

Changes to shielding measures

As lockdown measures begin to lift, we thought it might be helpful to provide you with an update on the how the situation for people who have been 'shielding' will change. Councils and relevant service providers have been in touch with those in this cohort to advise them of these changes.

From **1 August**, the advice to 'shield' will be paused and the Government is advising strict social distancing rather than full shielding measures. The change in advice also allows a return to work in COVID- secure settings, as well as exercise, shopping for food and visiting places of worship.

Food and medicine boxes which were provided throughout the lockdown by National Shielding Service will cease on **1 August**. However, other forms of support – such as priority supermarket delivery slots and the NHS Volunteers Scheme, amongst a range of local volunteer schemes – will continue.

The categorisation of 'clinically extremely vulnerable' will remain in place and the government guidance specific to each patient should be followed. For example, children who are 'clinically extremely vulnerable' can return to their education settings if they are eligible in line with their peers.

After **1 August**, the shielding list will be maintained and monitored as in the event of an increase in cases, we may need to advise people on the list to shield again.

If patients are concerned about support after **1 August**, they should contact the local council for advice. More information on all of the above can be found at www.gov.uk.

Medicines Deliveries from Community Pharmacies

From the end of July 2020, the national medicines delivery service will be ending. Most prescriptions will now be sent electronically by GP practices to a selected pharmacy for collection.

The NHS app is available to order repeat medication and select the nominated pharmacy for the prescription to be sent to, as well as changing the pharmacy if that makes it easier for support to be provided. More information is available here <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/the-nhs-app/>

NHS electronic repeat dispensing is also available for people with long term prescriptions to receive medication at a nominated pharmacy for a period of up to 12 months. Patients will need to arrange a discussion with the GP surgery to set this up. More information is available here <https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/pharmacies-gp-practices-and-appliance-contractors/prescribing-and-dispensing/electronic-repeat-dispensing-erd/erd-information-patients>

We are encouraging patients to discuss option with their pharmacist to suit individual need. Should a patient still require assistance to get their medicine, they should ask a friend or relative to collect on their behalf, use NHS Volunteer Responders on **0808 196 3646** (8am to 8pm) to arrange support, or contact the appropriate council to put you in touch with a local volunteer service.