Covid-19: Young People & General Practice Webinar
1st July 2020
RESOURCES & MATERIALS

Today’s webinar has been recorded and will shortly be available for viewing, together with interviews with each of the speakers covering some of the topics in greater depth and addressing questions that were raised with insufficient time to respond. The links for all of these videos can be found at www.youngpeopleshealth.org.uk/resources.

About our organisations:

The Vale of Trent Faculty of the Royal College of General Practitioners covers an area stretching from Ashbourne to Skegness and includes Boston, Derby, Lincoln, Mansfield and Nottingham. The Faculty Board, which is made up of volunteers including RCGP members and fellows, a lay member, foundation doctors and medical students, aims to support our members’ professional development by arranging educational, networking and special events for GPs and GP registrars and also careers events for medical students and foundation doctors. For more information go to https://www.rcgp.org.uk/rcgp-near-you/faculties/central-and-east-england-region/vale-of-trent-faculty.aspx

The aim of the RCGP Adolescent Health Group (AHG), since its inception in 1992, has always been to promote the highest possible standards of health provision for young people in a changing world. We do this in the UK by supporting GPs through education, promoting good communication and service development. If you have an interest in the health of 10-25 year olds, you may be interested in joining the RCGP AHG Associates. No actual commitments are necessary, but we will write to you at times asking for your opinions and experience. We will keep you abreast of developments and occasionally offer opportunities for research and other collaboration. Finally, we have an open meeting once a year with opportunity for you to tell us about your work. If you are interested or have any questions please do contact the Chair of the AHG: marian.davis@nhs.net

The Association for Young People’s Health (AYPH) is the UK’s leading independent voice for young people’s health. We work to improve the health and wellbeing of 10-24 year olds. We do this by:

- Involving young people in our work and making sure their views are heard
- Working with healthcare providers to improve services for young people
- Improving access to information, resources and innovation
- Promoting evidence-based practice and highlighting important data
- Increasing communication between practitioners from different sectors.

For more information about AYPH and becoming a member go to: http://www.youngpeopleshealth.org.uk
Resources recommended by the speakers are as follows:

**Collated Resources**
AYPH resources webpage:
https://www.youngpeopleshealth.org.uk/resources

**The Impact of Covid-19 on Young People**
https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanrhe/article/PIIS2665-9913(20)30212-5/fulltext

https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(20)31445-8/fulltext

http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/bmjpo-2020-000701

The Children’s Society: The impact of COVID-19 on children and young people

**Young People’s Experiences of Lockdown**
RCPCH page on young people’s experiences under lockdown:
https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/resources/covid-19-research-studies-children-young-people-views

Partnership for Young London: Checking in: voices of young people during lockdown
https://3532bf5a-d879-4481-8c8f-127da8c44deb.usrfiles.com/ugd/3532bf_7c20f5f6ef1e4c25afd7be462efa4126.pdf

NSPCC: What children are saying to Childline about coronavirus

**Information for Young People**
Elizabeth Jenner, Kate Wilson & Nia Roberts: Coronavirus - A book for children

https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-for-adolescents-and-youth-related-to-covid-19
Information for Parents
RCPCH: Advice for parents during coronavirus
https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2020-04/covid19_advice_for_parents_when_child_unwell_or_injured_poster.pdf

“Why won’t my teenager talk to me?” John Coleman. 2nd Edition. Routledge, 2018
www.jcoleman.co.uk

Guidance on Remote Consulting
University of Oxford: Video consultation information for GPs
https://www.phc.ox.ac.uk/research/resources/video-consulting-in-the-nhs

MDU: Receiving and storing patient images from online consultations

RCGP / NHSR: Principles of safe video consulting in general practice during COVID-19

Sally-Anne Pygall. 2017 Telephone Triage and Consultation: Are we really listening? Pub RCGP Learning

MDDUS: Practice Manager 2018, Issue 18: Tech Savvy
https://www.mddus.com/resources/publications-library/practice-manager

IRISi: Guidance for General Practice Teams

RCGP: Covid-19 and Safeguarding
Future Webinars and Events:

