

Local Developments

HSJ - Top teaching hospital suspends cancer surgery - 1 April 2020

University Hospitals of Birmingham FT tells patients it has suspended non-urgent cancer surgery

In a letter sent to a cancer patient expecting surgery this month, University Hospitals Birmingham Foundation Trust, said it had “taken the difficult decision to suspend all non-urgent surgery, including cancer surgery”.

”Not all cancer operations have been cancelled at UHB, however, we are having to defer a high proportion of them or offer alternative treatments given the impact of COVID-19.”

<https://www.hsj.co.uk/quality-and-performance/top-teaching-hospital-suspends-cancer-surgery/7027293.article>

West Midlands Combined Authority - Covid-19 Support - April 2020

The coronavirus outbreak is transforming the way we live and work. Here at West Midlands Combined Authority we recognise the serious and unprecedented nature of this situation and are working hard to maintain essential services to businesses and residents and to keep our communities safe.

<https://beta.wmca.org.uk/what-we-do/covid-19-support>

Birmingham City Council- Coronavirus (COVID-19) - April 2020

As a council we have been preparing for the last couple of months for the challenges of coronavirus, and the weeks and months ahead.

The Birmingham 12 point plan has been developed to meet the needs of our city, our residents and our communities. It is based on local knowledge and expertise, and also draws in best practice from elsewhere.

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/50231/coronavirus_covid-19/2062/birmingham_cc_s_response_to_covid-19

BSOL CCG - Mental Health Support Offer Launched For Birmingham and Solihull Children, Young People, Adults and Key Workers - April 2020

NHS Birmingham and Solihull Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has announced a range of mental health support for local people during this difficult time.

For many, the current circumstances are uncertain and stressful, and may make underlying mental and physical health conditions worse. New, easily accessible support, has now been made available by the local NHS, for the following groups:

0-18 year olds in Birmingham

0-18 year olds in Solihull

Over 18s in Birmingham and Solihull

Key workers.

<https://www.birminghamandsolihullccg.nhs.uk/news/1510-mental-health-support-offer-launched-for-birmingham-and-solihull-children-young-people-adults-and-key-workers>

BSOL CCG - Heartlands Hospital Gynaecology Assessment Unit To Be Temporarily Relocated and Home Birth Service Temporarily Suspended - April 2020

Due to the unprecedented demand on the NHS during the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic, we are temporarily relocating the Heartlands Hospital Gynaecology Assessment Unit (GAU) to Good Hope Hospital, from Thursday, April 2.

The Home Birth Service for pregnant women in the north and east of Birmingham has also been temporarily suspended with immediate effect, for the same reason.

<https://www.birminghamandsolihullccg.nhs.uk/news/1509-heartlands-hospital-gynaecology-assessment-unit-to-be-temporarily-relocated-and-home-birth-service-temporarily-suspended>

BSOL CCG - Erdington Health and Wellbeing Walk-In Centre To Temporarily Close - March 2020

We are having to make some temporary changes to local NHS services, to help us care for patients and maintain safe staffing levels.

Due to the very low number of patients attending the Erdington Walk-in Centre over recent weeks, the decision has been made to temporarily close the service.

<https://www.birminghamandsolihullccg.nhs.uk/news/1505-erdington-health-and-wellbeing-walk-in-centre-to-temporarily-close>

BSOL CCG - Good Hope Children's A&E Department Temporarily Closes To Increase Coronavirus Capacity - March 2020

Due to the unprecedented demand on the NHS during the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic, the Children's A&E at Good Hope Hospital will temporarily be closing from today, Friday 27 March.

In light of these changes, parents are asked not to take their children to Good Hope Hospital A&E.

<https://www.birminghamandsolihullccg.nhs.uk/news/1504-good-hope-children-s-a-e-department-temporarily-closes-to-increase-coronavirus-capacity>

National Developments

HSJ - Hancock announces £13bn debt 'write-off' - 2 April 2020

The government has announced it will “write-off” £13 billion of historic debt across the NHS.

Financially struggling trusts have been routinely forced to seek emergency bailout loans from the Department of Health and Social Care. Last year trusts’ total debts reached £14 bn of which £10bn was related to emergency loans.

