



25 March 2020

COVID-19: Tips for housing sector on end of life care

A Housing LIN Practice Briefing

About this briefing

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

Background

It may appear awkward to raise end of life care at this time but with the escalation of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the UK, [good quality end of life care](#) is as important now as it ever has been.

Whilst your residents are vulnerable and may die of their current long-term condition, there is now an added threat that some may contract [COVID-19](#) putting their lives further at risk.

The Housing LIN practice briefing, [Housing and Care in Specialist Housing](#), asks if you know your local community end of life care services, hospice or Macmillan nurses? It also asks do you know which residents have advance care planning arrangements, have stated their preference in the event of emergency resuscitation (via a DNACPR or ReSPECT process – see links below) and have this documented?

Top tips on end of life care and housing

In the light of the above, we would suggest you consider the following tips to support your residents:

- Ensure all your residents have an [Advance Care Plan](#) (ACP) documenting if they become unwell, what their wishes and preferences would be before and after death, and with their consent share this with their next of kin usually their families.

If you need support contact your local district nurse team, GP practice or palliative care team or other [national helplines](#).

- Having conversations around [Advance Care Planning](#) requires time and need to be undertaken in a sensitive manner especially around the issue of what will be the treatment response should a person deteriorates.

Specific aspects of care will need to be recorded such as '[DNACPR](#)' (Do Not Attempt Cardio respiratory Resuscitation) or the [ReSPECT](#) form if it is being used in your area. If you have a resident who requires [end of life care](#), keeping them within your facility will be important in these unprecedented times. It is important now to find out how you can

receive further support from your local palliative care team as many are providing virtual support via skype or similar.

- Find out how to access support for your resident needs from both health and social care to access medication and any equipment if available.

Additional support may be available from the community and primary care team but be aware that this may change from day to day due to their potential increasing commitments.

- Create a list of available support that includes a list of contact names and numbers especially when needed in an emergency.

It is important to make sure you stay in touch with families, being clear about their loved one's condition. Give clear advice about visiting times. No doubt you will all have [restrictions](#) in place but you will need to recognise and take a pragmatic, supportive and safe approach in the event of a resident dying with the family being there where possible to support them.

- Do encourage the use of technology (such as Skype or the phone) to keep residents and families in touch.

Remember the basics in [end of life care](#) still apply. It is paramount that the needs of the person and their family still apply, the memories of this difficult time will last.

Following the death of a resident your previous processes for the removal of the deceased may be different so do contact your local coroner, funeral director and crematorium to find out what the situation is locally as this may change over time.

Useful links and further practical advice

- Government guidance for social or community care and residential settings
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-social-or-community-care-and-residential-settings-on-covid-19>
- Practical guidance in caring for an individual who is in the final days of life at home or in a community setting
<https://helixcentre.com/project-end-of-life-toolkit>
- National guidance on Do Not Attempt Resuscitation
<https://www.resus.org.uk/dnacpr/>
- ReSPECT is a process that creates personalised recommendations for a person's clinical care in a future emergency in which they are unable to make or express choices
<https://www.resus.org.uk/respect/>
- Advance care planning - Planning your future care – information booklet for the public
<https://www.nhs.uk/planners/end-of-life-care/documents/planning-for-your-future-care.pdf>
- Advance Care Planning Compassion in dying
<https://compassionindying.org.uk/making-decisions-and-planning-your-care/planning-ahead/why-plan-ahead/>
- Care after death
<https://www.nfda.org/covid-19>

Housing and End of life care

The Housing LIN curates a dedicated website on housing, bereavement and end of life care at: <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/EndOfLifeCare/>

Acknowledgements

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Also read Claire's guest blog for the Housing LIN last year on housing and end of life care at: <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/blogs/Housing-and-end-of-life-care/>

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About the Housing LIN

The Housing LIN is a sophisticated network bringing together over 25,000 housing, health and social care professionals in England, Wales and Scotland to exemplify innovative housing solutions for an ageing population.

For more information on Coronavirus, visit the Housing LIN's online Info Hub on our Health Intel webpages at:

<https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/HealthandHousing/coronavirus-info-hub/>

If you would like to talk through how the Housing LIN can support your organisation at this time, please do not hesitate to contact us (see contact details below). And for more about our consultancy services, visit: <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/consultancy/>

And if you would like to write a briefing for the Housing LIN on how your organisation is tackling coronavirus, please email us at: info@housinglin.org.uk

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