**COVID-19 and children: what the busy clinician needs to know**
This webinar is to provide support for primary care clinicians managing children and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is being jointly presented by the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP), the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH) and the Academic Health Science Network.
Thu, July 9, 2020. 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM BST

**Optimising engagement and outcomes for patients with Functional/Medically Unexplained Symptoms**
UCL Great Ormond Street Institute of Child Health Webinar.
11 September 2020, 8:30 am–2:00 pm
Covid-19: 10 Top Tips for
GP Practice Safeguarding Leads

The Primary Care Safeguarding Forum (PCSF) and the National Network of Named GP representatives (NNNGP) have put together the following 10 Top Tips that GP Practice safeguarding leads may wish to consider, to support their practices, themselves and above all, vulnerable children, families and adults during these unprecedented times. The continued effort to fulfil the responsibilities of your GP Practice safeguarding lead role is truly appreciated by all.

1. **Safeguarding issues and health risks still exist**

Regrettfully safeguarding issues and other illnesses will continue to develop during these COVID-19 times. They will become potentially more covert, trickier to identify and manage. The incidence and threat of Domestic Violence (and other forms of abuse) is likely to escalate with so many families in a state of lockdown, isolation and facing financial constraints. (See appendix A) Please ensure all your staff remain ‘professionally curious’ during these challenging times.

2. **Children will still suffer from illness, unrelated to COVID illness, sometimes seriously**

Children will continue to get unwell from the usual childhood ailments unrelated to COVID-19 and so require the normal standard of care. They are not being brought into A&E, not being regularly seen at school or in the community including within our own practice and sadly, some are dying avoidable deaths due to missed or late diagnoses. Consider providing parents guidance to keep a vigilant eye on their children’s health and to know when and who to contact if their child becomes unwell. (See appendix B).

Similar concerns apply to pregnant women who must continue to have routine checks and be aware of when and how to contact their midwife or GP if worried. Please ensure that a post-natal check (including depression screening) and new baby check (including immunisations) remains an essentially provided practice service. Use this face-to-face opportunity to assess the well being of the family situation and ask direct questions on safeguarding issues sensitively and safely. The baby check and examination maybe the first time the baby (and family) has been out of the home environment since birth.

3. **Try and maintain effective communications with local SG partners**

Whilst many administrative functions and ‘routine work’ has been put on hold during this time, the essential work of safeguarding children and vulnerable adults continues. This essential work includes sharing information when requested by your local MASH; strategy discussions; case conferences and Section 42 enquiries. Consider abridged form completion or even telephoning MASH (or video conferencing) to discuss and share information. Please remember that the Caldicott rules of sharing information, confidentiality and consent still need to be appropriately followed, implemented and documented.

4. **Consider contacting your vulnerable, safeguarding ‘at risk’ patients**

   a. **Vulnerable children, families and adults**

   Using your current vulnerable risk registers, consider contacting them to ensure they are aware of the practice’s continued support for them. Attached are some templates (Appx C, D) that you may wish to consider using / modifying for this purpose.

   b. **Consider contacting your adolescent patients**

   Whether known to be vulnerable or not, consider searching and identifying all your adolescent patients (13-19 year olds) as a current potentially vulnerable group. Most are under lockdown or formal isolation at a time in their lives when they would be exploring the opportunities of independence and adventure. They are also increasingly aware of the tragic impact of COVID-19 within their own ‘peer group’ that will cause stress and anxiety from an otherwise usually ‘invincible’ cohort. Some may have become ‘young carers’ due to parental illness or parents needing to perform essential work. Attached is an adolescent template (appendix E) that you may wish to consider sending to support your adolescent patients, to keep their spirits up and provide resources to support healthy and resilient bodies and minds. Please use, tweak and amend as you wish (e.g. there maybe local resources you wish to add or substitute in the letter for them).

   c. **Consider ensuring End of Life plans are set up for all those in Care Homes and on your Palliative Care register**

   You may wish to ensure all staff have seen and the recent COVID-19 End of Life (EOL) care advice sent round by PHE/NHS. If you are looking after a care home, try to ensure, if not already done, that EOL care plans have been formulated and consider these for your established palliative care patients too. Please remember to involve patient and their next of kin where / if possible and consider current capacity issues too.

