



News from Justlife a Frontline Network Partner



This our second Coronavirus (COVID-19) email update. (24th March)

We hope that everyone is ok and your services are coping with these unprecedented times.

We appreciate that many of you will be receiving regular updates from your own organisations, with the situation continuing to change on a day-by-day basis, and many of you will be focused on other priorities and rather busy to read lots of emails.

However, on the other hand, we didn't want to assume people had access to information that might be helpful, so we have put together some information and resources below that you might find useful.

Kate and Simon

Brighton & Hove Frontline Network Team

ps. sorry for the format of this email (there's rather a lot of text, but do scroll down to make sure you don't miss anything.)

And don't forget, if you want to get in touch
email: kate@justlife.org.uk

Local news



An update from Simon relating to those in Emergency & Temporary Accommodation

Food & supplies: The Food Partnership are working on a plan to upscale food distribution in the city for people who rely on food banks etc. This will include people in emergency and temporary accommodation as well as supported accommodation. The model will involve hubs around the city. The hubs will make food parcels and potentially cooked meals. Services will then be able to collect food and deliver it to people in EA/TA. Basic supplies such as loo roll and cooking equipment will hopefully be available too. It's great to know food will be available and I can update when more is known. I suggest support organisations coordinate together the work of getting the food to people and share resources as I'm sure we will all have reduced staff teams.

Accommodation for people who are self isolating: Housing have reserved self contained units for people who need to self isolate, either for those in EA who are currently sharing facilities, or for those who have been rough sleeping. I believe they are also looking at other options of places to open asap. I'm sure they will update when there is news.

Council response; The council are running a number of cell groups to respond to various issues related to COVID-19, 3 of these I am aware of are vulnerable people, vulnerable accommodation and food distribution. Hopefully these will be effective ways to mobilise support, action and partnership working so that those in EA/TA are OK.

Move-In Packs: Justlife have some move-in packs available for rough sleepers going into any sort of emergency accommodation. Packs include basic items such as: toiletries/cutlery/crockery/kettle/toaster
Workers can contact the Justlife office on 0300 123 1550 to find out how they can get a pack for a client they are supporting.

Dr Tim Worthley, at Arch Healthcare, shares some advice for those being supported with dependence problems

Hello,

There is understandably some concern about how people will manage on self-isolation or lockdown in hostels if they have dependence problems.

Unfortunately there are no clear guidelines. However I can offer some general advice which I hope will be of some use.

Alcohol

- People will be well aware that it is dangerous to reduce alcohol intake too quickly.
- As a general rule of thumb, if you are a very heavy drinker who drinks throughout the day, you should manage a drop in alcohol providing that it isn't lower than the equivalent of 30 units daily. This would be 750mls of vodka/3 bottles wine/15 cans 5.5% beer.
- If you are a heavy drinker, but do not need to start first thing in the morning, you should be able to manage on 20 units daily. This would be equivalent to 500mls vodka, 2 bottles wine, 10 cans 5.5% beer.
- Once stable on that upper amount, someone should be able to reduce by 10 percent each time that they reduce. A reduction could happen

every 1-3 days.

- Warning signs for reducing too quickly include marked tremor, persistent retching, profound sweating, and in particular disorientation or hallucinations.
- Of course everyone varies, and so each person will need their own plan. For that reason **I would recommend that anyone needing their alcohol intake to be limited/reduced be supported to ring their care coordinator or the duty worker at Pavilions**. A phone consultation could be carried out to advise on a reasonable way forward.
- It is crucial that anyone limiting/reducing their alcohol take 4-6 thiamine tablets daily and 1-2 omeprazole/lansoprazole tablets daily. They will also need to be closely monitored.

Heroin

- Although reducing/stopping heroin quickly is unpleasant, it is not life-threatening.
- Ideally if someone who is dependent is unable to access heroin, they should be supported to ring Pavilions immediately to see if a replacement methadone script can be offered. This is fraught with complications and so may not be possible. However it is worth discussing with the duty worker at Pavilions.
- If someone instead chooses to go through a 'cold turkey', then it may be that Arch Healthcare can support this by prescribing medication to reduce withdrawal symptoms.
- Please note that coronavirus can mimic withdrawal symptoms.

Methadone/Subutex scripts

- If someone is already on a script, then it should be possible for them to continue accessing this.
- Provided that they are not symptomatic, then they ought to be allowed to attend the pharmacy to collect as usual.
- If they are symptomatic, or in strict self-isolation, then alternative arrangements will need to be made.
- It is unlikely that pharmacies will be able to start delivering methadone/subutex scripts. This is because they are already at almost complete capacity.
- I would recommend speaking to the care co-ordinator at Pavilions to

see if the pick-up rate can be reduced eg from daily to three times/wk, or from twice/week to weekly. In some cases this will be appropriate. However it won't always be possible due to risks of overdose.