Matt Hancock said he had made a “landmark step” to help the NHS’ covid-19 response. However the plans had already been discussed at a January meeting called by NHS England and NHS Improvement, and had been under consideration for at least 20 months.

<https://www.hsj.co.uk/finance-and-efficiency/hancock-announces-13bn-debt-write-off/7027305.article>

BMA, CQC, CPA, RCGP -Joint statement on advance care planning - 30 March 2020

The importance of having a personalised care plan in place, especially for older people, people who are frail or have other serious conditions has never been more important than it is now during the Covid 19 Pandemic.

Where a person has capacity, as defined by the Mental Capacity Act, this advance care plan should always be discussed with them directly. Where a person lacks the capacity to engage with this process then it is reasonable to produce such a plan following best interest guidelines with the involvement of family members or other appropriate individuals.

Such advance care plans may result in the consideration and completion of a Do Not Attempt Resuscitation (DNAR) or ReSPECT form. It remains essential that these decisions are made on an individual basis. The General Practitioner continues to have a central role in the consideration, completion and signing of DNAR forms for people in community settings.

It is unacceptable for advance care plans, with or without DNAR form completion to be applied to groups of people of any description. These decisions must continue to be made on an individual basis according to need.

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKCQC/bulletins/283e565>

HSJ - Details of Nightingale's clinical model revealed - 2 April 2020

Extensive details of the clinical model for the new Nightingale Hospital in east London have been seen by HSJ – including the criteria for admitting patients and expected difficulties in transferring patients from other acute sites.

The draft model, which was completed on Wednesday, also includes a list of “unfamiliar” tasks that non-specialist nurses will encounter, such as “emergency procedures”.

It is understood the field hospitals being established in Manchester and Birmingham will follow a different model, providing only “step down” care.

<https://www.hsj.co.uk/news/exclusive-details-of-nightingales-clinical-model-revealed/7027299.article>

NHS England - Airline cabin crew to join NHS nightingale carers - 30 March 2020

The NHS has enlisted easyJet and Virgin Atlantic to work alongside NHS clinicians at new Nightingale hospitals as part of the fight against coronavirus.

The airlines are asking staff who have not been working since the COVID-19 pandemic grounded some planes to consider helping the thousands of doctors, nurses and other medics at the new hospitals being built across the country.

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/2020/03/airline-cabin-crew-to-join-nhs-nightingale-carers>

NICE - NICE publishes latest set of rapid guidelines - 1 April 2020

Rapid guidelines

The first guidelines cover care for people receiving:

- [critical care](#)
- [haematopoietic stem cell transplantation](#)
- [kidney dialysis](#)
- [radiotherapy](#)
- [systemic anticancer treatments](#).

They're developed in collaboration with NHS England and NHS Improvement and a cross-speciality clinical group, supported by the specialist societies and royal colleges. [We're using a different approach to normal](#) in order to develop these quickly.

<https://www.nice.org.uk/covid-19>

NICE - NICE updates rapid COVID-19 guideline on critical care -25 March 2020

We have listened to concerns raised by patient groups about the application of our rapid COVID-19 critical care guideline.

<https://www.nice.org.uk/news/article/nice-updates-rapid-covid-19-guideline-on-critical-care>

LGA - Coronavirus: firefighters to deliver food and medicine, drive ambulances and retrieve bodies - 27 March 2020

Firefighters will be able to deliver food and medicines, drive ambulances, and retrieve dead bodies during the coronavirus outbreak in an unprecedented agreement between the Fire Brigades Union (FBU), fire chiefs, and Fire and Rescue Employers.

<https://www.local.gov.uk/coronavirus-firefighters-deliver-food-and-medicine-drive-ambulances-and-retrieve-bodies>

GMC - What can patients expect of their doctor? - March 2020

Doctors, and the whole healthcare team, are under intense pressure at the moment. The impact of coronavirus means they might need to deliver care in different ways. They are trying to do their best for all the patients they treat and to protect the health of the public.

<https://www.gmc-uk.org/news/news-archive/coronavirus-information-and-advice/information-for-patients>

Health Education England - Coronavirus Learning for the Health and Care workforce - March 2020

This free to access programme has been created by Health Education England e-Learning for Healthcare (HEE e-LfH) in response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) global pandemic.

