

20th March 2020

Dear Colleagues

I first wrote to you about Covid-19 a short while ago and since that time the spread and impact of this pandemic has become unprecedented. I personally cannot recall anything like this in my life time, main stream schools are closing, people at risk are being asked to stay at home, sporting events globally have been put on hold and the country is slowing down to minimise the impact of this unique and devastating virus.

We are blessed to be able to care and support for some of the most vulnerable people in the UK. Your efforts in times of normality are extraordinary making a significant difference for those in our care and for their families. Today and over the coming period what we do, how we continue to provide the care and support for those who have no other choice will help define us.

I know that we will all face some difficult personal challenges at work and home during this time. I am confident we will find a way to work through these, respond professionally and maintain the valuable continuity of care and support across our services.

This may require us all to be flexible in what we do, this may entail working in unfamiliar circumstances or surroundings, or working in areas outside our usual roles for the benefit of people who we care for. This can be stressful and you may have concerns about both the practicalities and implications of working in such circumstances. At this time we need to pull together, support each other and do what is required.

As you will know we have a team dedicated to support you and provide the help where we can to make your efforts easier. I am keeping very close to them and I have already learnt of many staff who are setting an example for all. We have several services in 'service isolation' with staff living in those services 24 / 7 for the required period of isolation, those who have cancelled holiday to maintain staffing and many more.

Finally, for those of you who know me, family is incredibly important to me, and I extend my concept of family to you and those in our care. As one big family I could not be more proud of you all. I would like to thank you all for all your commitment and I am humbled by how we are approaching these challenges.

So thank you again.

With kind regards
Haroon

Haroon Rashid Sheikh
Chief Executive Officer

Extraordinary days every day