   ❖ To contact any of the above groups, consider using texts (e.g. using AccRx, MJOG) or sending e-mails.
   ❖ You may wish to telephone / video call (e.g. AccuRx, [www.clinic.co](http://www.clinic.co)) selected vulnerable patients who you know might struggle with the need to isolate, be shielded or be in lockdown.
   ❖ Consider posting support and advice on your practice website and / or any social media platform you have.

April 2020 v2
5. Effective communication & Professional curiosity

With the way we now consult having radically changed overnight, our well-known and respected abilities in effectively communicating with our patients remains our strength and passion. We are now primarily telephone triaging to manage the majority of our patients' primary care medical needs.

a. Remain professionally curious on the phone, don't be afraid to ask lots of questions and get context to the requests or discussions had.

b. Use closed questions a little more if you suspect there might be safeguarding concerns you want to explore. (e.g. with abusive partners or family members in the house)

c. Use the opportunity to update records and contact numbers / mobiles / e-mail addresses, especially for adolescents, onto your records so that you can develop opportunities to directly communicate with them

d. Consider video consultations where possible using AccuRx or other companies (e.g. https://www.clinic.co)

6. Flexible working can work well – even in safeguarding matters

IT departments around the country are assisting working from home using laptops, licences for home PC use to enable practice staff to be able to work from home and contribute, even if they are in self-isolation or being shielded. Many will welcome the opportunity to add something to their daily routine during this time. Please contact your local CCG IT department for more information and assistance.

7. Delegate and delegate some more

Don't do all of this on your own. Use any spare staffing capacity to do searches, collate and send out letters / texts / emails to your vulnerable groups. Many administrative tasks (e.g. coding, scanning, managing pathology, referrals etc.) will be significantly reduced at this time. To further help the practice consider:-

- Consider assistance from your local PPG group for some administrative support, e.g. letter stuffing, mail outs

- Contact the local Medical school to see if students have capacity to volunteer, they could support administrative

- as well as clinical functions e.g. taking BP, observations, ECGs, some nursing function too

- Consider contacting the NHS volunteer website to request support

- Liaise with your local practices, colleagues, PCN, federations for any collaborative support being offered

Amended DBS regulations should enable you to take on e.g. medical students (or other appropriate volunteers) who have an update DBS check within the last 3 years.

8. Signpost staff to the latest, relevant information

We are all being inundated with daily updates, e-mails and advice and it can easily be quite overwhelming. However, please consider signposting the recently circulated RCGP Covid-19 Safeguarding document. This gives advice to all staff on the adaptations that will need to be made for safeguarding in light of our current different way of working.

9. Don't be afraid to ask for help

Please remember there remain local safeguarding leads in your area who continue to support the tremendous work you do and are waiting for your call to provide any support and resource they can. Some may have been deployed to support the COVID efforts elsewhere but every area will have some named and designated professionals still working and will be delighted to assist, if they can, in fulfilling your roles and responsibilities for practice safeguarding. Please use your local SG directory to contact, if and when required:- consider contacting your Named GP (for children and or adults); Designated Doctor for children / adult SG or your Designated Nurse or Safeguarding adult lead.

10. Look after yourself

Aside from your continued devotion to looking after your patients, their safeguarding needs, and the needs and wants of your staff and your own family, please remember to look after yourself too. Look at ways that even you can work from home, using the IT technology available. Please consider continuing your networking and support by setting up more video conferencing for you and your teams / colleagues to use (e.g. Go To meeting, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Webex) – many are offering free trials or discounts for NHS staff / organisations at this time – just ask.

Please keep safe and healthy

Author: Dr Richard Burack, Chairman of the Primary Care Safeguarding Forum (PCSF), the National Network of Named GP representatives (RNNGP) & Member of the RCGP Adolescent Group

Author: Ms Megan Burack, NHS Volunteer & Medical Student, QMC, Nottingham University

In collaboration and with thanks to the executive members of the PCSF, RNNGP and the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) Adolescent Working Group (AWG)
Dear << name >>,

COVID-19: Information for our 13-19 year old patients

The NHS has been writing to all those patients who are at high risk of hospital admission should they contract the Coronavirus (or COVID-19 if you want to be technical). Thankfully, for the majority of you who remain fit, healthy and strong, you will not receive this letter nor have to therefore fully isolate yourself for a minimum of 12 weeks.

