

# COVID-19 update

## Colliers Wood and North East Mitcham Community Forum

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1<sup>st</sup> October 2020

# AIMS AND PURPOSE

- Brief overview of the key COVID-19 messages related to Merton
- Brief overview of outbreak control
- Important messages for community involvement/action
- Introduce our Merton Community Champions – a key part of outbreak prevention
- Q&A

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# KEY MESSAGES

- ✓ Positive **cases are increasing in Merton**, from a low baseline. The increase is affecting a broader range of ages, it is no longer just young people out socialising.
- ✓ London has been identified as an '**area of concern**' by the Government. This recognises the challenge that London faces in containing the virus and brings with it additional support e.g. additional testing capacity.
- ✓ **Testing** is available if you are symptomatic, have been told to take a test before you go into hospital, have been asked to by your Local Authority or taking part in a Gov Pilot project.
- ✓ **The COVID-19 App** has been downloaded 14 million times so far. The more who download it, the better it works.
- ✓ Schools have worked very hard to be able to open up safely, as **returning to school is critical** to children and young people.
- ✓ The most effective way of helping to stop the spread remains adhering to guidelines around **social distancing, the rule of six, wearing face coverings and washing hands**.

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# MERTON LOCAL OUTBREAK CONTROL PLAN

Accessible at

[https://www.merton.gov.uk/assets/Documents/Outbreak%20Control%20LBM%20Outbreak%20Control%20Plan%20for%20publication%20with%20forward%20290620%20\(003\)%20\(002\).pdf](https://www.merton.gov.uk/assets/Documents/Outbreak%20Control%20LBM%20Outbreak%20Control%20Plan%20for%20publication%20with%20forward%20290620%20(003)%20(002).pdf)

## Purpose

Complement NHS test and trace to minimise virus spread. Identify high risk settings and vulnerable communities; describes how LBM works with Public Health England and local partners e.g. NHS and Voluntary Sector

## Scope

Response readiness for managing C19 positive cases/outbreaks; not included: prevention/mitigation of wider C19 harm and recovery

## Themes (DHSC)

1- Care homes and schools; 2- Other high risk settings; 3- Local testing capacity (in addition to routine NHS Test & Trace); 4-Local contact tracing / case finding (for community clusters); 5 Data integration; 6 Vulnerable people; 7 Governance

## Timeline

Now – end of March 2021 (at least; covering high risk autumn/winter)

# COMMUNITY ACTION FOR OUTBREAK PREVENTION

- Simple but effective methods to prevent transmission of the virus
  - The rule of 6, regular hand washing, social-distancing, self-isolation and face coverings
- Symptoms to look for - high temperature, new continuous cough, loss or change of smell/taste
- Testing – if symptomatic get a test via 119 or [www.nhs.uk/coronavirus](https://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus)
- NHS Test & Trace
  - if +ve case you will be contacted by e-mail, text or phone and asked for the contact details of any close contacts
  - if contacted by NHSTT, having been in close contact of someone who had +ve test, you will be asked to self-isolate for 14 days
  - Download the NHS COVID-19 app
- Be aware of potential NHSTT fraud e.g. someone asking for payment for a COVID19 test; testing is free. Text messages will come from NHStracing and calls will come from 0300 0135000

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# COMMUNITY ACTION FOR REDUCING HEALTH IMPACT

- The NHS is open. If you are worried, phone your GP or use NHS 111
- Get 'covid-fit' to reduce risk of complications
  - Eat healthily or lose weight
  - Stop Smoking
  - Increase your physical activity levels
- Manage any Long Term Conditions e.g. diabetes
- Access support for your Mental health and wellbeing
- Get your flu jab, many groups get this free but they are also available from some employers and from Community Pharmacy

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# COVID-19 COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

- ✓ COVID-19 Community Champions are a key part of our approach to preventing and managing outbreaks in Merton
- ✓ In response to Community Engagement workshop (11<sup>th</sup> Aug), where we heard that community want to support local efforts and have an on-going dialogue with LBM and NHS
- ✓ Anyone who lives or works in Merton who wants to help stop the spread of COVID-19
- ✓ Anyone that will share clear and consistent messages from the NHS and Public Health and feedback on challenges in Merton
- ✓ We have over 50 champions who are residents, Councillors, service providers, LBM Officers, CCG Officers, VCS reps, Clinicians and more!

