified as a case or known to be in contact with a COVID-19 case in the previous 14 days
* the named visitor is strongly encouraged to be fully vaccinated, with at least 14 days having elapsed since the final dose. Although vaccination is recommended it is not a requirement for visitors

Named visitors can visit a COVID-19 positive person we support who may require some comfort in what can be a stressful time. This would require the local HPT's involvement in risk assessing whether 'named person' visits to a positive case can continue, considering the needs of the person and the nature of the outbreak at that time.

* if the person we support they are visiting is diagnosed as a COVID-19 case, the named visitor should wear appropriate PPE as advised in the ARHAI Scotland Community IPC COVID-19 pandemic appendix. They should be supervised and supported by staff on donning and doffing of PPE and maintain optimal physical distancing where possible
* the named visitor is made aware and understands the risks to themselves in visiting during an outbreak. In particular, if the person we support is found subsequently to be a COVID-19 case.

Named visitors may, with agreement of the person we support (or their representative) and the staff, provide day to day basic care to support service users’ health and wellbeing. This is complementary to the care from staff and might for example include encouragement to eat and drink.

## Asymptomatic Visitors

Visitors do not need to undertake symptomatic testing to visit but instead are advised to follow Covid Sense and if not well should not visit family and friends

# Promoting Successful Visiting

Inspire are committed to ensuring that visits from family and friends are supported and meaningful for all involved even in the event of an outbreak. Visitors should always feel welcome and where appropriate offered refreshments. If visiting during an outbreak staff will provide information and advise visitors of the measures in place for helping to keep them and the person they are visiting safe.

In doing so we aim to protect the rights of all people we support, whether they are tenants or occupants, in relation to their privacy and confidentiality. Where services support more than one person within a house or flat, other people we support should be informed of when others are expecting visitors.

## Visitors Checklist

Prior to visitors attending at a service, whether to visit a person we support or on a service visit as part of the recruitment process, staff should ensure that form *FRM-HS-339 Visitor Checklist* is completed and adhered to by all visitors.

Under the Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (HSWA) Inspire owes a duty of care to all visitors to our services. A record of all visitors (including those with a specific role see below) entering and leaving the building should be maintained should it be necessary to evacuate a building in the event of a fire at a service.

# Different Types of Visitors

## Visitors with a Specific Role:

Some visitors will have a specific role, while others may be acting in a statutory role. It is in the best interests of the people we support to be assisted to understand the role of all visitors.

These visitors may be:

* Support Managers / Quality & Compliance Partners / Regional Managers / Senior Managers
* Care Managers, Health Professionals, Health and Social Care Partnership Contracts Managers, Care Inspectorate, Environmental Health, and the Health and Safety Executive
* SVQ personnel
* Tradespeople
* Volunteers / Befrienders / Advocates etc.

It should be noted that in Housing Support Services, the people we support are the tenants; only those visitors who are providing a direct service to the tenants should make arrangements to visit them in their home. Professionals who do not provide direct services to tenants should make alternative arrangements with the individual. For example, SVQ personnel, Care Inspectorate, Contracts Compliance etc.

Others that may wish to speak to them for example Support Managers, Quality & Compliance Partners, or Regional Managers need to arrange and agree a time that is suitable for the person supported. They may choose not to meet at their home and request an alternative venue.

**Other Visitors**

There are often requests from a range of other people to visit services. Their role may be less clear, and they may not necessarily contribute directly to the quality of life of the people we support.

Not all the people we support can communicate on this issue and we need to ensure that we are sensitive to individual feelings and supportive in decision making on this issue. This means that the views of the people we support are represented in any decision. The request to visit should be explained to the person and the potential gains or benefits to the individual should be considered.

All of the above should always have their I.D. checked. Tradesmen should not be left with people we support unsupervised.

## Children Visiting People We Support Homes

Our services are people’s homes and if children are brought for a visit, it is the responsibility of the adult who brought them to supervise and ensure the safety of the child/children

If staff have any concerns regards child protection or child exploitation about any child that visits the service staff need to discuss this with their Support Manager. Please see the relevant Council’s website (Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire or Moray) under child protection to check who to contact to pass on the concern. Managers are to ensure that any concerns that are reported, are passed on to their Regional Manager.

## Pets visiting individual’s homes

Pets must remain supervised when visiting a person in their own home. Pets cannot be left with people supported without their owners. Where people share their home with another person, a visit from pets needs to be agreed by the other people or person living within the house to ensure there is no problems regards allergies, anxiety or fear of the animals visiting.

## Staff receiving personal visitors while on duty

Unless in exceptional circumstances, and with the agreement of a line manager, staff should not receive visitors while on duty. This includes children.

An exception to this rule would be an arranged social activity where people we support may invite staff and their families to attend, and in this case, parents must remain with their children during this event.

## People we Support Visiting Staff Homes

Inspire staff **should not** arrange to have people we support visit their homes. This is to safeguard and protect people we support and staff from the danger of unfounded allegations or misinterpretation of their intentions.