However, I am sure you are aware that COVID-19 can infect and affect anyone, of any age and in any state of fitness or health, sometimes with serious consequences.

As a practice, we wanted to take this opportunity to write to you to be able to advise you that we are still here, able and willing to support you and provide services for your on-going or developing medical needs.

We are trying to become as IT savvy as many of you already are, mainly doing telephone / video consultations and starting to use texts and e-mails. We are starting to update and develop our practice website {check out www.acmecaringpractice.co.uk} and even use social media platforms to provide messaging and support. {check out https://www.facebook.com/acmecaringpractice/}

We are also able to still see you face to face but only if this is essential. Currently, we will need to speak / video consult with you first as the best way to keep you safe and maintain your health.

We would also like to provide you with some additional information by answering some questions from young people on their healthcare and about COVID-19. We hope that our answers may help you cope with the restrictions that lockdown or self-isolation may have on your overall well-being.

Q1. Is it OK to be worried about what's happening?

These are truly extra-ordinary times where information and issues are changing extremely rapidly. It is not surprising that each day can feel totally different to the next and this is unsettling. What's happening in the world right now can feel daunting, unable to make plans even for the immediate future - it's very normal to feel anxious and unsure about things.

Maybe your exams have been cancelled, or your first year at university has come to a sudden halt, or school has been closed for the foreseeable future? Whether you're feeling overwhelmed, unproductive, anxious or hopeless, your feelings are justified – you are not alone in feeling this way.

Q2. Can I call to speak to a doctor if I am worried about my health?

If you are feeling very overwhelmed and are struggling to function normally, there is help available. Please contact us – we are still open for business. Calls may take a little longer to answer on our switchboard but we will endeavour to manage and direct your call to the most appropriate person to help with your medical query / need. {Call us on XXXXX XXXXXX}
Q3. Will my contact be confidential?

As a registered patient of ours, you are entitled to receive medical support, care and assistance from our staff. You do not need permission from your parents or guardian to make an appointment or chat to one of our doctors or nurses. Please be reassured that contact and discussions with any of our staff is treated with confidence, as will be the opportunity to speak or consult with one of our clinical staff.

Q4. I have read that I could e-mail the doctor with a question, is this possible?

As of April 1st, we are operating 'e-consult.' This means you can send us a question or concern and we will get back to you, on the same day, with a response. This is new for us and you will need to register to be able to use the service. If you are under 16, your parents will need to register on your behalf, but then you will be able to send a request yourself, and receive a reply back to your given e-mail.

Q5. Will you have a record of my mobile or e-mail address if you need to contact me?

With the increased role of technology in all we do now, it is very important that we have a current mobile and e-mail address for you, so that, with your permission, we can text or contact you directly. We may have an old contact or a parent's mobile number attached to your records so to update your details would help us ensure we can keep in contact with you appropriately and directly when you need advice or support.

Could you e-mail the practice (XXXCG.acaringpractice@nhs.net) with your current contact details and giving your consent (permission) for us to be able to contact you by this means if you are happy for us to do so. Our staff will then update your records.

Q6. I am a young carer, should I let you know about this?

Absolutely - yes please. Whether you have been a carer of others in your family for a while or just recently because of COVID-19 please contact the surgery so we can make a note of this. If you are struggling or having difficulties with your caring responsibilities or if you have any questions, we would be happy to try and help.

Q7. Social Media is giving me mixed messages and confusing me, how do I know what is true and what is false?

