

November 2020 E-News

ESSEX CARE ASSOCIATION

Welcome to our November Issue and an especially warm welcome to our new members who have recently joined us!

In each monthly issue, we aim to include a range of local and national news that will be of interest to our members and as well as some things you may have missed elsewhere. In this issue, we have articles on the 'Live at Home' tender; surveillance in care homes and the Parliamentary Social Care: Funding and Workforce Report amongst other things.

What would you like to see us feature in future ECA newsletters? Let us know and you could win a £25 donation to the charity of your choice!

Just drop an email to: simon.harniess@essexcare.org.uk

Do you feel that the Local Authority or CCG don't understand the pressures you are working under? They want to hear from you! We are looking for providers from all care sectors – Care Homes, Domiciliary Care, Supported Living, Extra Care, etc, who would be willing to speak for 10-15 minutes about their experiences – good and bad – on future online engagement sessions with our Health and Social Care partners. Drop an email to Simon at the address above.

If you have received this email from somebody and you are not yet a member, check out our offer for new members on our website: <http://www.essexcare.org.uk/>

****Use the table of contents to go straight to the section you're interested in***

[Care Home Visits](#)

[Surveillance in Care Homes](#)

[Domiciliary Care News](#)

[Financial Support extended](#)

[Powerpoint not Required?](#)

[Funding and Workforce Report](#)

[Member Queries](#)

CARE HOME NEWS

Care Home Visits

Essex has now moved to Tier 2 which means that visits to Care Homes are no longer allowed except in exceptional circumstances, such as 'End of Life'. We understand that this is set out in the national Guidance and the local Director of Public Health does not have any say.

It is a very difficult situation. On the one hand, we want to protect the most vulnerable from the risk of a possible Covid infection; on the other hand, there is evidence that having regular contact with loved ones can be hugely beneficial to care home residents, especially those with dementia.

We realise that those of you with responsibilities for care homes will be grappling with these issues and there is no easy answer. However, it does seem that rather than a blanket ban on visits, there is a case to be made for individuals to be treated as individuals with their needs (including the need for visits) to be considered in their care plan. If a home can then demonstrate that they are able to put in place effective infection control measures to support safe visiting then it should be allowed. Similarly, we know that there are challenges for those running Supported Living Schemes or care homes for 'Working Age Adults' who may want to go out to visit real

As an Association, we cannot advocate that you do anything other than adhere to the current guidance, but we will be talking with our colleagues in the Care Associations Alliance about a campaign to have the guidance amended. In the meantime, we would encourage you to speak with your residents, relatives and staff about the issue and what they would ideally like.

Using Surveillance in Care Homes

Using electronic surveillance in care homes is a controversial subject. Some see it as intrusive and indicative of a lack of trust; others have implemented it and found that it has benefits for staff as well as residents and relatives. Whatever your position, we would encourage you to do your research and have conversations with all parties involved before making your mind up.

[The Care Campaign for the Vulnerable](#) was set up by one relative after her mother's very negative experience in a care home. Whilst they do campaign primarily from a resident point of view, their website includes reports from homes where they have been able to document clear benefits to residents, staff and the organisations.

CQC have some useful guidance on their website under the heading 'Using surveillance in your care service'. This covers when you might think about using surveillance; open and covert surveillance, and legal aspects: [CQC Surveillance Guidance](#)

This issue may not be top of your agenda as we begin to see Covid infections rising, but as we go forward things will be challenging for care home providers and public confidence in our sector is one of the factors. Is this something that would make prospective residents and their relatives chose your home over an alternative?

Is this an area you would like to know more about? Let us know and we will organise something online for members.

DOMICILIARY CARE NEWS

Live at Home tender

The ECC Home Care Framework 'Live at Home' is currently open and full details can be found here [Live at Home framework 2021 - tender announcement](#)

We know that some ECA members have raised significant concerns about going ahead with this tender at this time and also about some of the content of the tender. We arranged an online session for members so that we could hear the concerns and we have now written to ECC about this.