The programme includes key materials to help the health and care workforce respond to Coronavirus.

<https://www.e-lfh.org.uk/programmes/coronavirus/>

GOV.UK - New advice to support mental health during coronavirus outbreak - 29 March 2020

People struggling with their mental health during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak will be offered additional online support and practical guidance to help them cope. Parents and carers will also benefit from tailored advice on how to support children and young people with stress during the coronavirus outbreak, which includes providing clear information, being aware of their own reactions and creating a new routine.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-advice-to-support-mental-health-during-coronavirus-outbreak>

Relevant Reports, Findings and Official Figures

GOV.UK - Coronavirus (COVID-19): hospital discharge service requirements - 19 March 2020

Sets out how health and care systems and providers should change their discharging arrangements and the provision of community support during the coronavirus situation

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-hospital-discharge-service-requirements>

GOV.UK - COVID-19: ethical framework for adult social care - 19 March 2020

Guidance on ethical considerations for local authorities and adult social care professionals planning their response to COVID-19.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-ethical-framework-for-adult-social-care>

GOV.UK - Care Act easements: guidance for local authorities - 1 April 2020

This guidance sets out how Local Authorities can use the new Care Act easements, created under the Coronavirus Act 2020, to ensure the best possible care for people in our society during this exceptional period.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-changes-to-the-care-act-2014/care-act-easements-guidance-for-local-authorities>

ONS - Coronavirus (COVID-19) roundup - 1 April 2020

Office for National Statistics (ONS) data and analysis are vital for informing the public and the government's response to COVID-19. This page is a summary of insights from our most recent analysis and will be updated as new publications are released.

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/conditionsanddiseases/articles/coronaviruscovid19roundup/2020-03-26>

World Health Organisation - Preventing COVID-19 outbreak in prisons: a challenging but essential task for authorities - 23 March 2020

WHO/Europe has published interim guidance on how to deal with the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in prisons and other places of detention, entitled "Preparedness, prevention and control of COVID-19 in prisons and other places of detention".

<http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/health-determinants/prisons-and-health/news/news/2020/3/preventing-covid-19-outbreak-in-prisons-a-challenging-but-essential-task-for-authorities>

The Kings Fund - Health and care: the first 100 days of the new government - 27 March 2020

The new government arrived in office on 13 December 2019 with the health and care system facing significant and persistent challenges, many of which the government committed to addressing in its manifesto. However, these challenges have been dwarfed by the Covid-19 (coronavirus) outbreak, which has emerged as the biggest public health emergency and most significant challenge to health and care services since the NHS was established.

<https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/publications/health-care-first-100-days-government>

What Works Wellbeing - New research on emotional wellbeing impacts of COVID-19 - 1 April 2020

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to many communities and organisations developing ways to support each other, especially those most vulnerable. Evidence shows that having someone to rely on in times of trouble is the top driver of a high-wellbeing nation. Helping others and having purpose supports personal wellbeing. So this is a good sign.

Yet, there is already evidence showing that 5% of the UK population feel chronically lonely, and the overlap between loneliness and those at risk of low wellbeing. With physical distancing, being on lockdown, and relying increasingly on technology to connect, there is a risk that loneliness will increase along with social isolation.

<https://whatworkswellbeing.org/blog/new-research-on-emotional-wellbeing-impacts-of-covid-19/>

Independent Age - Survey reveals challenges faced by over-65s during pandemic - 27 March 2020

The impact of COVID-19 has been felt by older people across the UK, with three in five (60%) over-65s unable to get enough supplies to cover their day to day needs, shows a survey by older people's charity Independent Age.

The poll found that three in four over-65s had already significantly limited their social contact, and more than two-thirds felt anxious or worried about the impact of coronavirus.

The Independent Age poll of 489 UK adults aged over 65, carried out by Opinium, also revealed that close to one in eight people - 12% - had heard or been on the receiving end of negative language about older people in relation to COVID-19.

<https://www.independentage.org/news-media/press-releases/independent-age-survey-reveals-challenges-faced-by-over-65s-during>

CQC - COVID-19: interim guidance on DBS and other recruitment checks - 2 April 2020

CQC interim guidance on DBS and other recruitment checks, for providers recruiting staff and volunteers to health and social care services in response to coronavirus (COVID-19).

