

COVID-19 Contingency Planning



Maintaining safe staffing levels

Key considerations/ Ten top tips

1	Ensure safe staffing levels and continuity of care are the central motivators for all contingency planning activities. Put arrangements in place to ensure you have sufficient staff to provide safe, high-quality care even in the event of increased staff absence.
2	Prioritise staff wellbeing and plan in compassionate and considerate discussions with employees with a view to protecting the health, safety and welfare of all staff. Have individual conversations, about COVID-19, with all members of your workforce, particularly those who may be at increased risk, and seek solutions tailored to individual needs.
3	Learn from previous experiences, of yourself and others, and scenario-plan for potential future challenges.
4	Keep solution focused. Describe what you will do if the event happens and write down any actions that need to be done in preparation for the solution (e.g. staff training, setting up remote working).
5	Recognise that a blend of both short-term and long-term solutions may play a part on your contingency planning but plan not to rely on short-term solutions for longer than is sustainable. E.g. staff working additional shifts or deferring annual leave.
6	Record and monitor the impact of staff shortages, for example if community care staff miss a visit, and include them in your quality assurance process.
DHSC adult social care COVID-19 Winter plan 2020 - 2021	
7	Limit all staff movement between settings unless absolutely necessary to help reduce the spread of infection, including by reviewing exclusivity arrangements with recruitment agencies, and considering the recruitment of additional staff over the winter period.
8	If available to you, use funding from the Infection Control Fund (conditions apply) to pay staff who are self-isolating, in line with government guidance, their normal wages and to put in place measures to stop staff movement.
9	Consider how volunteers could help support service delivery and link-up with the NHS Volunteer Responder's programme and the wider voluntary sector.
10	Link with Local Authorities to access any support for care providers in your area to access other initiatives – for example Bringing Back Staff.

For a more detailed look at the Department of Health and Social Care's adult social care COVID-19 winter plan 2020 to 2021, including supporting your workforce, visit: www.gov.uk/government/publications/adult-social-care-coronavirus-covid-19-winter-plan-2020-to-2021/adult-social-care-our-covid-19-winter-plan-2020-to-2021