

**Care Home Intervention Team (April 2020)**

**ACTIVITY GUIDANCE FOR CARE HOMES DURING COVID-19**

Keeping active and occupied is essential to living a fulfilling life for us all, especially older people living in care homes, and is crucial during this unprecedented time of COVID – 19. Daily life and routine is disrupted, and measures necessary to protect residents and staff through social distancing, can increase feelings of loneliness, anxiety, frustration and depression for residents - helping maintain a purposeful routine of meaningful activity during this period can help reduce this. It is a challenge, and requires us to think creatively how to support residents with and without dementia during this time, ensuring the safety of staff and residents in line with local and national guidance.

***What can I do to support resident’s wellbeing through activity?***

An **Interest Checklist** (keep 2 metres apart, resident can complete if able, or loved ones can help) – if an activity can’t be done, try and adapt it for indoors (e.g. gardening magazines), or explore new activities that can be done safely

**Individualised activity pack** for residents self-isolating/distancing in room; consider books, magazines, personal photos, jigsaws, crosswords, art materials, CD’s & DVD’s of interest and ability

* [**The Daily Sparkle**](https://www.dailysparkle.co.uk/covid19-response/)is providing free resources focusing on activity in isolation for residents
* [**Golden Carers**](https://www.goldencarers.com/19-ways-for-residents-to-socialize-in-isolation/6335/) describes some creative, social distancing activities for socialising during isolation

**Life Story:** Support residents to feel connected to themselves, and others during this time of isolation

* Complete [**'This is Me'**](https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-03/this_is_me_1553.pdf) with the person and/or family to help activity planning, life story work and reminiscing with them
* Family may like to email photos which you can laminate; write the occasion and people in photo

[**Living well in care homes (Royal College of Occupational Therapists)**](https://www.rcot.co.uk/about-occupational-therapy/living-well-care-homes-2019) guidance describes activities when you may have 5 – 15 minutes to spare. For example, you could discuss loved ones photos and memories during routine care, check their TV/radio is on before you leave and check magazines/books etc. are within their reach

**Support communicating with loved ones**: This might be via phone, post, or video calls where possible

* If possible, set up a regular time for residents to talk with friends and family which they can look forward to
* Help write a letter, or read one sent from family

**Positive daily routine:**

* Try to limit news exposure – if residents are anxious, support checking news only at set times of the day
* Structure residents time with identified interests and positive distractions - consider a daily/weekly timetable and help fill this in
* If possible, encourage residents to sit out of bed (if able) whilst social distancing; set up space in their room to engage in activities outside of bed

**Technology**: If access to a tablet, there are a variety of activity resources available for residents of all needs including live stream musical performances, quizzes and games

* [**Activities for Older Adults During COVID19; A guide to online resources for those providing care for people with dementia**](https://healthinnovationnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Maintaining-Activities-for-Older-Adults-during-COVID19.pdf)
* [**Alzheimer's society coronavirus activity ideas**](https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/coronavirus-activity-ideas-people-living-dementia)

**Group activity:**

* Limit group size - ensure 2 metre social distancing can be applied
* Check residents for symptoms prior to attending; do not involve residents in isolation or with positive symptoms and explore 1:1 activity that could be provided instead
* Avoid shared resources; ensure items can be thoroughly cleaned after, or single use only for groups and 1:1
* Offer groups without items (e.g. verbal quizzes, music/singing sessions) – many virtual groups can be held via a tablet; [**Age of Creativity**](http://festival.ageofcreativity.co.uk/downloads/) has links to virtual galleries, concerts and exercise groups for example

Contact CHIT Monday-Friday 9am-5pm (020 3228 6429) [CCHIT@slam.nhs.uk](mailto:CCHIT@slam.nhs.uk) if worried about a resident’s mood or behaviour (e.g. wandering, distressed, restless or increasingly isolated); we can support personalised activity plans and discuss individual referrals and additional support for residents

**\*Please note: Always follow your homes infection control guidance (including use of PPE) and management of positive COVID-19 cases in your home when engaging with residents in isolation/social distancing. Provide all activity in line with individual risk assessments, care plans and home protocols.**