Sometimes feeling stressed or anxious can be related to seeing lots of media coverage and new stories about the impact of COVID-19. At the moment, there is a lot of coverage from all media and although it is important to stay informed, consider taking a break if you feel things are getting on top of you. Maybe you should stop looking at Twitter? A horrendous thing to suggest, I know. However some days, social media might be your only source of news and information. While some of what you read is trustworthy, a lot of it isn't, and it's put out there to scare and confuse you. Consuming so much of this information at once can be damaging to an already anxious brain and it's important to know when to give yourself a break from it. Social media can also be fantastic, try to use it for positive and upbeat interactions with friends and family.

Q8. So where should I get my advice and information about about COVID-19?

Gwyneth Paltrow and Kourtney Kardashian will have you believing that a shot of apple cider vinegar every morning and a $200 face mask will cure coronavirus. Donald Trump stated that the USA would have sorted Coronavirus out by Easter. These are unrealistic, not scientifically proven and just not true. Only take advice from trusted government and health service websites. These have all the latest facts and figures to give consistent advice on how to prevent spreading, catching it and what to do if you think you have the Coronavirus.
Q8: How can I occupy myself to avoid boredom and feeling even worse about things?

Despite the loss of normal routine and activities, try to develop and implement a new routine that provides a balance of several different activities and interactions with others. At times like these, it can be easy to fall into unhealthy patterns of behaviour, which can make you feel worse. Simple things you can do to stay mentally and physically active during this time include:

- Wake up relatively early – (annoying but it does help). Lying in bed until early afternoon will drain your energy levels and crush productivity. Set a nice alarm to wake up to and allow yourself more time to get ready and start the day properly.

- Stay connected to your friends and family via skype, email, video-calling and telephone / texting. Don’t rely just on texting though, as an audio-visual catch up is much more rewarding.

- Social media can be an excellent way to keep in touch with your friends and family. However, you should be mindful of your use of social media. Use it to promote positive interactions, and put your device away if it starts to negatively affect your mood. Many smartphones allow you to set time limits for certain apps such as Facebook or Instagram.

- It is important to maintain, where possible, some sort of daily routine. You should vary what you put into your routine to keep things different and interesting but try and include key elements consistently.

- Make a to do list (or schedule / rota) with reasonable and specific things included. Finalise your schedule / rota the night before so you are ready and prepared for the day ahead. Include spending time doing things you enjoy as well as things you need to do.
  - Time to eat (breakfast, lunch and dinner)
  - Time to network chat and socialise, social media / gaming (IT based)
  - Time to study, homework, coursework, learn, research
  - Time for exercise
  - Time for relaxing, personal downtime (non IT based)
  - Time to spend with family
  - Time to spend doing something fun / different / activity based

- Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, drink enough water, and try to avoid smoking, alcohol and recreational drugs

- If needing to socially isolate, spend time with the windows open to let in fresh air, arranging space to sit with a nice view if possible and get some natural sunlight. Get out into the garden or sit on your doorstep if you can, keeping a distance of at least 2 metres from others.

- If you don’t need to isolate, you should try and get out of the house to do your daily exercise (walk, jog, run or bike-ride) for an hour, keeping your social distance to at least 2 metres when outside.

- Look to introduce fun activities for you and the family
  - Themed meals
  - Special movie / Netflix nights
  - Quizzes and competitions
  - Kitchen dancing / Karaoke
  - Skype/Friend of friends other family to invite them too

- Getting a good night’s sleep is crucial for feeling emotionally healthy the next day. We all feel better after a good night’s sleep.
Q10: What is out there to help me cope with this pandemic?

Here are some young person friendly websites, apps and resources focused on helping you navigate through these uncertain times as well as supporting your emotional and physical well-being.

**UK information websites on COVID-19**

**NHS (nhs.uk) website COVID-19 advice**
- [https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/)

**Government (gov.uk) website COVID-19 advice**

**Young Scot website COVID-19 advice**
- [https://young.scot/campaigns/national/coronavirus](https://young.scot/campaigns/national/coronavirus)

**COVID-19 Sleep tips from Evelina Children's Hospital**

**COVID-19 Sleep tips from the PHSE Association**

**Resources to manage COVID-19 for Children & Young People**
- [https://young.scot/campaigns/national/coronavirus](https://young.scot/campaigns/national/coronavirus)
- [https://cympodtech.nihr.ac.uk/2020/04/06/covid-19-resources-for-children-young-people-and-families/](https://cympodtech.nihr.ac.uk/2020/04/06/covid-19-resources-for-children-young-people-and-families/)

