

## **Advice to Support people with a Learning disability 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 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 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.

In line with this, Public Health England have recently 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:

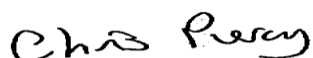
- 6(1) *During the emergency period, no person may leave the place where they are living without reasonable excuse.*
- 6(2) *For the purposes of paragraph (1), a reasonable excuse includes the need –*
- d To provide care or assistance, including relevant personal care within the meaning of paragraph 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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