



Email: [Debbie.Neill@advanceuk.org](mailto:Debbie.Neill@advanceuk.org)

20<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Commissioner,

Advance  
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Witney  
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[www.advanceuk.org](http://www.advanceuk.org)

**RE: Advance's response to Coronavirus**

I am writing to confirm Advance's ongoing preparations in light of the global outbreak of Coronavirus (COVID-19) to reassure our commissioners and stakeholders that appropriate, timely actions are being taken. As this is an unprecedented situation for everyone we are doing our best to plan for a number of scenarios while acknowledging the potential threat this virus has on our ability to provide care and support services to vulnerable adults.

At both an organisational and local service level, we have put in place a range of measures taking into account the most recent Government advice. We have also reviewed our local and corporate business continuity plans and have required our contractors to demonstrate the same.

We are doing what we can to keep customers and staff safe and to minimise the impact on service delivery. As staff are asked to self-isolate and other services close down in the community we are looking at how to work collaboratively with other providers in a mutual aid situation. We are also actively recruiting staff who may have recently left our employment as fully trained casual workers and looking at other methods to back fill vacancies including re-deploying office staff to help with high pressure areas in the organisation. We are doing all we can to support our front line staff so that they can continue to deliver vital services during this outbreak.

We are actively sourcing more personal protective equipment (PPE) while recognising there is a national shortage. We are joining daily calls with other organisations in the sector to share ideas and solutions during this difficult time. We have updated our risk registers at all levels of the organisation, establishing lists of staff who are cross-trained and who could be re-deployed to areas with high need. Our project response team is meeting daily to assess and review the situation and take urgent operational decisions.

As our staff are key to delivering services we are regularly communicating and making sure everyone gets the support they need. Easy read, BSL and plain English communications are also being shared with our customers and friends/families and guardians are being asked not to visit our schemes while we will do our utmost to ensure customers don't become isolated.

We are committed to working closely with all stakeholders to contain and manage the impact of the virus and deliver services. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information. We will keep issuing updates as and when necessary.

Yours sincerely

Debbie Neill  
Director of Support

