

Quick tips to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19



Background

During the pandemic, staff may need to wear personal protective equipment (PPE). This could be frightening for a person with dementia as they may not recognise the carers or care staff they are familiar with.

- Laminate a picture of yourself in your work clothes with your name. You can show this to the person to help them recognise you. This could be cleaned frequently.
- If you are wearing a mask, the person will not see your face and may find it difficult to pick up on body language. Think about other ways to communicate such as hand gestures.
- If a person has a therapy doll or animal, consider putting PPE on them first (perhaps a similar item due to the shortage). And remember to clean regularly.
- Encourage outdoor exercise as this is known to increase mood and improve wellbeing. Use chair exercise groups to enable residents to keep their distance from each other.
- Support residents to watch and participate with YouTube exercise videos or DVDs in their room.
- You may want to reconsider the use of hand sanitiser due to its strong smell or if the person has a cut or sore, as this will sting. Where appropriate consider using hand sanitiser as a hand massage.
- Provide personalised items of interest that may provide comfort and keep the residents' hands busy and away from their faces.
- If close contact or touching faces is noted, remain calm and approach with gentle open body language, using a gentle tone to redirect the resident.

DSA continues to support your care home, via our normal referral pathways. **We are considered an 'essential service' for residential care by the Commonwealth Department of Health** and, as such, our Dementia Consultants remain able to visit to provide direct support, or phone or video conference depending on your preference. Regardless of whether your home is in lockdown or not, we are still available to support.