

27<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

Dear Care Home Manager

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, it is necessary to reconfigure the Acute Care at Home service to ensure that patient's at the point of requiring an acute admission can be maintained in their own home. This will help protect bed capacity in our acute hospitals for those critically unwell.

The new Community Rapid Response Team will offer a single point of contact to GPs and NIAS for patients at point of hospital admission. The Acute Care at Home team will continue to provide acute medical care to patients in care homes during the current COVID crisis.

The team will accept patients after the General practitioner has completed a telephone triage, rather than a face to face visit for the period of this escalation.

The team are trained to swab for COVID-19 and care for these patients. This should reduce the need for care home residents to be admitted to the acute hospitals for diagnosis.

#### **Criteria for Referrals**

- Live in the Southern Trust Area
- Those referred to the service must have been assessed as requiring acute care i.e. deemed to be at the point of hospital admission following GP telephone triage.
- Over 18 years with a confirmed diagnosis of heart failure (clinical signs of heart failure, a BNP and an echocardiogram )or a confirmed diagnosis of COPD, Bronchiectasis or ILD.
- Over 65 years and frail elderly or under 65 years if hospital is detrimental to their well-being.
- Any patient not deemed critically unwell requiring admission to hospital
- Can be managed safely at the place of residence

#### **Exclusions:**

- Immediate resuscitation required
- Chest Pain
- Acute asthmatics
- Acute Surgical or Orthopaedic Crisis
- DVT
- Stroke
- Haemostasis / GI Bleeding
- Mental Health – picked up through Home Treatment Crisis response.

**The Community Rapid Response Team is available from Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2020 and the Operational hours for referrals are 9am – 5pm, Monday to Sunday.**

If you have a patient who you feel would benefit from this service, then please discuss with the residents GP.

From Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March we are also offering an advice and support line for care home managers and Trust staff. The advice line number is **028 37 563591** and will be operational **9am – 5pm, Monday to Sunday.**

If you would like any further information, please contact Yvonne Murphy, Manager of Acute Care at Home and Older Peoples Ambulatory Services on email: [Yvonne.murphy@southerntrust.hscni.net](mailto:Yvonne.murphy@southerntrust.hscni.net) or Tel: 07834 9290

Yours Sincerely,

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Catherine Sheeran  
Head of Service Acute Care at Home and Intermediate Care