**Websites offering links to a number of Young People friendly resources**

**Anna Freud**  (Links to number of wellbeing resources, list of sources of help for those with urgent needs)
- [https://www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind](https://www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind)

**Childline**  (Help and advice on a wide range of issues)
- [https://www.childline.org.uk/](https://www.childline.org.uk/)

**Footsteps Teeside**  (Coping with isolation, mental health & wellbeing. Resources peer reviewed by student Hollie Smith)
- [https://footstepskeeside.co.uk/covid-19/](https://footstepskeeside.co.uk/covid-19/)

**Health for Young People**  (Good links to advice & information on sexual health, mental health and long term conditions)
- [https://what0-18.nhs.uk/health-for-young-people](https://what0-18.nhs.uk/health-for-young-people)

**Healthy Young Minds**  (Herts based, Has links to local and national advice and sources)

**The Mix**  (Advice and support for the Under 25’s)
- [https://www.themix.org.uk](https://www.themix.org.uk)

**Young People’s Health.org**  (Wide range of links to valuable resources)
- [https://www.youngpeoplehealth.org.uk/covid-19](https://www.youngpeoplehealth.org.uk/covid-19)

**Websites offering advice on keeping fit, at home**

**Free 30 day Yoga course**
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-uhKVdZCJIM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-uhKVdZCJIM)

**Herts sports partnership**  (workout from home)
- [https://sportinherts.org.uk/workoutfromhome/](https://sportinherts.org.uk/workoutfromhome/)

**NHS Physical active guidelines for children and young people**

**SuperBetter**  (Builds personal resilience and boosts physical and emotional wellbeing)
The Football Association (Staying fit at home)
  ➢ http://www.thefa.com/get-involved/footballs-staying-home

21 best home exercises for men (workout from home)

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**Young people friendly websites offering advice, applications and Resources on mental health and well-being**

- **Calmharm** (UK charity on children & young people’s mental health)
  ➢ https://calmharm.co.uk

- **Clearfear** (Free app to help with managing anxiety)
  ➢ https://www.clearfear.co.uk

- **DistrACT** (Provides help around self harm and suicidal thoughts)
  ➢ https://www.themix.org.uk

- **Headspace** (Guidance & training in mindfulness, free extended access during COVID-19)
  ➢ https://www.headspace.com/

- **Kooth** (Anonymous online support for young people)
  ➢ https://kooth.com

- **MeeTwo** (Helps teenagers to talk about difficult things)
  ➢ https://www.meetwo.co.uk

- **Mindful Gnats** (Helps young people develop mindfulness and relaxation skills)
  ➢ https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/mindful-gnats/id973919092

- **MindShift** (Canadian app with advice managing anxiety and depression)

- **MoodGym** (Interactive program to help with low mood)
  ➢ https://moodgym.com.au

- **Recharge-move well, sleep well, be well** (Program to help improve mood and energy levels)

- **Sleepio** (online sleep improvement programme)
  ➢ https://www.sleepio.com

- **Smiling minds** (Australian app-based meditation programme)
  ➢ https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/smiling-mind/id560442518

- **Young Minds** (Children & young people’s mental health)
  ➢ https://youngminds.org.uk

- **Top tips for parents to help their young person** (by Author Dr Dominique Thompson)
  ➢ https://buzzconsulting.co.uk/docs/PDF-Top-tips-for-parents-of-locked-down-teens.pdf

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Please keep safe and healthy

Yours sincerely

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**Acknowledgements for collating & editing:**
Ms Megan Burack, Medical student at Queens Medical Centre,
University of Nottingham and NHS Volunteer

In collaboration and with thanks to the Executive members of:
the Primary Care Safeguarding Forum (PCSF), National Named Network of GPs (NNNGP)
and the Royal College of General Practitioners Adolescent Working Group (RCGP AWD)
Dear <<name>> and family,

COVID-19: Information and support for our families with younger children

During the COVID-19 crisis, the practice is operating in a very different manner. Appointments will largely be conducted by telephone or even video rather than being face to face and we are very focussed on the large numbers of unwell patients that we are managing and supporting.