We have issued this interim guidance in response to temporary changes being made by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to DBS applications and processes. It will be in operation for the period the Coronavirus Act 2020 remains in force.

<https://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-providers/all-services/covid-19-interim-guidance-dbs-other-recruitment-checks>

Housing LIN - COVID-19: Tips for housing sector on end of life care - 25 March 2020

With the further escalation of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the UK, the lives of residents are at risk and those who are vulnerable may die of their current long-term condition.

This timely Housing LIN briefing set out a number of tips for the housing sector on end of life care and signposts to a selection of useful links and further practical advice.

<https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/type/COVID-19-Tips-for-housing-sector-on-end-of-life-care/>

Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee - Pharmacy bodies publish resilience guidance to support pharmacy teams - 25 March 2020

PSNC, working closely with NPA, CCA and AIM, has published guidance to help support and maintain the community pharmacy network during the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

These are unprecedented times and exceptional measures may be required to ensure patient and public safety, as well as the safety and welfare of the pharmacy team. The joint guidance therefore considers the support needed for pharmacy staff to stay well at work, in the context of opening hours, during what are likely to be increasingly difficult and stressful times.

<https://psnc.org.uk/our-news/pharmacy-bodies-publish-resilience-guidance-to-support-pharmacy-teams/>

Insights, Opinion pieces & Views

Please note the articles placed below are to inform about the dialogue around issues people are facing at this time and are not an endorsement of Healthwatch Birmingham's views

GOV.UK - Even for a pandemic expert like me, life in isolation has been a struggle - 2 April 2020

Personal Blog post by Paul Cosford - former Medical Director of Public Health England

<https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2020/04/02/even-for-a-pandemic-expert-like-me-life-in-isolation-has-been-a-struggle/>

Socialist Resistance - The Pandemic Coronavirus COVID-19 and Disabled People - 28 March 2020

In recent weeks Disabled people of all ages have voiced their anger and frustration at the apparent disregard of their needs and interests by the Johnson government during the current pandemic. At this particular moment in time the support required by Disabled people to access the same rights and opportunities as non-Disabled people is absent as a direct result of the government's inability and failure to address the **medical**, **socio-economic**, and **political** issues that have arisen due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

<https://socialistresistance.org/the-pandemic-coronavirus-covid-19-and-disabled-people/19606>

The Lancet - The COVID-19 response must be disability inclusive - 27 March 2020

There are more than 1 billion people living with disabilities (PLWD) worldwide. The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic is likely to disproportionately affect these individuals, putting them at risk of increased morbidity and mortality, underscoring the urgent need to improve provision of health care for this group and maintain the global health commitment to achieving Universal Health Coverage

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667\(20\)30076-1/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667(20)30076-1/fulltext)

Self Injury support - Coping with Coronavirus Lockdown When Your Mental Health is Already Not Great - 27 March 2020

This blog is about the impact of the current lockdown situation if you are already struggling with your mental health

<https://www.selfinjurysupport.org.uk/blog/coping-with-coronavirus-lockdown-when-your-mental-health-is-already-not-great>

Red pepper - The politics of Covid-19 - March 2020

Piece by a disabled adult discussing concerns about the government response, and how it applies to them as someone who employs their own care staff through direct payments.

<https://www.redpepper.org.uk/covid-19-disabled-peoples-rights/>

gal-dem - From stop and search to coronavirus - increased police powers will always harm people of colour - 25 March 2020

The Coronavirus Bill will give the police unprecedented power. Here's how this will affect our communities, and what we can do to look out for one another.

<https://gal-dem.com/from-stop-and-search-to-coronavirus-increased-police-powers-will-always-harm-people-of-colour/>

Centre for Mental Health - Managing an anxiety disorder in the midst of coronavirus - 24 March 2020

This is a truly weird time for everyone, but some of us may have found that the concerns around coronavirus and the general atmosphere of anxiety have exacerbated our mental health problems.

<https://www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk/blog/centre-mental-health-blog/managing-anxiety-disorder-coronavirus>