

St. Michael's House -Family Frequently Asked Questions April 9th

Residential Services

Q. What happens to if my family member who lives in Residential Services, needs to be tested for Covid-19 ?

A. Family members will be informed. An Easy to Read guide will support the service user in explaining the process. Our St. Michael's House teams will work with Family members. St. Michael's House is guided by the Public Health professionals.

Q Are healthcare workers being prioritised for testing ?

A. Should a staff member develop symptoms or have a close contact with someone of concern they inform their head of unit and seek advice from their GP before reporting for work. If the GP agrees a test is required there is a specific pathway for Health Care Staff. The GP will advise the staff member about safely returning to work

Q. Has St. Michael's House sufficient Protective Clothing (PPE) to support current need in Residential Services ?

A. Yes. St. Michael's House has sufficient PPE to meet current need and are distributing it to residential houses as required. We continue to work with the HSE and suppliers to replenish and enhance stock levels .

Q. Are Staff being asked to monitor their health and report any symptoms before reporting to work ?

A: All staff have been fully informed of the early symptoms of Covid 19 and risks in relation to close contact with persons of concern. Staff who have any concerns are asked to contact their Head of Unit and GP before reporting to work.

Q. Are there masks available for staff to wear to the supermarket when shopping?

A: At the moment in Ireland, Public Health are not advising the use of masks for everyday use. Good adherence to the Physical/Social distancing is a priority with this.

Q. Are staff wearing gloves each day with my family member ?

A: Wearing gloves is not a substitute for washing hands. Gloves carry germs just like hands do, so frequent hand hygiene will negate the need for wearing gloves all the time. There are glove supplies for staff.

Q. Is there any support available to Residential Services where adults/children with disabilities could be supported to minimise the risk of spreading the Covid-19 and/or to provide a higher level of care.

A. While every effort will be made to care for service users in their own Residential house, in a small number of cases it may become necessary to transfer to alternative accommodation. This could be become necessary to reduce the risk of the virus spreading or to provide a higher level of care. In all cases families will be kept fully informed.

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We are preparing for any unwell service users from our Residential services. Our Belcamp Day services is being temporarily converted and is called **Belcamp Nua** in Dublin 13.

This will be temporary accommodation depending on the needs of the individual from Residential Services, should we need it. It is a non- acute /non-urgent isolation unit if needed. We are working with families and understand how difficult this time is. We cannot predict the future but we are planning as best we can to continually protect our service users and staff teams during this National Emergency Crisis.

Q. If necessary will residents be transferred to Hospital ?

A. Yes, like all patients with significant medical needs related to Covid-19, service users will transfer to hospital should it become necessary. Families will be kept fully informed. The decision to admit a service user to hospital will be made by medical professionals in the hospital.

Day Services

Q. Is there a date for St. Michael's House Schools or Day Services to reopen ?

A. There is no such date set to reopen services. We understand the need to resume services. We are guided and adhering to HSE and Public Health guidelines. Families will be notified as soon as information becomes available.

Q. Are there plans in place to support families who are supporting their family member at home?

A. All families have been assigned a designated contact person to discuss any concerns they may have. Individual clinicians and teachers are keeping in touch with families and are developing creative ways to support service users and families as well as advising on a wide range of issues. Families are encouraged to share and discuss any concerns they may have no matter what the issue is.

Q. What supports are in place for all families to try and keep a structure to their days at home?

A. There is supportive information, developed by clinicians, for St. Michael's House families on our website, www.smh.ie. Both pages can be found in the dropdown menu on the Home page. Teachers in St. Michael's House Special National Schools are in touch with families and are delivering creative fun solutions to stay in touch with their pupils.

Q. What can I do to support St. Michael's House during this National Emergency Crisis ?

A. Please bear with us for information and updates. We are working as fast as we can to continue to support services and protect service users and staff teams. Support us, by adhering to the necessary restrictions we have put in place and most importantly follow the National guidelines in relation to movement, social distancing and cocooning.

Q. How can I stay informed on what is happening in St. Michael's House ?

A. Please visit our - www.smh.ie/news/covid for all our updates and news on this National Emergency Covid-19.

Thank you