

11 June 2020

For general practice in Kent and Medway

COVID-19 Update 26

This update is provided by Kent and Medway CCG to provide information to help practices deal with the COVID-19 pandemic.

If you have any feedback or ideas to make the updates more useful to you please email kmccg.gpscovid19@nhs.net

Highlight:

An all staff survey designed to help learn the lessons about how health services were delivered during the lockdown can be filled in here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/KMstaffLKD>

Clinical Advice & Support

Referral to treatment (RTT) measurement

There have been some enquiries about what RTT means for patients who decide not to proceed with medical hospital procedures during COVID-19 and whether they would be discharged back to general practice.

The NHS published [Referral to treatment \(RTT\) measurement and COVID-19](#) on 24 March providing advice that: “If a patient cancels, rearranges or postpones their appointment, this has no effect on the RTT clock, which should continue to tick. Patients should not be discharged back to their GP simply because they have cancelled or rearranged appointments; this should always be a clinical decision, based on the individual patient’s best clinical interest.”

COVID-19 and Mental Health Challenges in Practice webinar – 16 June

The next in the series of COVID 19 Best Practice Webinars will be on Tuesday 16 June from 7-8.45 pm (please log in at 6.50 pm for start at 7.00pm).

There will be an opportunity for discussion with an expert guest panel, including special guest Dr Clare Gerada (GP and Director of Practitioner Health and Former RCGP Chair) around key issues and areas of focus, such as:

- How has COVID-19 impacted on our patients’ and our own mental health?
- What have been the key challenges for you, your patients and your teams?
- Are you exhausted physically and mentally and what support is available?
- What are the effects of the pandemic and lockdown on us as a society?
- Covid delirium, encephalitis, psychosis, PTSD, and their management?
- Suicide challenges and prevention - even more of a priority than ever before?

These webinars offer a chance to share expertise from across all areas to help resolve issues and share learning in relation to the current challenges presented by COVID-19 and include case and situational based discussions. All attendees have the opportunity to ask the expert panel questions and raise discussion points using interactive chat forum.

To see more detailed information on the event and to register for a place please use this link: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/covid-19-and-mental-health-challenges-in-practice-16-june-tickets-108683940592>

ZOOM details will be sent on confirmation of booking a place and will be found towards the bottom of the confirmation email.

For any other queries please contact Rakesh Koria on r.koria@nhs.net

Patient leaflet about COVID-19

The NHS has produced a leaflet to give to patients who have visited their GP and have been identified as having symptoms of COVID-19 infection. We have been informed that it has been sent to you separately by the NHS but to highlight it we have attached a copy to this Update, in case you wish to use it in your practice.

Dentistry

Some, though not all, dental practices started to open for face-to-face treatment from 8 June. The exact opening dates for practices and the range of services they will be able to offer will vary depending on the measures they have managed to put in place and the availability of staff following risk assessments.

We are still trying to minimise the number of calls being made to NHS 111 during the working week and advise that if patients contact you during these hours for dental matters you should advise them to contact the dental practice they normally attend or their nearest dental practice for advice via <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/dentists/>

Safeguarding

Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership

As we are all aware there are concerns across the health and care system in Kent and Medway about the impact of the current situation on the mental wellbeing of young people. To support clinical colleagues in addressing these challenging issues, please see the attached June newsletter from the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership including an offer of free virtual Youth Suicide Awareness Prevention training sessions on various dates.

The partnership has also updated their Support Level Guidance Sheets. The language used allows the assessment of risk from the child's viewpoint and in addition a section has been added to cover external risks outside the home. There is also a flowchart to further help when assessing a family for referral for support.

Safeguarding Fabulous Fortnight

Practice managers have been sent information about a series of safeguarding training webinars on subjects like "School Health and Trauma Informed Practice" and "Bereavement". They will be taking place over the next two weeks.

Infection Prevention & Control

Antibody testing

We are aware that there are national discussions taking place with regard to antibody tests. We will update further when we have heard any outcomes.

Ordering personal protective equipment (PPE)

We have been told that throughout May and June 2020, the Department of Health and Social Care has been emailing GP practices, inviting them to register with [a new PPE portal](#) that has been developed in partnership with eBay UK, NHS Supply Chain, the Army, Clipper and Royal Mail. The new portal is for ordering PPE from a central inventory. This is to supplement (not replace) the wholesale supply route that already operates.

Current order limits mean GP practices can order one combined pack, containing 50 IIR masks, 200 aprons and 200 pairs of gloves per week (or up to this amount of separate items). These limits may change over time. Orders through the portal should arrive within 48 hours if placed before 1pm. Orders placed after 1pm will be subject to an additional 24-hours.

The emails asking you to register should be coming from PPE Dedicated Supply Channel - ppe.dedicated.supply.channel@notifications.service.gov.uk. Please make sure that you are regularly checking your email accounts registered with the CQC/MHRA in order to ensure that the invite is received and actioned. If you have not received the email or have any other queries, please contact the portal directly on 0800 876 6802.

Workforce

All staff survey

Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group has launched a survey for all staff in all sectors to gather learning from COVID-19.

The NHS across Kent and Medway is currently managing and coordinating the response to COVID 19; staff have been working hard to maintain essential services and keep the members of our communities safe and well.

As you know the system as a whole is preparing to restart many of the services which had to be paused. On behalf of the whole NHS in Kent and Medway, the CCG is gathering feedback from patients, clinicians and staff.

We would like to hear views of as many staff as possible on the changes made to health services in Kent and Medway in response to the pandemic so we can understand what has worked, what we should be taking forward and gather lessons from the response. The short anonymous survey focuses on views and experiences and does not ask for any information which can identify individual staff.

Please complete the survey [here](#).

The CCG engagement team is also keen to talk to individual staff. If you are willing to take part in a short interview or if you have any questions about the survey please contact kmccg.engagekm@nhs.net

Carers Week - launch of Carers platform of support and resources

This week is Carers Week and NHSE/I are launching the [Employers for Carers platform](#). There are currently an estimated 250,000 carers working in the NHS, many of whom are aged between 45-64 and so are likely to be amongst our most experienced and skilled staff. The platform includes resources for carers such as videos and guides, a carer's passport, and resources for line managers of carers.

Communications

Patient Survey open until 15 June – please share with PPGs.

The NHS across Kent and Medway has risen to the challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic. Clinicians and thousands of support staff have worked tirelessly to care for the most seriously ill, whilst maintaining other essential urgent services.

Together we are now planning to restart health services which we have had to pause so we have launched an online survey for patients and families so that we can find out about their experiences, and what they think of changes that we put in place to keep them safe. We also want to find out why some people stayed away from NHS services. This will help inform what we do next, and how we reassure the public about the safety of NHS services whilst COVID-19 is still around.

Please can each practice share the link below with their Patient Participation Group (PPG) and ask members to complete the survey and share it with family and friends so we can get as many views as possible. If you wish to circulate it through any other patient focussed communications, it would be appreciated.

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/KMCCGlockdownPE> The survey is open until 15 June.

There is a separate survey for staff to fill in which is highlighted on page 6.