

East Sussex Community Hubs - Guidance for staff and volunteers

This guidance is for staff working in Community Hubs in East Sussex during the coronavirus pandemic, to support them with contacts with the public and appropriate onward signposting and referral.

For the latest government advice on coronavirus [visit gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk).

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1. Health and wellbeing

Urgent health problems and clinical advice about coronavirus

People should not go to places like a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital if they think they might have coronavirus. They should stay at home.

The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- **high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- **loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

Most people with coronavirus have at least one of these symptoms. People can use the [111 coronavirus](#) service if they think they have coronavirus.

[Visit the NHS website](#) for the latest information and advice on coronavirus.

Coronavirus testing

Anyone with any of the symptoms of coronavirus can [ask for a test through the NHS website](#).

In East Sussex, essential workers and people in their household can book a test by emailing sxccg.covidtestingreferrals@nhs.net. NHS and social care staff can be tested even if they don't have symptoms.

Care homes can also [apply on gov.uk](#) for testing kits for their residents and staff whether they have symptoms or not.

[Visit gov.uk](#) for the latest advice on coronavirus testing, and who can apply.

Other health problems

If someone needs medical help, the NHS is still here for them. If they need help or advice not related to coronavirus:

- for health information and advice, they can use the [NHS website](#) or their GP surgery website,



- if they need medical help from their GP practice, they should contact them either online, by an app or by phone to be assessed. They should not go to the GP practice in person unless specifically told to do so following an assessment,
- for urgent medical help, use the [NHS 111 online service](#) – only call 111 if unable to get help online. The [NHS 111 British Sign Language \(BSL\) Service](#) is also available,
- for serious or life-threatening emergencies, call 999 for an ambulance,
- if people are told to go to hospital it is important that they go to hospital,
- people should continue to attend their appointments, unless they have been told not to attend.

Urgent dental treatment

Due to COVID-19, all routine dental treatment has been stopped at the moment. If someone thinks they need urgent dental treatment, they should:

- Call their dentist during the practice's usual opening hours. Their dentist may be able to offer advice over the phone, prescribe medication for pain or infection, or make a referral to one of the new Urgent Dental Care Hubs open across Sussex. They should not go to the dental practice in person.
- If they don't have a dentist, they can search for a local dentist on the [NHS website](#) and then call them for advice.
- If they cannot contact their dentist, or don't have one, they can use the [NHS 111 online service](#) for advice, help with contacting an urgent dental service or to arrange treatment if needed.
- They should not contact a GP, as they cannot provide dental treatment.

GP appointments for people who are d/Deaf

People in East Sussex who are d/Deaf can now contact their GP more easily using the SignLive video relay service. SignLive is a free app that connects the caller to a fully qualified British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter, before connecting to the GP practice. [Find out how people can use the service.](#)

Mental health support

Directory of community support

Find mental health support in East Sussex through the [online Mental Health Directory of Community Support.](#)

Health in Mind

www.healthinmind.org.uk offers free courses and therapy for people in East Sussex, to help with stress, anxiety and low mood.

Urgent or crisis support

People who need urgent or crisis support with their mental health can call the Sussex Mental Healthline on 0300 5000 101, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. People who have general concerns about their mental health can also phone to receive psychological support.

Online support for young people

[e-wellbeing](#) is a new digital wellbeing service for young people aged 13-25. People can visit the site and take a short quiz. They'll then be directed to information and services to help how they are feeling.

Suicide Warning Signs

The stress and worry of the COVID-19 situation is having an impact on the emotional wellbeing of everyone, and for many it is exacerbating underlying mental health issues. As such, it is important to be alert to the possible suicide warning signs. If you are thinking about suicide or worried about someone you can visit

www.preventingsuicideinsussex.org now for advice and links to specialist help.

