



Department of Health & Social Care

From the Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care

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The Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP
Chair, Health and Social Care Committee
House of Commons
Westminster
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15 May 2020

Dear Jeremy,

During the Health and Social Care Committee inquiry into the *Management of the Coronavirus Outbreak* on 17 April 2020, I offered to write to you to clarify the guidance for the use of PPE in care homes for non-covid patients.

Public Health England's *How to Work Safely in Care Homes guidance*, published on 17 April and updated on 27 April, recommends the use of PPE for care workers in care homes regardless of whether residents have symptoms, as there is sustained transmission of Covid-19. This guidance can be found on page 6 here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-how-to-work-safely-in-care-homes>

The table below states the recommended PPE to use when providing personal care to care home residents with or without symptoms.

Recommended PPE items	Explanation
Disposable gloves	Single use to protect you from contact with resident's body fluids and secretions.
Disposable plastic apron	Single use to protect you from contact with resident's body fluids and secretions.
Fluid-resistant surgical mask	Fluid-repellent surgical masks can be used continuously while providing care, until you take a break from duties (e.g. to drink, eat, for your break time or end of shift). The mask is worn to protect you, the care worker, and can be used while caring for a number of different residents. You should not touch your face mask unless it is to put it on or remove it.

	You should remove and dispose of the mask if it becomes damaged, soiled, damp, or uncomfortable to use. You need to use a new mask when you restart your duties after a break
Eye protection	Eye protection may be needed for care of some residents where there is risk of droplets or secretions from the resident's mouth, nose, lungs or from body fluids reaching the eyes (e.g. caring for someone who is repeatedly coughing or who may be vomiting). Use of eye protection should be discussed with your manager and you should have access to eye protection (such as goggles). If you are provided with goggles, then you should be given instructions on how to clean and store them between duties. Eye protection can be used continuously while providing care, until you need to take a break from duties

Source: Public Health England guidance "*How to Work Safely in Care Homes*"

Yours ever,



MATT HANCOCK