



Advice to support people with additional needs exhibiting potential challenging behaviour during lockdown.

In these unprecedented times in relation to the current Coronavirus (COVID-19;) it is important that the guidance that is being published/advised by Public Health England, NHS England and the UK Government is followed to ensure that everyone is implementing the necessary measures to promote the health and safety of everyone that we support.

However, for some individuals who have learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorder, dementia and additional mental health needs; social isolation, a reduction in physical activity, unpredictability and changes in their routine can all contribute to increasing anxiety and undue stress.

Therefore it is understood that the essential care provided for those individuals with a relevant diagnosis continues in line with the expert advice/ guidance that has been sought from those professionals within the Community Health Care and Social Care Teams that has been received on this matter; that an enforcement of a reasonable excuse with regards to the new legislation can be considered for these individuals.

The Government recently clarified guidance on their website on being outside the home for individuals with learning disabilities or autism:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do>

15. Can I exercise more than once a day if I need to due to a significant health condition?

You can leave your home for medical need. If you (or a person in your care) have a specific health condition that requires you to leave the home to maintain your health - including if that involves travel beyond your local area - then you can do so. This could, for example, include where individuals with learning disabilities or autism require specific exercise in an open space two or three times each day - ideally in line with a care plan agreed with a medical professional.

Even in such cases, in order to reduce the spread of infection and protect those exercising, travel outside of the home should be limited, as close to your local area as possible, and you should remain at least 2 metres apart from anyone who is not a member of your household or a carer at all times.

This is supported by Public Health England published guidance on the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020 via The Secretary of State following Regulations in exercise of the powers conferred by sections

45C(1), (3)(c), (4)(d), 45F(2) and 45P of the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984(a).

Regulation 6 states:

6(1) *During the emergency period, no person may leave the place where they are living without reasonable excuse.*

6(2) *For the purposes of paragraph (1), a reasonable excuse includes the need –*

d To provide care or assistance, including relevant personal care within the meaning of paragraph 7(3B) of Schedule 4 to the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act 2006(1), to a vulnerable person, or to provide emergency assistance;

In this instance there is sufficient evidence within section 6(2d) that for therapeutic purposes and exercise it is considered appropriate for the individuals outlined above to be continuing to access this pragmatic stance to avoid an increase in anxiety which is likely to intensify a heightened response.

This may mean that these individuals **may require a higher capacity of staffing** to be with them at all times whilst outdoors to ensure that the likelihood of risk and safety measures are being implemented as appropriate as per local protocol and guidance.

The following guidance will continue to adhere to:

- Staying 2 metres (6ft) away from other people (within the community setting) at all times;
- Washing their hands before they leave the property and upon return to the property (and wherever else necessary);
- Not meeting others whilst out in the community



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