

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION –
THIS IS NOT A CIRCULAR**

20 March 2020

Dear resident

Your Optivo scheme manager service

I'm writing to let you know about arrangements in this scheme during the Coronavirus outbreak. Along with the care team, we'll do all we can to support you and other residents. We're following Government and NHS advice. One important change is Optivo staff will be relying more on the phone to keep in touch with you. Please phone your scheme manager if you need help or would like a regular phone call – you'll find the number on the scheme office door.

Optivo staff cover at your scheme

The Optivo staff team will be stretched over the next few months. Some staff are in 'at risk' groups and will work from home. Staff with children may be off work while schools are closed. Others are already unwell or will be unwell in the coming weeks. This means staff may not be at the scheme as much as usual. We'll of course continue to visit the scheme to do fire alarm tests and other essential health & safety checks – but maybe not on the usual day.

When staff are at the scheme, to protect residents they'll avoid any unnecessary face-to-face contact.

Please don't visit the scheme office if you need to speak to a staff member – phone your scheme manager on their mobile number or use your pull cord to talk to the care team.

Your care

The care team will let you know if there are any changes to your care provision.

What to do if you're unwell or need to self-isolate

Follow the NHS advice. Stay in your flat and use your pull cord or phone to let the care team or Optivo scheme manager. We'll contact you regularly until you're feeling better.



Building 1060
Cornforth Drive
Kent Science Park
Kent ME9 8PX

T 0800 121 60 60
www.optivo.org.uk

For ways to contact us go to
optivo.org.uk/ContactUs

If you're very unwell let the care staff know, use your pendant or pullcord or phone 999.

Events in the lounge

We're cancelling meetings and events in the lounge until further notice. This is because the Government has advised over-70's and other people who are 'at risk' to avoid large gatherings, gatherings in smaller public spaces and gatherings with friends and family.

The Government advice also says: "You should contact your regular social visitors such as friends and family to let them know that you are reducing social contacts and that they should not visit you during this time unless they are providing essential care for you."

So we're also cancelling bookings of the guest room – even ones we've already accepted and confirmed. We won't accept new bookings.

I know some people may think we're over-reacting and activities should carry on as usual. But we all need to follow the official guidance. Please think of your neighbours who may be put at risk if you pass the virus on to them.

Staying fit and positive

We don't want anyone to become lonely or isolated. Current Government advice is it's fine to go for a walk outdoors if you stay more than 2 metres from others. Other ideas they suggest are:

- look for ideas of exercises you can do at home. If you're online, the NHS website has great advice
- spend time doing things you enjoy – this might include reading, cooking, other indoor hobbies or listening to the radio or watching TV programmes
- try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, drink enough water, exercise regularly, and try to avoid smoking, alcohol and drugs
- keep your windows open to let in fresh air, get some natural sunlight if you can, or get outside into the scheme garden

Please keep up-to-date with the Government and NHS guidance which may change. Follow news reports on the TV or radio. You'll also find all the official guidance online on the gov.uk website.

Restaurant/café

Meals will still be available but the restaurant itself will be closed. We'll let you know how to collect meals - or have them delivered if needed.

Hairdresser/other facilities

People from outside the scheme won't be able to use these unless they can come in and out without going through the building. If they need to close they'll let everyone know.

Help with shopping

Please let a member of staff know if you're running out of food or medication.

Post and parcels

The postperson and delivery people can still deliver to the scheme. We're asking them to come straight in and out without stopping to chat.

Cleaning and hand-washing

Our cleaners will pay attention to surfaces that are frequently touched. But their service may be affected by staff shortages. The Government advise the best thing we can all do to avoid the virus spreading is to wash our hands well and often with soap and water.

Repairs

Please let us know if you have an emergency repair by phoning 0800 121 60 60.

Thanks for taking the time to read this. I know how worrying the threat of Coronavirus is. We're doing everything we can to support you and keep 'business as usual' in these unusual times. Please let your scheme manager know if you have any suggestions or questions. In the meantime, stay safe and well, look out for your neighbours - and thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely,



Robin Deane
Head of independent living