Information and support for front-line workers

- The Local Government Association and NHS England and Improvement have produced a comprehensive pack of [wellbeing information and resources](#) to help health and care managers and staff at this difficult time. Hub call handlers may find the wellbeing information pack for care staff particularly useful, as it includes tips, advice and tools to help sustain your wellbeing.
- A new resource, [Our Frontline](#), offers round-the-clock one-to-one support, by call or text, from trained volunteers, plus resources, tips and ideas to look after the mental health of people working in front-line roles in health, social care, the emergency services, and other key workers.

Pharmacies

Community Pharmacies are still open, although hours may be different from normal. Repeat prescriptions are still available as usual. It is important people only request medicines when they are running low (e.g. one week's supply left).

Patients are being encouraged to order their repeat prescriptions online directly from their GP practice via the practice website or through the NHS App wherever possible, or by using the Prescription Ordering Direct (POD) phone service if this is available with their GP practice. This will speed up the process for repeat prescriptions to be issued.

It can take between 5 and 7 days from ordering a repeat prescription from a GP to it being ready to collect at the pharmacy. Patients are urged to plan in advance so that they don't run out.

See 'Getting medicine and picking up prescriptions' in section 3 for advice on collecting prescriptions and medicines if someone is shielding or self-isolating.

2. Keeping people safe

Protect vulnerable people by reporting a concern

East Sussex County Council remains committed to keeping vital services running and providing the support everyone needs, especially to the most vulnerable. In response to this unprecedented situation, and in line with Government guidance, Safeguarding and protecting the most vulnerable adults in our community remains a priority. During this difficult time we would like to reassure you that Safeguarding concerns will be responded to and referrals should continue to be made if a person is at risk of or experiencing abuse or neglect. Safeguarding is everyone's business, so it is important that we remain alert to possible abuse or neglect concerns. Now more than ever it is important that we are watchful and alert towards the signs and indicators of abuse and neglect.

We know that many people have signed up to volunteer and help the most vulnerable. Your role is important, not only in helping people to get the things they need, but also being the extra eyes and ears for those who are at risk of abuse or neglect. During this time there is less likely to be professional face-to-face contact with vulnerable people so we are more reliant on volunteers and members of the public reporting concerns.

If you have a concern about an adult at risk you should:

- In an emergency call 999,
- Contact East Sussex County Council's Health and Social Care Connect on 0345 60 80 191, email HSCC@eastsussex.gov.uk,
- For further online information please see the East Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board website www.eastsussexsab.org.uk.

If you are worried about a child or teenager who might be at risk of harm or in danger, then you should:

- In an emergency call 999,
- Otherwise contact [the Single Point of Advice](#) (SPOA) team on 01323 464 222 Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm, Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm.

Or, follow these links to report a concern:

[Report an adult who is being abused, neglected or exploited](#)
[Report a child or teenager at risk of harm](#)



Domestic abuse

You can find a range of [advice and resources on domestic violence](#) on the ESCC website. A guide for hub call handlers on responding to domestic abuse concerns was also circulated in Issue 2. In a life-threatening situation call 999 and ask for the police.

People in East Sussex needing help, advice or support on domestic abuse and sexual violence can contact [The Portal](#) on 0300 323 9985 or visit the [Safe Space Sussex website](#).

If you are concerned that someone you are speaking to is experiencing domestic abuse or is at risk, then the following should help you decide what to do:

- It's important to remind people that if they or someone else is in immediate danger they should call 999 and ask for the police,
- If someone is in immediate danger but can't talk, they can call 999 from a mobile phone then press **55** when prompted to be put through to a police call handler, so the call handler knows it's a genuine call,
- If someone is in danger and can't call the police, it is suggested they arrange a safe word system with a trusted neighbour, family member or friend. They can agree on a word and/or emoji to text to them quickly in an emergency, so the trusted person knows to call 999. Both people should keep their phones topped up, charged and accessible,
- If someone is suffering from domestic abuse, isolation rules do not apply,
- You need to share concerns about a child or other vulnerable adults in the household with Children and Adult Safeguarding teams (see above for how to report concerns),
- It's vital the survivor is told who any information will be shared with so they're aware another service may contact them.

