

## St. Michael's House -Family Frequently Asked Questions April 30th

We understand that this is a very difficult time for Families.

Please see some answers to your questions about

St.Michael's House services during #Covid-19

**Q. There are Covid-19 cases reported by the HSE in Nursing Homes every day, should I be very concerned ?**

**A.** There are indeed cases of Covid-19 virus every day in Ireland. However, Minister Simon Harris has confirmed this week that 90% of disability centres nationwide are currently Covid-19 free. We are taking every measure to protect service users and staff on outbreak cases or near cases of the virus. If there is any concern in your family members residential house you will be notified by the Person in Charge or senior staff member.

**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 and are distributing it to residential houses as required. We continue to work with the HSE which has reported that there is a 'parity and equality of access' to PPE clothing for disability services based on need in the same way that hospitals and nursing home are given access.

**Q. As a Primary Carer, what if I get sick at home with my family member from SMH Services ?**

**A.** The HSE have recently developed a pathway plan for when a carer becomes ill and has to go to hospital and there is an emergency response on a case by case basis. Should this happen please contact your assigned St. Michael's House contact person for advice .

**Q. As a Primary Carer, can I get Protective Clothing (PPE) for my home ?**

**A.** Yes. Family Carers Ireland can support a request for PPE clothing for Family Carers . Call National Careline 1800 240724 and make a request . Please see [familycarers.ie](http://familycarers.ie)

**Q. Are SMH Residential Staff informed on all HSE and Public Health Guidelines as they change ?**

**A.** Yes. Staff are kept informed of all new information as it becomes available. The organisation's Quality and Safety team are also producing webinar's on critical topics in relation to the management of the Covid-19.

There is a recently established SMH Covid-19 Testing Steering Group who are keeping staff informed.

**Q. Are staff wearing gloves each day with my family member in Residential Care ?**

**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. Social Distancing is directed in all services where possible.

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### **Q. Are staff wearing masks each day with my family member in Residential Care ?**

**A.** St. Michael's House acknowledges the Guidance on COVID 19 regarding the use of surgical masks which issued on April 22nd from HSE /HSPC. We are fully supportive of the guidance and are implementing recommendations this week. We are working closely with the HSE to secure the necessary supply.

### **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 and further announcements on May 5th. 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 of children using our services 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.

Adult services managers, staff and clinicians have been working together to support those living in our residential houses and to make contact with and provide advice and support to those service users whose day services are currently closed and their families.

Families are encouraged to make contact with our teams to share and discuss any concerns they may have no matter what the issue is.

### **Q. Is there any further information available to families and service users ?**

**A.** We have published a wide range of information and guides to support families and service users during the national "lock down" on our website [www.smh.ie](http://www.smh.ie). This information is updated on a regular basis and families are encouraged to check in regularly.

There is also very useful information published on [www.gov.ie](http://www.gov.ie)

### **Q. Where can I send a query to be answered so all families can be informed ?**

**A.** Please email any questions to - [info@smh.ie](mailto:info@smh.ie) so it maybe added to the next Family FAQ's in May.

**Thank you.**