**Process for appeals to the Care Home non-essential visitor best practice**

This document outlines the appeals process concerning the Hertfordshire County Council guidance related to non-essential visitors into care homes on the 3August.

In some circumstances care homes may feel that they have assessed the risk as to be manageable and therefore can safely open some or all of their home to non-essential visitors before the currently policy outlines.

In these instances, the following process will be followed by the care home and the wider system partners in Hertfordshire in the form of the Covid19 care home outbreak cell.

The care home must email the Provider Hub using the email [assistance@hcpa.info](mailto:assistance@hcpa.info), outlining the risk assessment they have undertaken to reach this conclusion. This will then be sent to the relevant HCC staff member. This email should cover:

* + Current position of the home in terms of the outbreak or Covid 19 status amongst staff and residents.
  + A confirmation that the swabbing for all negative residents and staff has been undertaken at 4-7 days
  + When the home was last open for non-essential visits and how they were operated and will manage visitors going forward
  + The risk assessment undertaken using the visitor guidance checklist and the measures that will be taken to avoid any risk of transmission

The county council will respond to the care home with a clear decision within a maximum of 3 working days although will aim to respond quicker.

Any decision made as part of the appeal can be reviewed and amended based on new evidence and prevalence of Covid19 in the local system.

The decision only applies for that outbreak and a home will need to close for non-essential visitors if there is a new outbreak or if there is a new positive case or symptomatic resident or staff member.

**Stage 1**

The information from the home will be taken to the relevant care home Covid19 outbreak cell for decision.

* The cell will consider the risk assessment and supplementary information supplied by the care home, any evidence from partners and the current local area prevalence rate

For a decision to be made, a quorum must be established as defined in the Covid19 cell terms of reference and including a representative from Hertfordshire County Council’s public health department. The chair of the outbreak cell’s responsibility is to ensure that all views are accounted for when agreeing either a decision or to escalate to Stage 2.

The decision made will be formally noted on the outbreak cell decision log and an email outlining the decision will be sent on behalf of the Chair of the outbreak cell.

**Stage 2**

If the care home outbreak feels they are unable to make a decision or a quorum is not present, then the decision is escalated to Hertfordshire County Council’s Director of Public Health for a decision.

The decision made will be formally noted at the next outbreak cell, logged on the outbreak cell decision log and an email outlining the decision will be sent on behalf of the Chair of the outbreak cell.