- Another option is to remove the supervision component of the script. Although this is sometimes stipulated on the prescription, it is not legally enforceable, and so pharmacists can choose to ignore this recommendation. That would enable the script to be collected by a support worker on behalf of the client. It may be that the pharmacist would like some confirmation of this from the Duty worker at Pavilions on a case-by-case basis. It would also be advisable for the client to ring the pharmacy to confirm that they are happy for a named individual to collect the methadone/subutex on their behalf.

Benzodiazepines

- As for alcohol, it is dangerous to stop these too quickly.
- However it is generally accepted that provided someone takes 30mg daily, no matter how much they were taking previously, they will not have a withdrawal seizure.
- It would be very difficult for Pavilions or Arch to commence prescribing a reducing dose of BDZ to someone without first having assessed them and taken urine samples etc. This is therefore a very difficult situation.
- As for alcohol, it is generally fine for clients to reduce by 10% daily. In my experience clients can safely reduce by 5mg every few days, although this can become very uncomfortable in the later stages of a detox.
- I would recommend phoning Pavilions or failing that Arch Healthcare for advice in this situation.

Spice

- This is not dangerous to stop quickly, unless it has been cut with large doses of benzodiazepines.
- However it can be very unpleasant to withdraw from.
- My advice would be to contact Pavilions or Arch to discuss a short-term prescription of diazepam or Quetiapine to help reduce withdrawal symptoms. This should not be needed for more than one week.

I hope this is helpful. Please let me know if you have any questions/

Kind regards

Tim

Dr Tim Worthley

Clinical Lead, Arch Healthcare

Brighton & Hove City Council Guidance

Here's the link to the guidance from the Council regarding people who are vulnerable, including those who are homeless and rough sleeping:

<https://new.brighton-hove.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/care-homes-vulnerable-and-older-people>

Digital Brighton & Hove

With all of us suddenly living much of life and work online, click [here](#) for Digital Brighton & Hove's latest newsletter full of resources and help for everyone.

National news

Some News from the National Frontline Network Team:

Emergency Fund Survey

The COVID-19 (Coronavirus) outbreak presents significant and fast-evolving challenges for the homelessness sector.

We are conscious that services are already being impacted by staff capacity as people go into isolation and work from



home, and that there could be severe consequences for the services you provide on the frontline.

In light of this, St Martin-in-the-Fields Charity is creating an “Emergency Fund”, which can be accessed by frontline workers supporting people experiencing homelessness, who have been directly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

To ensure this fund is as effective as possible, we want to identify the best ways to support your work during this outbreak.

We would like to know what emerging areas you believe require immediate additional funding, to support your work on the frontline.

This survey will take approximately 5 minutes to complete’

We want to hear from all frontline workers (case workers, managers, volunteers) who directly support people who are experiencing homelessness. This includes those working in the voluntary, statutory, and public sectors.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to complete this survey – the results will be anonymous.

[Complete the survey here](#)

C19 Frontline Worker Forum launching
JOIN THE C-19 FORUM TODAY

The "C-19 Frontline Worker Support Forum" is a space dedicated to sharing frontline worker information, guidance and solutions relating to COVID-19.

Anyone who is a frontline worker supporting people experiencing homelessness can utilise this vital resource.

You can ask a question, share information, or highlight best practice on how to best support people experiencing homelessness at this time.

We hope the C-19 Forum will highlight good practice and what works, but also be honest about the challenges faced.

Frontline workers are required to [register to the Frontline Network](#), in order to access the C-19 Forum, however we will shortly be making it free to access for all Frontline Workers.

Homeless Link Resources and Information

[Homeless Link](#) have updated their information and guidance. The link also includes a webinar recorded on the 18th March.



Communi



Find out what other local networks are doing across the UK, read the latest stories, search for events and explore what funding opportunities are available to you as a frontline worker.

You can also sign up to the latest news from the national Frontline Network [here](#).

The Brighton & Hove Frontline Network

The Brighton and Hove Frontline Network is for local frontline workers who support people experiencing homelessness to come together and share ideas and expertise.

The Brighton and Hove Frontline Network is hosted by Justlife and is part of the national St Martin's Frontline Network.



You are receiving this email because you have attended a Frontline Workers Network meet up or have asked to be updated or are someone we think may be

interested.

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