

Dear Colleague

Please see below useful information for those involved in the community response to COVID-19 [from the Eden Support Team](#).

Kindest Regards

Sonia

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From: King, Claire

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Subject: 08/06/2020 - Sharing info useful to those involved in community response to COVID-19

Hi everyone

I wanted to focus on the following for the update today.

Face coverings

On Thursday 4th June, it was announced that from Monday 15th June, it would be mandatory (a legal requirement) for the public to use face coverings on public transport. See [here](#)

On Friday 5th June, it was announced that from the same date, all staff in hospitals in England will be provided with surgical masks which they will be expected to wear from 15 June and all visitors and outpatients must wear face coverings at all times when visiting hospital sites. See [here](#)

Here is some info I hope is useful:

Isn't a face covering just a mask?

No. It is important to understand that a face covering is different from a mask. The public are being asked NOT to wear masks because this would place demand on stocks of PPE surgical masks (that are still needed by people working in the health and social care sector) and masks needed by people to protect them from industrial hazards through their work (dust, chemicals etc). A face covering is defined as a cloth/fabric covering that can be home-made or purchased. Please do not buy surgical or industrial grade masks (this disrupts the supply chain and can cause the cost to increase for others, such as care homes).

Why are people being asked to wear a face covering specifically on Public Transport?

People are still being advised to avoid public transport where they can, but if they do use public transport, it will be a legal requirement to wear a face covering from the 15th June on buses, ferries,

trains and planes (individuals can be fined if they don't wear a face covering when they should). When necessary to use public transport, people may be more likely to be in enclosed spaces for longer periods of time where we know there is a greater risk of the spread of the virus and social (physical) distancing is likely to be difficult to follow consistently. This differs from enclosed spaces like shops for example, where people can more easily go outside if social (physical) distancing is not possible and where shop owners can place limits on the number of customers allowed inside at any one time. The Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) has set out that using face coverings on public transport can provide some small additional protection to fellow passengers and can help people to avoid unknowingly spreading the virus if they are suffering from coronavirus, but not showing symptoms.

Why are people being asked to wear a face covering specifically when visiting hospitals/attending outpatient appointments?

Again, it can be difficult to maintain social (physical) distancing in busy areas, such as hospitals, where there are lots of people who are particularly vulnerable if they catch COVID-19. Many outpatient appointments require hospital staff to get very close to the patient, therefore this would be an additional measure to protect our frontline health and care workforce.

Are there certain groups of people who should not wear a face covering?

We are awaiting more detail from the Government on this one, but we do know that young children (face coverings pose a suffocation risk for children under the age of two), some people with disabilities and others with breathing problems are not required to wear a face covering. If in doubt speak to your GP, other health practitioner or health visitor for advice.

How do I make and wear a face covering?

There is guidance on how to wear and make a face covering on the Government website [here](#)

There is also information on the World Health Organisation website [here](#)

I've seen lots of people in public in Cumbria wearing face coverings, but they are not covering their noses. It is really important that the face covering covers both your mouth and nose. Also, do not wear the face covering around your neck or on top of your head when not in use.

People should wash their hands or use hand sanitiser before putting their face covering on and after taking it off and it is important that people don't touch their face covering when wearing it, where possible, to avoid hand to face covering transmission of the virus. Carry a bag (such as a sandwich/food bag) to keep your face covering in when it is not in use. Wash your face covering regularly and do not share it with other people.

Appreciate that on long journeys on public transport, people will need to eat and drink. Minimise the time spent not wearing your face covering and follow the good practice advice given above in this section regarding hand hygiene and handling of your face covering.

If I'm going to buy a face covering, is there anything to be aware of?

I would not recommend you buy surgical or industrial grade masks, look for cloth/fabric face coverings. In particular be cautious of masks from commercial websites/sellers that have valves attached. This is a type of N95 mask that have a one-way valve allowing exhaled air to pass through a small round or square filter disc attached to the front. The exhaled air may not be filtered and therefore it can undermine the job of a face covering in protecting those around you.

Anything else?

Here are a few other tips if you're not used to wearing face coverings:

1) remember to breathe! You may subconsciously change how you breathe when your nose and mouth are covered so try to breathe normally

- 2) wearing a face covering can make you feel warmer, so wear layers in case you get hot on public transport or in hospital settings (which we know can be hot anyway)
- 3) Experiment with wearing your face covering at home before having to wear it for any period of time when on public transport or whilst attending/visiting hospital – that way you can adjust it and find out how to wear it most comfortably before being in a situation where you can't touch it.

Finally, these are the go-to sources of information regarding community resilience and COVID-19. Information updated daily.

- See Cumbria CVS COVID-19 [webpage](#) and volunteering [webpage](#)
- See Cumbria County Council COVID-19 [webpage](#)
- See Cumbria LEP COVID-19 webpages. Available [here](#)

All the government guidance:

Find national guidance and announcements about coronavirus (COVID-19) [here](#)

Thanks

Claire

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Please be aware that I work flexible hours, so whilst this is a convenient time for me to send this email to you – I do not expect a response from you outside your normal working hours