We are aware that your family has been identified as needing extra support. We would like to reassure you that we are still very much 'open for business' and are still here to help and support you with any concerns or queries you have. We are only too aware that children will continue to get unwell from the usual childhood ailments, unrelated to COVID-19 and will require the normal standard of care.

All community health and social care services remain in operation. Health visitors, 0-19 Teams, social care and workers, hospitals and GP practices (including ours), Out of Hours and 111 are all still providing the same, safe care as before and so please call them if you have any concerns.

Our normal telephone / switchboard number remains the same for you to call us too. To ensure your call is appropriately prioritised and directed to the right clinician, please mention to the receptionists what your query or concern is about and also if your child is being given early help support; on a Child Protection Plan; on a Child In Need plan, or if you are looking after a child who is in foster care.

If you wish, we can arrange for someone to ring you on a regular basis (e.g. weekly or fortnightly) for support. Please do let us know if that is the case.

The following have some useful advice and suggestions that can help children and families cope with having to remain socially isolated, in lockdown and socially distanced from others in challenging times.
1. **Trusted sites to get up to date information on COVID-19**

At the moment, there is a lot of coverage from all media and although it is important to stay informed, it might make you feel as if things are getting on top of you. Feeling stressed or anxious related to seeing lots of new stories about the impact of COVID-19 will be a common reaction. It is OK and quite normal to feel this way.

Try to only take advice from trusted government and health service websites. These have all the latest facts and figures to give consistent advice on how to prevent spreading, catching it and what to do if you think you have the Coronavirus. Some are suggested below.

- **NHS (nhs.uk) website COVID-19 advice**
  - [https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/)

- **Government (gov.uk) website COVID-19 advice**

2. **Managing an unwell child during social isolation and distancing**

Whilst coronavirus is infectious to children it is rarely serious. If your child is unwell it is likely to be a non-coronavirus illness, rather than coronavirus itself.

Whilst it is extremely important to follow government advice to stay at home during this period, it can be confusing to know what to do when your child is unwell or injured. Remember that NHS 111, GPs and hospitals are still providing the same safe care that they have always done, just in different ways at the moment. Some advice to help you access the right service if your child becomes unwell or injured can be followed using Appendix C2.

3. **Helping families cope with ‘social isolation and distancing’**

For those of you with younger children in the household, we are aware how difficult it can be to get across the messages and explain what it means to be in ‘lockdown’ and to both socially isolate and distance from others. We hope you may find the following free resource (Appendix C3) useful to help your younger children follow the current restrictions in place.

Also, checkout the children’s book on Coronavirus, illustrated by Axel Scheffler, famed for the award winning ‘The Gruffalo.’ (Appendix C4)

- **Free Coronavirus illustrated Children’s book, by Axel Scheffler, Nosy Crow Ltd**
  - [https://nosycrowcoronavirus.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/Coronavirus-ABookForChildren.pdf](https://nosycrowcoronavirus.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/Coronavirus-ABookForChildren.pdf)
4: Helping children & families cope with ‘social isolation and distancing’

For most children, try to develop and implement a new routine that all family members can follow. This will provide a balance of several different activities and appropriate interactions with others. At times like these, it can be easy to fall into unhealthy patterns of behaviour, which can make you feel worse. Simple things you can do to stay mentally and physically active during this time include:

