



# Daughters of Charity Disability Support Services

## Working with Families- Daughters of Charity Disability Support Service (DOCDSS) and the CoronaVirus/ COVID-19

20 March 2020

### Family Frequently Asked

#### Questions in this uncertain time

The DOCDSS Serious Incident Management Team is working hour by hour as the Irish Healthcare landscape changes. Our decisions are advised by the World Health Organisation, the European Centre for Disease Control, the HSE, and the Health Protection Surveillance Centre. We are meeting daily to monitor the ongoing situation and ensure contingency plans are in place.

#### What about my family members Day Services and respite service?

We have closed all Day Services and respite in order to protect our service users and staff teams from the 13<sup>th</sup> of March. We will review this status from 29<sup>th</sup> of March as public health policy guidance evolves on the duration of the emergency period.

#### Are there Visitor Restrictions?

At present, we currently have a strict **NO VISITORS** policy. Again, we do regret the extreme nature of the decision to ban all social visitors from our facilities; however this decision was made in accordance with public health guidance on limiting exposure for

highly vulnerable populations. You can contact your service centre for guidance on how you can arrange for regular phone or video chats with your family member.

#### What if I want to bring my family member home for a visit, or they want to come visit me?

Unfortunately, movement between home and community are not permissible at this time; any service user that elects to return home, any family that elects to have a service user return home for any duration of time are to be informed in advance that once someone leaves a centre, they will not be allowed to return until informed by a service manager that it is safe to do so. There is no flexibility on this policy: once someone goes home, unfortunately they will not be able to return to the service until the end of the social isolation period. This difficult decision was made to protect all the service users in their home during this unprecedented time.

#### My family member is a day attendee, will I receive any supports during this period?

Each Centre Manager is in the process of contacting you to see what specific needs you

may have, and there is a meeting to review on the 25<sup>th</sup> March. At this time, any support will be by telephone, video-link or home assist (shopping, pharmacy, messages) where feasible. We will have more information for you shortly when we know what the demand and requirements are.

#### What are the contingency plans for required medications for my family member?

We are working with Families on a case by case basis as each service user and service is different. Staff are ensuring there is enough medication supplies for your family member. Please ensure you take the same action at home. Contact your regular pharmacy-check opening hours. Be sure you have a thermometer and paracetamol/calpol in the home. We are working with medical teams to find the best solutions for everyone under the circumstances.

#### What if a staff member contracts COVID-19?

Staff will be isolated in their home and reported to the Public Health for follow up standard procedures. Healthy staff from other units will back fill any ill staff roles where



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possible. Not all staff have the same skill-set so we are continually working on staff plans and redeployment.

## What if service user/users contracts COVID-19?

The Family will be informed, and we will follow our guidelines which are in accordance with public health. We will also advise Public Health who will continually will advise us on follow up standard procedures. We will keep you fully updated by phone during this process.

## If Ireland goes into lockdown - will DOCDSS have enough supplies?

We have ordered extra medical supplies and are expecting deliver of two large shipments

week of the 23<sup>rd</sup> March. Our residential units have stocked up on foods. We are working together to maintain services. Our team responsible for gathering medical supplies are working round the clock to make sure we get a reasonable amount of proper medical supplies for any contingency.

## Are there plans to close DOCDSS completely?

While our Day and respite service centres are closed, we continue to care for the people residing on our campuses and in the community, and will continue to attend to their needs through the emergency period. Families should contact their service centre for regular up-

dates. We will also be issuing updates through letters, emails, and through our Twitter account at @DOCDSS.

## What can I do in the meantime?

Follow trusted news sources and look for official statement from DOCDSS, public health officials and ministers. Engage in social distancing, hand hygiene, and avoid going out other than for work or essential services. Stay in contact with your service-supported family member through phone calls or video chats; contact your service centre to make arrangements. Stay positive—the emergency will be over before long and things will return to normal.