There was significant concern expressed about holding a tender at this time when we are beginning to see the impact of the second wave of Covid-19 on our staff teams and when Essex has been placed in Tier 2 following representations to the Government from the Council. We feel that providers should be able to give their full energy to supporting their workforce and planning services to ensure that the most vulnerable rather than completing lengthy tender documentation.

Members also expressed concerns about the possibility of 'minute-by-minute' billing being introduced and also the significance of greater TUPE information being sought. We have already enquired about this informally with ECC and we understand that minute-by-minute billing is NOT on the cards and that the TUPE approach is probably determined by some recent legal cases. Nonetheless, this has been included in our formal letter.

When we wrote to ECC previously about concerns (in July) they replied that they would still go ahead with the tender as other providers had been in touch with them and said they wanted to, but that they would extend the period for providers to complete the tender. This felt like a reasonable compromise, but we feel that conditions in the county have changed. To be fair, the provider market does not speak with one voice and whatever ECC decide, it will be hard to balance all the considerations.

When we held an online event for members to share concerns, less than a dozen people joined. Collectively, those present did represent a fairly large amount of people who they are supporting, and we had a good mix of larger and smaller providers from different parts of the County. Nonetheless, the more members who join these discussions or email us with their concerns, the more strongly and confidently we can approach the Local Authority.

OTHER NEWS

Home Care, Supported Living and Independent Living Financial Support extended

ECC have confirmed that the arrangements they put in place in March to support Domiciliary care and other providers will now be extended up to 03 April 2021. Providers should have had email notification of this. We understand that ECC are in the process of updating the information on the [Provider Portal](#) as this is written.

Powerpoint not Required?

As I am writing this, I have just finished chairing the Mid and South Essex Local System Workshop. In some ways it was a good event - there was a lot of information from ECC and CCG staff and around thirty people joined - but I think all those involved felt it was a bit content-heavy. There were a lot of slides and a lot of words to digest!

One of the Essex Directors remarked that he would like to turn this on its head and hear more from providers. So are you up for it? Would you as an Essex provider be interested in speaking for 5-10 mins at the next event? It could be about the challenges your care home is facing; a piece of good practice you would like to share; how you struggle to get OT's out to make assessments; or any other topic that is relevant to our work.

This conversation was specifically about Mid and South Essex, but the same principle applies to the whole county. If you are at all interested, let me know: simon.harniess@essexcare.org.uk

Social Care: Funding and Workforce Report

This month saw the publication of the House of Commons Health and Social Care Committee Report *Social Care: funding and workforce* in which MPs urged government 'to grasp the nettle' on social care.

You can read more in this [Laing-Buisson](#) article which picks up comments by Jeremy Hunt, Martin Green and others:

Committee chair Jeremy Hunt MP said: 'To address wider issues the sector needs a 10 year plan and a people plan just like the NHS. Without such a plan, words about parity of esteem will be hollow. We owe it to both the staff and families devastated by loss to make this a moment of real change.'

Martin Green, Care England chief executive, said: 'The report addresses the short, medium and long-term requirements. It is heartening that after so long in the wilderness the sector is being listened to and we hope that this report will be the turning point that we so desperately need.'

Member Queries

Please let us know if you have any queries that you think we can help with. Recent queries we have responded to include:

- Where to access Cyber-security training
- Live at Home tender concerns
- Free parking for carers on duty
- Contact details of any CQC Inspections advisors
- How to speak to at ECC about Supported Living?
- Sexuality, relationships and sexual safety in care

If you have a query that we might be able to help with, email us on office@essexcare.org.uk

*Copyright © *|2020|* *|Essex Care Association Ltd|*, All rights reserved.*

Our email address is:

office@essexcare.org.uk

Our phone number is:

01268 565551

Our website is:

<http://www.essexcare.org.uk/>

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).
