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Date: 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Dear residents, patients and relatives

Many thanks to so many of you who completed our survey on indoor visiting last week. We know from this that many of you agree with our messages of caution, particularly around preferring any visitors indoors to be vaccinated, although we also appreciate those of you who feel it has been too long since being able to comfortably see your loved one, and we are here to support you in whatever your decision. We will be aligning our approach to the Government guidance which unfortunately we have yet to receive for England, so please bear with us.

As we confirmed in our letter of the 26<sup>th</sup> February we are supporting visiting indoors in bedrooms which is starting to happen in Scotland already and we are following the Government guidance, and will commence in England next week in a safe and structured way. We know many of you are looking forward to it, and we also know that many of you have told us that you don't feel comfortable coming inside at this point in time and will continue to use our visiting suites. We are pleased that we can offer this to you, and will respect whatever decision you decide, bearing in mind that those who are able to do bedroom visits is still very limited, and must only be the designated visitor which is one person for those in England and Jersey and two for those in Scotland. Unfortunately there is still no news on bedroom visiting in Wales.

Our staff in our homes and hospitals in England and Scotland are working hard to enable visiting as soon as possible. Please bear with us as we prepare and implement this in the best way possible. As you will be aware it is important that we are all clear on who the designated visitor/s are, and we know many families are having this conversation to help determine that. As we said last week, for those residents and patients who are able to decide themselves who their designated visitor/s are, we will be having meetings with them and will ensure this is documented in their care plan. We will also be contacting those who have lasting Power of Attorney for Health/Welfare or Guardianship, to support residents and patients who are not able to make that decision for themselves through a best interests meeting with their legal representative or appropriate family members. If you are a designated visitor you will be receiving communication on what you need to do to ensure the visits are safe, and also how you should book the visit through the visitor booking system on our website, which will enable our staff to manage the COVID-19 testing process effectively.

Thank you for your continued support as we move forward with our protocols in a safe and structured way, we really appreciate your patience. In the meantime we continue to support the vaccination programme and now have over 90% of our residents and patients and over 85% of

our staff which we are delighted about and we hope that this gives you comfort and reassurance too.

As we step into March it is great to feel that Spring is in the air and there are numerous events that our residents, patients and staff will be celebrating and marking such as Dame Vera Lynn's Birthday where we will remember her through her famous performances, as well as celebrating St Patrick's Day where residents can learn all about the country and sample the tastes, sights and sounds that Ireland has to offer. On top of that there are future talks from V&A Dundee talking about the museum and their famous Mary Quant exhibition, so lots of plans are afoot for everyone to enjoy.

Also, let's not forget on the 14<sup>th</sup> March many of us will be celebrating Mothering Sunday and remembering the special role of mothers in our lives and throughout history. We know many of you will want to visit and send cards and presents, and we will support this to our best ability. Please book your visits through our visitor booking system and bear in mind that not everyone may be able to visit on the day itself. If you would like to send a gift please try and ensure this arrives 72 hours before so we can contain it for safety purposes.

As always we will continue to do all we can to keep you updated but please don't hesitate to contact us with your queries and concerns, or your gratitude and thanks, and we will continue to do our best to respond as quickly as we can. You can do this through the General Manager or Hospital Director, or through our team at [feedback@barchester.com](mailto:feedback@barchester.com). Our only ask is that you do this with kindness and courtesy to the teams that are doing their very best to help, and we know you will. Sending our very best wishes to you and your families.



Dr Pete Calveley  
CEO Barchester Healthcare



Julia Atherton  
Director of Nursing

We are sending this with the best intentions and with the latest data we have. If this causes offence we are deeply sorry

