

homes:

Information for Residents and Visitors

Version 1.0 – 19.07.2021

Visiting in nursing homes and other residential care facilities is very important to the health and wellbeing of residents and their families and friends. We are now looking to get back towards normal visiting in those nursing homes where most people have vaccine protection. This leaflet gives information for residents and visitors about enjoying visits in a way that keeps the risk of COVID-19 as low as possible.

When someone has completed their vaccination the chance of getting serious COVID-19 disease and of dying from COVID-19 is much lower. This means it is safer to have more visiting. But there is still a need to be careful because protection from the vaccine is not perfect, there is a high level of spread of COVID-19 in many parts of the country and the vaccine may not work quite so well against some types of the virus.

This leaflet is mostly about **indoor face-to-face visiting** in the nursing home or other residential care facility. Other ways to keep in touch such as window visits, outdoor visits and telephone/video visits are very useful also. However these are **in addition to and not instead of** indoor visits in your room or another room in the home.

As a resident you decide if you want to have visitors and who you want to have to visit you. There is a lot more detail about this in the HSE [guidance](#) **Normalising Visiting in Long Term Residential Care Facilities (LTRCFs)**. We will continue to update the guidance as we move through the COVID-19 pandemic.

How often can I expect to see visitors?

If most people in your nursing home (about 8 out of 10) have been vaccinated, you should already be able to see two people at a time and have up to four visits each week. From July 19th you can mostly have as many visits as you want but with just 2 people at any one time. There will be no need to have an appointment for every visit but a Nursing Home may need to have some limits on the number of visits and visitors at busy times to make sure the nursing home does not get too crowded.

Even if no one in the home has been vaccinated you should expect to be able to see one person twice a week.

If visits are not happening, the nursing staff or the person in charge of the nursing home or care facility should talk to you about that and explain the reason why there is limited visiting and for how long this will go on.

If there are times when you are very ill or very upset and need extra visits you should talk to the nursing staff about how that can be arranged. You can also ask someone to talk to the nursing staff for you. If there are times when you don't want to see visitors or you only want to see some people but not others you should talk to the nursing staff.

How many different people can visit?

There is no limit to the number of different people who can visit you, but no more than two people at a time. If there are a lot of people you want to see they will need to take turns to visit you.

Can children visit?

Yes, but an adult needs to be with the child and needs to make sure the child keeps to the rules in the nursing home.

How long can the visits be?

The visit can usually be as long as you want unless the nursing home is getting very crowded or the visit is causing a problem or a risk for other residents. If there are times when visits need to be a bit shorter nursing home staff will be able to tell you about this.

If I have not had the vaccine yet is it OK for me to see visitors?

Yes. It is OK to see visitors if you have not had the vaccine but it is safer for you and for the people who visit you if you both get the vaccine as soon as it is offered to you.

Are there times when people should not visit?

Your friends and family will need to stay away from the nursing home:

- if they have any symptoms of COVID-19 infection or of any other infection
- If they have been told that, they have to restrict their movements or self-isolate.

People with symptoms should not visit a nursing home even if they have had the vaccine.

What do visitors have to do?

- Visitors might need to make an appointment at certain busy times
- Visitors have to sign in when they come
- Visitors will have to answer some questions and may have a temperature check when they arrive for the visit.
- Visitors have to clean their hands before they start the visit.
- During the visit your visitors will wear a mask when moving around the nursing home and in shared areas. They do not have to wear gloves or aprons or gowns.
- If you and your visitor both have vaccine protection you do not have to wear a mask when you are alone together in your room or in another room during the visit. Visitors should clean their hands when they go into and out of the room.
- Visitors should not visit other people in the home when they come to see you and they need to follow the directions of the staff about coming into the building and leaving the building.

Can visitors bring in things for me?

Yes. There is no reason why they can't bring you books, papers, magazines pictures, keep-sakes or a favourite food.

Is it safe to go out for a drive or a visit home with a visitor?

Yes. If there is a high level of vaccination in your Nursing Home outings and visits to a home are OK but you should follow public health advice the same as everyone else. This means keeping your distance from other people, keeping your hands clean and wearing masks if you are indoors with people that might not be vaccinated. You do not need to stay in your room when you return from your drive or visit. If you are not vaccinated the risk to you of going out to meet other people is a lot greater especially if the people you meet are not vaccinated.

What happens if there is an outbreak?

If there is an outbreak of COVID-19 in the home there may be very little visiting for a time but that should be based on advice from public health and visiting should start again as soon as practically possible.

ENDS