Scams

Stay up to date on known COVID-19 scams and how people can protect themselves on the [Friends Against Scams website](#). You can also take part in their [20-minute online training session](#).

Reporting a scam

People should:

- Contact their bank if they think they have been scammed.
- Contact the police immediately by calling 101 if the scammer is in the area or if money was transferred to the scammer in the last 24 hours.
- Call 999 if they feel threatened or unsafe.
- Report incidents or issues online directly to Trading Standards in East Sussex at www.eastsussex.gov.uk/business/tradingstandards/report.
- Call the Citizens Advice Bureau on 0808 223 1133 or visit www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer for advice on goods and services. All information will also be passed onto East Sussex Trading Standards.

3. Support for the shielded group

East Sussex County Council is the lead agency for people who are in the shielded group. ESCC will be arranging welfare calls and food and essential supplies for people in the shielded group that need support.

Before you refer someone, you will need to find out their: name, address (including postcode), a phone number, details of support required (if known), e.g. food box (with any dietary requirements & number in household), shopping, prescription collection, or telephone support.

General referrals	Support referrals excluding food, or concerns about someone, should be emailed to telecare@eastsussex.gov.uk This address is monitored Monday to Friday.
Food referrals	Food referrals for the shielded group should be emailed to food.delivery@eastsussex.gov.uk See below for more details about who is eligible.

If for any reason you need to call to make a referral, or you would like to discuss any other concerns regarding someone in the shielded group, then the contact telephone number is: 01273 481 242. This is being staffed by our Complaints and Feedback service who will be able to help and advise you.

Food Delivery Service (Covid-19) – FAQs

As part of our response to provide support to those in the shielded group, East Sussex County Council (ESCC) has set up a food and essentials delivery service. While most of the deliveries to those in the shielded group are being done by the national government, some of those in this group who are vulnerable and are not in receipt of the national government food boxes are receiving support from ESCC.

To make a referral or to cancel further deliveries, please get in touch:

Email: Food.Delivery@eastsussex.gov.uk

Telephone: 01273 481 242

Our delivery days will be changing soon – watch this space for more information. From 1 June, the deadline for sending new referrals for a standard or special box will be 2pm on a Monday, while the deadline for urgent deliveries will remain 2pm every weekday.

Who can be referred to receive this box?

Anyone in the shielded group who has been advised by the NHS to remain in isolation because of their medical condition or other vulnerability can be referred to receive this box.

What are the contents of the ESCC box?

The contents change from week to week. These contain basic food items and some non-food essentials. Most of the items are ambient with some fresh vegetables and refrigerated items included.

Can someone receive the national government box as well as the ESCC box?

If someone is already receiving the government food box, they should continue to receive it unless they have special requirements that are not being met.

Can special dietary requirements be catered for?

We will aim to cater to special dietary requirements owing to a medical or cultural reason; please mention those while making a referral. It is easier for us to know what kind of food is required by the person being referred, rather than a medical condition. For example, stating that a person needs non-dairy milk rather than stating that the person is lacto-intolerant makes it easier for us to procure appropriate items for delivery. While we try to meet the dietary requirements, owing to the large numbers we are supplying and difficulties in procuring, we cannot cater to every request. Currently, we can provide vegetarian, gluten free, nut free, dairy free and some other fortified diets.

How many times a week are these deliveries made?

The special needs deliveries are being made on Tuesday and Wednesday each week and the standard boxes are sent out on Thursday and Friday. Please note that sometimes due to circumstances out of our control, there is a delay in delivery times. Owing to the large number of deliveries we are making and up to ten drivers involved, we are unable to confirm until the early part of each week whether the delivery has been made or not.

We can make a handful of deliveries on a daily basis for any urgent referrals. Please mark these as urgent when making a referral.

When can the referrals be made?