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# The role of the Champions

1. Receive the latest updates on how to stay safe and healthy during COVID-19 through the weekly drop-in meetings and Friday messages

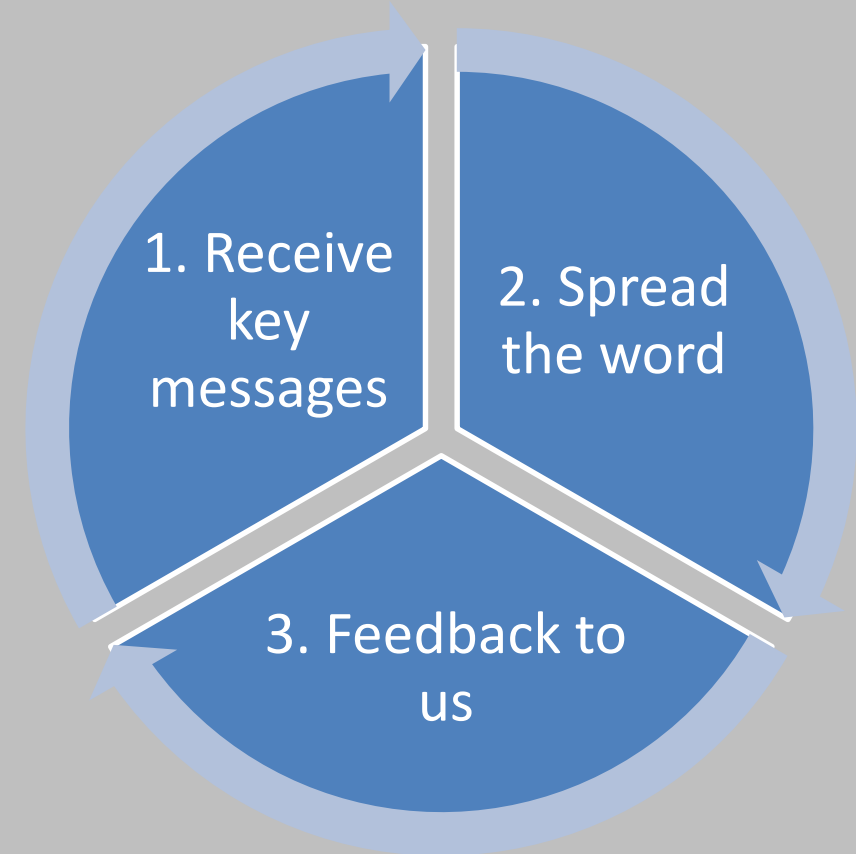
Key messages can be delivered to targeted audiences via a combination of digital and hard copies. Multiple languages and easy read versions via: video, jpegs, visuals, text message

2. Share this information with family, friends, work colleagues, and the wider community

Champions can spread the message via appropriate communication channels. We will support you in what ever way we can

3. Feedback to us what is working well, what isn't and what are the needs of the community

Everyone sharing – we want to hear from the champions too: what info do you need? what are the issues in the community?





# JOIN OUR NETWORK OF COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

- Register to become a champion at <https://consult.merton.gov.uk/survey/795> or for more information contact [public.health@merton.gov.uk](mailto:public.health@merton.gov.uk) or [una.obrien@merton.gov.uk](mailto:una.obrien@merton.gov.uk)
- Drop-in sessions take place every Wednesday (12pm-1pm and 7pm-8pm)
- Tell your friends, family colleagues, networks and communities – we are always looking for new champions.

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## ANY QUESTIONS?

Barry Causer

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# **FURTHER INFORMATION**

**THE RULE OF 6  
SOCIAL DISTANCING  
WEARING A FACE COVERING  
SOCIAL ISOLATION**

# THE RULE OF 6

To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, you should not socialise in groups bigger than 6 people.

When seeing friends and family you do not live with you should:

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- ✓ meet in groups of 6 or less
- ✓ follow social distancing rules when you meet up
- ✓ limit how many different people you see socially over a short period of time
- ✓ meet people outdoors where practical: meeting people outdoors is safer than meeting people indoors because fresh air provides better ventilation

(based on guidance at 30th September 2020)

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## Can I visit people indoors?

Yes. When meeting with people you don't live with you can socialise in groups of up to 6. This is a legal limit. If your household (and/or support bubble) is larger than 6 people, you can gather together. You should continue to maintain social distancing with anyone you do not live with.

## Can I use public transport if I'm seeing friends in a park or going to my parents' garden?

You can help control coronavirus and travel safely by walking and cycling, if you can. However where this is not possible, you can use public transport or drive. If you do use public transport, you must wear a face covering .

## Are children counted in the group of 6?

Yes.

## Can I stay overnight in someone else's home?

Yes, you can stay overnight in someone else's home, but only if you do not form a gathering of more than 6 people. You may only form a gathering of more than 6 people for an overnight stay if it is with your support bubble. People in the same support bubble can stay overnight with each other in larger groups as they count as one household.