- Wake up relatively early – (annoying but it does help). Lying in bed until early afternoon will drain your energy levels and crush productivity. Set a nice alarm to wake up to and allow yourself more time to get ready and start the day properly.
- Stay connected to your friends and family via Skype, e-mail, video-calling and telephone / texting. Don’t rely just on texting though, as an audio-visual catch up is much more rewarding.
- Social media can be an excellent way to keep in touch with your friends and family. However, you should be mindful of your use of social media. Use it to promote positive interactions, and put your device away if it starts to negatively affect your mood. Many smartphones allow you to set time limits for certain apps such as Facebook or Instagram.
- It is important to maintain, where possible, some sort of daily routine. You should vary what you put into your routine to keep things different and interesting but try and include key elements consistently.
- Make a to do list (or schedule / rota) with reasonable and specific things included. Finalise your schedule / rota the night before so you are ready and prepared for the day ahead. Include spending time doing things you enjoy as well as things you need to do.
  - Time to eat (breakfast, lunch and dinner)
  - Time to network chat and socialise, social media / gaming (IT based)
  - Time to do work, study, homework, coursework, learn, research
  - Time for exercise
  - Time for relaxing, personal downtime (non IT based)
  - Time to spend with family
  - Time to spend doing something fun / different / activity based
- Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, drink enough water, and try to avoid smoking, alcohol and recreational drugs.
- If needing to socially isolate, spend time with the windows open to let in fresh air, arranging space to sit with a nice view if possible and get some natural sunlight. Get out into the garden or sit on your doorstep if you can, keeping a distance of at least 2 metres from others.
- If you don’t need to isolate, you should try and get out of the house to do your daily exercise (walk, jog, run or bike-ride) for an hour, keeping your social distance to at least 2 metres when outside.
- Look to introduce fun activities for you and the family
  - Themed meals
  - Special movie / Netflix nights
  - Quizzes and competitions
  - Kitchen dancing / Karaoke
  - Skype/FT friends other family to involve them too
- Getting a good night’s sleep is crucial for feeling emotionally healthy the next day. We all feel better after a good night’s sleep.
5: Helping families with emotional and physical well-being

Having to be in 'lockdown', socially isolate and distance yourself (and your family) from your colleagues, friends and family members will make many of us feel stressed and anxious. These are truly extraordinary times where information and issues are changing extremely rapidly. It is not surprising that each day can feel totally different to the next and this is unsettling. What's happening in the world right now can feel daunting, unable to make plans even for the immediate future - it's very normal to feel worried and unsure about things.

We want you to look after yourself and your family during these difficult times. The following resources can help you with your family with your emotional and physical well-being.

**Websites offering emotional well-being and support**

- **Childline** (Free confidential help and advice for any under 18 year old, whatever the worry)
  - [https://www.childline.org.uk/](https://www.childline.org.uk/)
  - Call 0800 1111

- **Domestic Violence & Abuse Support** (Contact Refuge for your rights, options and support)
  - [https://www.nationaldsvhelpline.org.uk](https://www.nationaldsvhelpline.org.uk)
  - Call 0800 2000 247

- **ICON** (Babies cry: You can cope. Advice and support for parents coping with a crying baby)
  - [https://iconcote.org](https://iconcote.org)

- **MIND** (Mental Health Support with specific advice on 'Coronavirus and your wellbeing')
  - [https://www.mind.org.uk](https://www.mind.org.uk)

- **NSPCC Helpline** (Worried about a child, unsure? Contact professional counsellors for help, advice and support)
  - Call 0808 800 5000

- **Samaritans** (Resources and help for all ages)
  - [https://www.samaritans.org/](https://www.samaritans.org/)
  - Call 116 123

- **YoungMinds** (Supports children, young people, parents & carers with their mental health and well-being)
  - [https://youngminds.org](https://youngminds.org)

**Websites offering advice on keeping fit, physical well-being**

- **Free 30 day Yoga course**
  - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=--jhKVdZQJM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=--jhKVdZQJM)

- **Herts sports partnership** (workout from home)
  - [https://sportinherts.org.uk/workoutfromhome/](https://sportinherts.org.uk/workoutfromhome/)

- **SuperBetter** (Builds personal resilience and boosts physical and emotional wellbeing)

- **The Football Association** (Staying fit at home)

- **21 best home exercises for men** (workout from home)

**Please keep safe and healthy**

Best wishes
Stay at Home

I have to stay home.

My favorite places are not open.

People are getting each other sick.

People do not get sick if they stay at home.

So now all people need to stay home.

I can still go outside and go for walks.

I cannot be close to other people, but I can still talk to them.

One day, when it is safe, everything will open again and I will leave home.

The better we do at staying home, the sooner places will open again.