Referrals need to be made by 2pm on Wednesday each week for a standard box delivery and by 2pm on Monday for a special needs box.

What if an urgent delivery needs to be made?

For those who do not have food and supplies until the next standard delivery, we are able to make a small number of deliveries every day. Urgent delivery requests need to be made by 2pm each working day. If someone needs a delivery before the next standard delivery but can wait for one or more day, please state so in the message to the Food Delivery Mailbox. This helps us manage our urgent deliveries each day, so on a day with a large number of referrals, some can be pushed to the next day. All those who receive daily deliveries will be automatically added to the weekly box unless it's a one-off request while someone is waiting for delivery of the government box.

Can non-food essential items be included in deliveries?

We can include some non-food essentials in the boxes; please specify if there are any specific requirements. Examples include incontinence pads, sanitary pads, soap and shower gel.

Can medicines be provided through this service?

No, we are unable to provide medicines through this service.

What can people do if they haven't received their box?

Sometimes there are delays in our delivery schedules. We ask people to wait until the following Monday for a standard box and until Friday for a special box before getting in touch with us. We are unable to answer queries related to delivery times as this is difficult to ascertain. We ask people to please refrain from getting in touch with us to find out when their delivery will arrive. However, if they are running low on supplies and need urgent assistance, they can get in touch and we will ensure that they receive an urgent delivery.

What help can they get in organising their own shopping while they are shielding?

We know that not being able to organise their own essentials shopping is disruptive to our residents' life. This food box service is a stop-gap measure to ensure no one in East Sussex is left on their own. As we move into the Transition Phase of this project, we will be getting in touch with everyone on our delivery list to try to help them organise their own shopping.

Getting medicine and picking up prescriptions

People in the shielded group should, in the first instance, ask friends, relatives, and neighbours to collect medicines for them. For other people the NHS advice is also to ask a trusted family member or friend to pick up prescriptions from community pharmacies. This should meet the needs of the vast majority of people.

If that is not possible for either group, then safe local solutions should be followed, e.g. use DBS checked volunteers, volunteers from the NHS Volunteer Responders programme or another solution agreed between the patient and the pharmacy. People can now refer themselves directly to the NHS GoodSam programme.

If this is not possible then the pharmacy may be able to deliver themselves or ask another local pharmacy to deliver on their behalf. Pharmacy services differ, but they should all be trying to find a solution with the patient directly, but they may need the support of Community Hubs to arrange a volunteer.

Further information about Getting Medicine:

- A poster called '[collecting a prescription for someone else?](#)' lists key pieces of information for people who are picking up medicines from a pharmacy on behalf of someone else
- Two 'call handling scripts' to use should a [patient call for help with medicines](#) or if a [pharmacist calls asking for help getting medicines to patients](#).



Getting food and help with shopping

If someone's GP has written to them to ask them to shield themselves at home for 12 weeks because they have a serious medical condition, food can be delivered to them at home by the national government or by East Sussex County Council. If this has not happened, Community Hubs will help arrange a short-term solution until the food delivery can start. To refer someone to the Council see the information on support for the shielded group above.

If someone is not in the shielded group but needs help to get food because they are unwell or self-isolating and don't have trusted family or friends to support them, community hubs can help them explore the options. This might include ordering a food box from a supermarket, ordering over the phone with a local shop, or getting some help from a local volunteer group. See the attachment 'Community Hubs – information about supermarkets' circulated with issues of the briefing.

GoodSam

People in the shielded group have the option of [referring themselves directly to GoodSam](#). If you have concerns about someone's ability to manage the process themselves, you can still choose to refer them. That would also allow you to monitor the referral and check that the action is completed.

If you have any experiences you would like to share about GoodSam please [email ESCC](#).

4. Support for unpaid carers

At this difficult time, Care for the Carers are working hard to make sure that unpaid carers feel supported and connected and have the information to care safely during coronavirus. They are still here for unpaid carers, so please get in touch.

