

## COVID-19 - recommendations for community action by dietitians supporting care homes

[Guidance on residential care provision](#) recommends care homes minimise non-essential visiting during the national COVID-19 outbreak.

Community services are expected to work collaboratively with care homes in their local area. We ask dietitians to consider implementing the following actions to support community services & care homes to care for their high-risk population:

1. Determine and agree probable availability of dietetic support and leadership for community teams & care homes.
2. Identify non face-to-face tools which can support care homes to continue nutrition & hydration care, support & delivery.
3. Contact and collaborate with other community staff & responsible Executive Lead to maintain a connection with care homes & community staff.
4. Encourage continued use of <a href="#">‘MUST’</a> nutritional screening where possible. During a COVID-19 outbreak this advice may need to change.
5. Work with acute staff to ensure nutritional risk scores & nutritional care plans are included on hospital discharge documentation.
6. Discuss and agree plans for how nutrition support can continue to be provided during a COVID-19 outbreak within an individual care home.
7. Review care home access to food provisions & food supply chain. Support & advise care homes regarding food supply challenges, for example food wholesalers may deliver to smaller providers during this time.
8. Support relevant wholesalers to understand the importance of continuing to stock ingredients commonly used to increase the nutrient density of food & fluid e.g. skimmed milk powder, vitamin fortified milkshake powder, ground nuts, cheese.
9. Dietetic assistant practitioners, dietetic students & support workers can provide invaluable support to care homes and dietitians alike.
10. Oral nutritional supplements (ONS) should only be considered where clinically indicated (in line with local NHS guidance), likely to be clinically effective & where residents meet ACBS indications (ACBS indications do not include food access issues)