

COVID-19 update

Mitcham Community Forum

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8th October 2020

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Minute Item 3



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 and SWL**, following the trend in the rest of London; NHS indicators are increasing e.g. admissions of patients with confirmed COVID-19 and patients requiring intensive care. London is monitoring the situation very closely and reviewing the need for potential further control measures.
- There have been a small number of outbreaks in Merton settings e.g. workplaces, but the vast **majority of cases are assumed to result from transmission** within and between households.
- Small actions will have a big impact on the strength of any second wave. Merton residents practising **social distancing, good hand hygiene and adhering to the rule of six and wearing a face covering** will make a real difference to control the virus and protect our lives and livelihoods.
- **Self-isolate immediately** if you display any symptoms of coronavirus and book a test as soon as possible.
- **Testing capacity** has increased and there is a new testing site in Merton, which is now accessible for booking via the national portal.
- Now is the time to **support each other** and consider how we as individuals can make a valuable contribution to limiting the spread of coronavirus in Merton and London.



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)





Public Health
England

Our Top Six Tips to Londoners



Stick
with six

6

Mask
up



Wash
your
hands



Keep
your
distance



Check
your
symptoms



Pull
together



If you develop any coronavirus symptoms you should self-isolate and book a test as soon as possible

COMMUNITY ACTION FOR OUTBREAK PREVENTION

- 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
- 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
- Sign up for Merton COVID-19 newsletter – www.merton.gov.uk/newsletter

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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 (11th 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 70 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

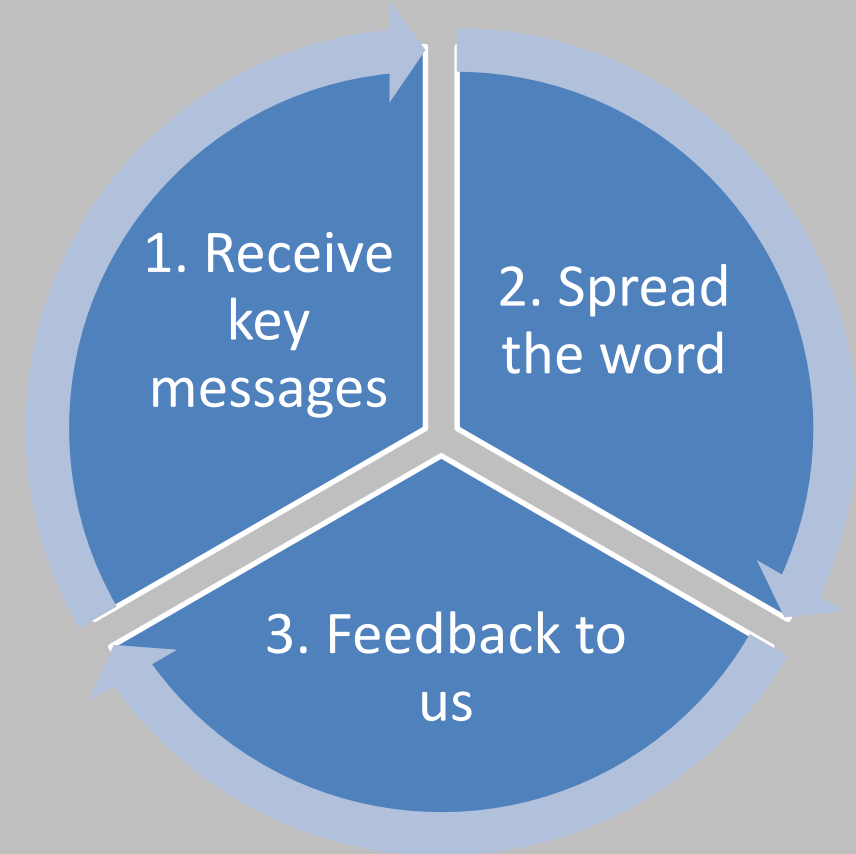
Key messages can be delivered to targeted audiences via a combination of digital and hard copies. Multiple languages and easy read versions via: video, jpegs, visuals, text message

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 or una.obrien@merton.gov.uk
- Drop-in sessions take place every Wednesday (12pm-1pm and 7pm-8pm) - this weeks topic was mental health and next week we are exploring 'engagement and enforcement'.
- Tell your friends, family colleagues, networks and communities – we are always looking for new champions.

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ANY QUESTIONS?

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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:

- ✓ ²Wear a face covering: on public transport and in many indoor spaces, you must wear a face covering by law, unless you are exempt
- ✓ ¹move 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)

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

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Support

- ✓ Merton Community Response Hub – 020 8685 2272 or help@mvsc.co.uk



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