

## **Coronavirus (COVID-19): Guidance for people using our Cancer Support Services and the Public - update 17/3/20**

Weston Park Cancer Charity is working to minimise the risks presented by COVID-19 and your cooperation is required. As a service user of the Cancer Support Centre or a member of the public who supports Weston Park Cancer Charity, we ask that you support us to help keep you, patients, staff and volunteers safe.

### **Our services for people living with and beyond cancer**

From 17/3/2020 the Cancer Support Centre will close to the public and we will run essential services by phone or online.

We have prioritised which Cancer Support Services will continue to run to ensure our resources and efforts provide essential help and support to those who need us.

Please call our **HELPLINE on 0114 553 3330** and select option 1 or email [cancersupport@wpcancercharity.org.uk](mailto:cancersupport@wpcancercharity.org.uk) to:

- Speak to a healthcare professional
- Speak to us about an emergency hardship grant
- Book an appointment with a welfare benefits advisor
- Join our 'We Care' social group which provides regular phone support to people who are self-isolating for a prolonged period

This is a significant change to how we provide our services so we have tried to answer some of the questions you may have:

### **Will I still be able to drop-in to the Cancer Support Centre?**

No. Our priority services will be provided over the phone or digitally.

### **What time is your helpline open?**

You can call our telephone helpline Monday – Friday 9am - 5pm on 0114 553 3330.

### **I have an appointment booked at the Cancer Support Centre, what should I do?**

If you have a welfare advice appointment, one of our team will be in touch to reschedule a phone appointment. Appointments for all other services

have been automatically cancelled so there is no action you need to take. Everyone will receive a phone call from one of our team for a friendly chat and to see if there's anything else we can help with.

**I am feeling anxious, what should I do?**

We understand that this is a worrying time and we are at the end of the phone for a friendly chat. You can also join our 'We Care' support group which provides regular phone support to people who are at spending long periods in isolation. The charity MIND has produced general advice on looking after your wellbeing <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/> and you can listen to our guided relaxation online at [www.cottonyoga.co.uk](http://www.cottonyoga.co.uk)

**I am worried about transport to and from appointments, can you help with this?**

We do not provide a transport service but we know getting to and from hospital appointments is a huge concern for people. We are looking at ways we can help with this.

**Can you help to deliver essential items to people who are self-isolating?**

We are looking at different ways we can get essential supplies to people living with and beyond cancer, who are self-isolating or 'shielding' for a prolonged period. We will work with Voluntary Action Sheffield (VAS) and other voluntary sector organisations to coordinate this.

**I am living with or beyond cancer but I haven't used the Cancer Support Centre before, can I use your services now?**

Yes, please get in contact with us.

**I am worried about a family member or neighbour who is affected by cancer. Can I give them your details?**

Yes. Our Helpline is open Monday-Friday 9am to 5pm and is staffed by healthcare professionals and support workers who are here to help.

**Where do I find further information on what to do if I am or I am caring for an older or vulnerable person?**

Government guidance published on 16/3/20 on social distancing for everyone in the UK and protecting older people and vulnerable adults can be found online at:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults)

**A summary of the advice is:**

Group/ Action	Wash hands more often	Household isolation for 14 days*	Self - isolation for 7 days**	Social mixing in the community***	Having friends and family to the house	Use remote access to NHS and essential services	Vary daily commute and use less public transport	Home working
0 – 69	Yes	Yes	Yes	Advised against	Advised against	Advised	Advised	Advised
70+	Yes	Yes	Yes	Strongly advised against	Strongly advised against	Strongly advised	Strongly advised	Strongly advised
Any age Member of vulnerable group with an underlying health condition <sup>1</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Strongly advised against	Strongly advised against	Strongly advised	Strongly advised	Strongly advised
Pregnant women	Yes	Yes	Yes	Strongly advised against	Strongly advised against	Strongly advised	Strongly advised	Strongly advised
Those with serious underlying health conditions	As above, but further bespoke guidance will be provided by your GP next week							

\* if one member of your family or household has a new continuous cough or high temperature

\*\* if you live alone and you have a new continuous cough or high temperature

\*\*\* if you live alone and you have a new continuous cough or high temperature

\*\*\*\* for example via telephone or internet

<sup>1</sup> ie anyone instructed to get a flu jab each year

**Further advice will be issued within the next week for patients with some clinical conditions:**

There are some clinical conditions which put people at even higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19. If you are in this category, next week the NHS in England will directly contact you with advice on the more stringent

measures you should take in order to keep yourself and others safe. For now, you should rigorously follow the social distancing advice in full.

People falling into this group are those who may be at particular risk due to complex health problems such as:

- People who have received an organ transplant and remain on ongoing immunosuppression medication
- People with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy or radiotherapy
- People with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia who are at any stage of treatment
- People with severe chest conditions such as cystic fibrosis or severe asthma (requiring hospital admissions or courses of steroid tablets)
- People with severe diseases of body systems, such as severe kidney disease (dialysis)

**Find out what to do if you think you have symptoms by visiting NHS 111 website <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19>**

You can also find advice on Coronavirus for people with cancer from One Cancer Voice at [www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/cancer-in-general/coronavirus-and-cancer](http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/cancer-in-general/coronavirus-and-cancer)

We understand this is a concerning time for those with living with and beyond cancer and their family. Please rest assured that Weston Park Cancer Charity is keeping up to date with and following national guidance on this evolving situation and taking all necessary steps to minimise risk to those we support. We will continue to focus our resources and efforts on running essential services.

### **Our generous supporters and the public**

It's thanks to our fundraisers, donors and supporters that our services are free for people to use, when they need us most.

It's your hundreds of sponsored parachute jumps, thousands of miles run, swum or walked. It's gifts left in wills, the change from people's pockets or the result of a tough sponsored silence. It all makes a real difference to people living with and beyond cancer, right now.



Our fundraising office is currently closed but if you would like to make a donation please visit [www.westonpark.org.uk](http://www.westonpark.org.uk) – you can help us be ready for anyone who needs us.