## Can I look after my grandchildren?

Yes. People in groups of up to 6 can meet indoors or outdoors, which enables you to spend time with your grandchildren (although whole families may not be able to meet up at once).

(based on guidance at 30th September 2020)

## How many people am I allowed to meet with outdoors?

When meeting with people you don't live with (or who you have not formed a support bubble with) you can socialise in groups of up to 6. If your household (and/or support bubble) is larger than 6 people, this is your largest permitted group and you cannot meet as a group with any additional people. You should continue to maintain social distancing with anyone you do not live with.

## Can more than six people can be in a pub, restaurant or place of worship at once?

Venues following COVID-19 Secure guidelines can host more than 6 people in total, but no one should visit in a group of greater than 6 (unless you are all from the same household or support bubble).

# EXCEPTIONS

**There are exceptions where groups can be larger than 6 people. These include:**

- for work, or the provision of voluntary or charitable services
  - registered childcare, education or training
  - supervised activities provided for children, including wraparound care, youth groups and activities, and children's playgroups
  - providing support to a vulnerable person
  - providing emergency assistance, and to avoid injury or illness or to escape risk of harm
  - for arrangements where children do not live in the same household as both their parents
  - fulfilling a legal obligation, such as attending court or jury service
  - elite sporting competition and training
  - wedding and civil partnership ceremonies and receptions – up to 15 people
  - funerals – up to 30 people. This does not include wakes, other than for religious ceremonial purposes
  - exercise classes, organised outdoor sport or licensed outdoor physical activity, and supervised sporting activity (indoors or outdoors) for under-18s
  - indoor organised team sports for disabled people
  - support groups of up to 15 participants – formally organised groups to provide mutual aid, therapy or any other form of support. This includes support to victims of crime, recovering addicts, new parents, people with long-term illnesses, those facing issues relating to their sexuality or gender, and those who have suffered bereavement.
  - protests – if organised in compliance with COVID-19 Secure guidance. All individuals must be socially distanced
- (based on guidance at 30th September 2020)

# Social Distancing (space)

To reduce the risk of catching or spreading coronavirus, try to keep at least 2 metres away from people you do not live with. Social distancing helps stop the spread of the virus, as it is more likely to spread when people are close together. An infected person can pass on the virus even if they do not have any symptoms, through talking, breathing, coughing or sneezing.

Where you cannot stay 2 metres apart you should stay more than 1 metre apart, as well as taking extra steps to stay safe. For example:

- ✓ Wear a face covering: on public transport and in many indoor spaces, you must wear a face covering by law, unless you are exempt
- ✓ move outdoors, where it is safer and there is more space
- ✓ if indoors, make sure rooms are well ventilated by keeping windows and doors open

You do not need to socially distance from anyone in your household, meaning the people you live with. You also do not need to socially distance from someone you're in an established relationship with, or anyone in your legally-permitted support bubble if you are in one.



# Wearing a face covering

COVID-19 usually spreads by droplets from

- ✓ coughs
- ✓ sneezes
- ✓ speaking

These droplets can also be picked up from surfaces and spread if you touch a surface and then your face without washing your hands first.

This is why social distancing, regular hand hygiene, and covering coughs and sneezes is so important in controlling the spread of the virus.

The best available evidence is that, when used correctly, wearing a face covering may reduce the spread of coronavirus droplets in certain circumstances, helping to protect others.





# WHEN TO SELF-ISOLATE

Self-isolation is when you do not leave your home because you have or might have coronavirus (COVID-19). This helps stop the virus spreading to other people.

Self-isolate immediately if:

- ✓ you have any symptoms of COVID-19 (a high temperature, a new, continuous cough or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste) - request a test ASAP via 119 or <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>
- ✓ you've tested positive for COVID-19 – this means you have COVID-19
- ✓ you live with someone who has symptoms or tested positive
- ✓ someone in your support bubble has symptoms or tested positive
- ✓ you're told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace or the NHS COVID-19 app
- ✓ you arrive in the UK from a country with a high coronavirus risk – see [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/coronavirus-countries-which-show-high-risks)

# HOW TO SELF-ISOLATE

## How to self-isolate

You must not leave your home if you're self-isolating.

## Don't

- ✓ do not go to work, school or public places – work from home if you can
- ✓ do not go on public transport or use taxis
- ✓ do not go out to get food and medicine – order it online or by phone, or ask someone to bring it to your home
- ✓ do not have visitors in your home, including friends and family – except for people providing essential care
- ✓ do not go out to exercise – exercise at home or in your garden, if you have one

## Support

- ✓ Merton Community Response Hub – 020 8685 2272 or [help@mvsc.co.uk](mailto:help@mvsc.co.uk)