



Hillside Care Home

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To : All Family & Friends of Hillside Care Home
From : Gareth Bamsey

17th July 2020

Subject : Hillside Care Home – Update

Dear 'Family & Friends of Hillside Care Home'

Update

You will be pleased to know that Hillside still remains virus free. No residents currently have any of the symptoms associated with Covid-19 and no residents at the home have tested positive.

All of the active members of the staff team (*75 in all*) are now routinely being tested on an ongoing weekly basis. Since starting this process internally we have all received negative Covid-19 test results. Our 4th round of weekly tests were conducted on Wednesday 15th July and the results typically come through a couple of days after, on the Friday of each week. We were informed that this testing regime was going to '*...continue for four weeks*' although I now understand that this is to continue for a further round of four weeks. Personally, I think it likely to continue beyond that as the risk profile in society at large is probably increasing slightly as people return to normal but understandably, I am unable to control or influence that.

Weekly testing does add a significant new logistical burden onto the home and it is frustrating that we have to re-key the information onto the Government's portal each week. However, two of the team, Carly & Selma, now take the lead on the administrative side with the '*Clinic*' being typically led by Margaret or Lissy (*all in all, it adds approximately 80 hours work across the team each week which includes an hour for those members of the team who are not on shift and who come in especially to be tested*). However, we all feel that it is a constructive way to reduce the Covid risk.

Garden Visits

It has been lovely to see so many visitors once again. The feedback we have received from many families is that the '*Garden Visits*' process is working very well. We therefore intend to continue with this approach in the same vein whilst visits need to be constrained and managed. If there is anything you would like us to differently then please do let us know. One adjustment that we will make is:

- o *For loved ones to now come as often as you want each week but to still limit the number of bookings in advance to two.*

That way, if any ones wishes to come more often then that should be fine as they would effectively choose from the gaps amongst other families who have already booked and come less often.



The Booking Process does seem to be a very useful way of facilitating communication between families and the care team who are on shift on a particular day. We will therefore look to keep this system going once the pandemic has receded. There'd clearly be no limits or constraints once we have gone through the pandemic and I'm still of the view that we're probably talking about Summer 2021. The Booking System's subsequent purpose simply becoming an *optional* communications channel / mechanism for families and visitors to use to communicate their plans with the care team and hence their loved one as they wished.

Please note I haven't yet received any indication about the potential further relaxation surrounding internal visits and as and when this changes I will let you know. Please also bear in mind that if the Pandemic starts to gain momentum in the Autumn / Winter then lock down measures for Hillside, and indeed us all personally, are likely to be increase again.

Hopefully, Oxford University's vaccine which produces neutralising antibodies and T-cells - both of which can play a key in preventing viral infection will prove successful, or indeed one of the other 140 vaccines that I understand are on trial across the globe. However, the viability or timing of all such trials is still unclear.

Life does carry on very much like normal within the care home itself, albeit with the wearing of face masks. If you wish to see any of the day-to-day aspects then feel free to join our Facebook page run by Lesley.

In the rest of this letter I'd like to use this opportunity to update you on a couple of other developments.

Pharmacy

We are just moving pharmacy from Hafod Pharmacy to Mumbles Pharmacy. During the peak of the pandemic our current pharmacy stopped delivering medication in blister packs as they were unable to cope with their staff shortages. This status-of-affairs has continued and so by moving to Mumbles Pharmacy we will be able to re-introduce these. In our view, the blister pack approach is much more rigorous as it reduces the chance of medication errors which clearly, we aim to keep at zero. We will then move to an electronic medication administration system called Care Meds in October, assuming the Pharmacy move has settled down. This approach is again more rigorous and will utilise our existing infrastructure and the mobile devices that the team already use on a day-to-day basis.

Hillside Phase II Upgrade

We have been investing in and improving the care home extensively for some 15 years now. We conducted a major £2.5m upgrade project that transformed the home in 2012 (Phase I). This led to the home being selected for the Finals of the National Healthcare Design Awards (*a National competition that considers best care home designs across the whole of the UK*).

This project transformed the care home, adding many new lounges, improved auxiliary accommodation and a number of new large ensuite bedrooms. However, 25 of the existing inherited bedrooms remained the same although we have clearly updated them and procured new furniture and such. Many of these inherited rooms are relatively small, on average being 11m² in size and do not as a theme, have any ensuite facilities.

Since 2017 I have therefore been working with a local firm of architects on a further enhancement programme, Hillside Phase II Upgrade. By adding new accommodation to the home this upgrade programme would enable the home to become 100% ensuite. As Hillside is a Grade II Listed Building in a special Conservation area this process has been extremely challenging and lengthy to say the least. It has taken 2½ years in the Design and Planning process with the Planning Application itself receiving numerous objections. The Planning Committee duly voted on the Planning Application last week and I am pleased to say that they have approved it with a unanimous verdict. Several of the Planning Committee commenting that '*...they needed such good quality care homes and accommodation in Swansea.*'

The process will therefore now trundle on and is unlikely to start in any significant way until late 2021. Then my aim throughout will be to ensure negligible impact upon residents and the day-to-day ebb and flow of life within the home itself.

Please do not hesitate to contact Margaret, Lissy or myself if you have any questions or concerns about any of the above although please note that I will be taking my Summer Holiday shortly when I am going camping in France for a couple of weeks with my wife and 6 children (*four of them young adults!*).

Thank you once again for all of your support.

With best wishes



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p.s. I would like to again, personally thank each of you who took some time to rate the home/team on the carehome.co.uk website, your comments and scores are greatly appreciated and have already given the home a higher profile on searches.

www.carehome.co.uk (Hillside Review)