The Carers Hub is open virtually 10am-5pm Monday-Friday (except Bank Holidays) as follows:

- Call: 01323 738390
- Text: 07860 077300
- Email: info@cftc.org.uk
- Facebook: Message Care for the Carers

The Carers Hub is currently receiving a large number of calls, so it is likely that people will need to leave a message when they phone. The Hub will prioritise carers urgently needing to access food, essentials and medication and will respond as soon as possible to other enquiries. People should include in their message their name, contact details, as much information as possible and how urgently help is needed. Non-urgent enquiries are responded to within 5 working days.

All face-to-face groups, support, meetings and activities are temporarily on hold. However, these will be replaced by phone and online support.

Young carers

East Sussex Young Carers Service, provided by Imago Community, is continuing to offer support by phone and video to young carers aged 5 to 18. Young carers are responsible for caring for a family member with a long-term condition, disability, mental health or substance misuse issues. The young carer could be providing physical, practical or emotional support to the cared for. For support people can [visit the website](#) or call 0300 111 1110.

5. Children, young people and families

Safeguarding

If you are worried about a child or teenager who might be at risk of harm or in danger, then you should:

- In an emergency call 999,
- Otherwise contact the [Single Point of Advice](#) (SPOA) team on 01323 464 222, Opening hours: Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm, Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm.

Open for Parents website

[The Open for Parents website](#) provides information, advice and resources to parents and carers on all things children and family. It includes information about local support as well as national guidance & resources. Topics include education & learning; health & wellbeing; and managing behaviour.

Family Information Service

For queries about childcare and schools, and to contact Children's Services with other queries, go to the website to [submit a query](#) and the team will respond or ask the Community Hub caller to visit the website directly.

Problems with childcare

Children should stay at home wherever possible. There is some provision for children of keyworkers.

6. Adult social care

People who already receive social care at home will continue to do so.

Anyone can request an assessment at any time to see if they are eligible for social care and support, or request advice and guidance, by [contacting Health and Social Care Connect](#).

7. Volunteers

The Government has issued advice on staying safe as a volunteer, [available on gov.uk](#).

8. Training for community hubs

Community hub volunteers can get fast-track training from ESCC in safeguarding; infection prevention and control; equality and diversity; handling information; privacy and dignity; and health and safety. Volunteers will complete the training using a range of methods including e-learning, workbook completion, and discussion with a mentor. Completion should take a couple of days and a certificate will be provided as evidence of knowledge. To get on the fast-track training programme please email the [ASC training team](#).

9. Benefits and employment advice

[Visit gov.uk](#) for Government advice on benefits and employment.

10. Business support advice

Visit the South East Business Hub for [local advice for businesses](#).

11. Information for independent care providers

The latest updates for social care and health providers in East Sussex are [available on the East Sussex County Council website](#).

12. Supporting d/Deaf people

Deaf Cultural Outreach Group (DeafCOG) has developed guidance and tips to help frontline services support d/Deaf people safely and effectively during the coronavirus outbreak. They should help you understand deafness better and provide some useful insight into how you can best support deaf people you have contact with through the hub. They have also updated their offer to explain how they can help. Please see the three documents circulated in Issue 5 - Deaf awareness guidance; Deaf guidance sheet; and Our offer to hubs.

13. Grants and funding

- Front-line food aid charities can apply to DEFRA for a [grant](#) of up to £100,000 to help them continue to provide food to the vulnerable. The grant scheme will close on Monday 6 July.
- East Sussex County Council's Making it Happen: Small Sparks Grants are currently accepting applications from any area of the county during the COVID-19 crisis. Making it Happen is about discovering, celebrating and building on the positive things in local neighbourhoods. For more information and how to apply, please see the document circulated with Issue 5.
- [Funding News for East Sussex](#) is usually a monthly e-newsletter provided by East Sussex County Council. We are currently publishing it weekly during the coronavirus outbreak. It is aimed at the voluntary sector and provides information about grants and sources of funding.