

## COVID Email Update 12 October 2020

Good morning to you all

There has been no change to the Public Health advice for Camden yet this week. An announcement from Government on a new three-tier local lockdown system is expected today (more info here <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/oct/11/three-tier-covid-plan-for-england-what-it-means-and-how-it-may-work>). Councillor Gould made a statement about rising London cases on Friday which you can read here <https://news.camden.gov.uk/camden-council-leader-urges-residents-to-be-extra-careful-this-weekend-as-coronavirus-cases-rise/>. Sadiq Khan has said he is expecting tighter rules to be in London soon.

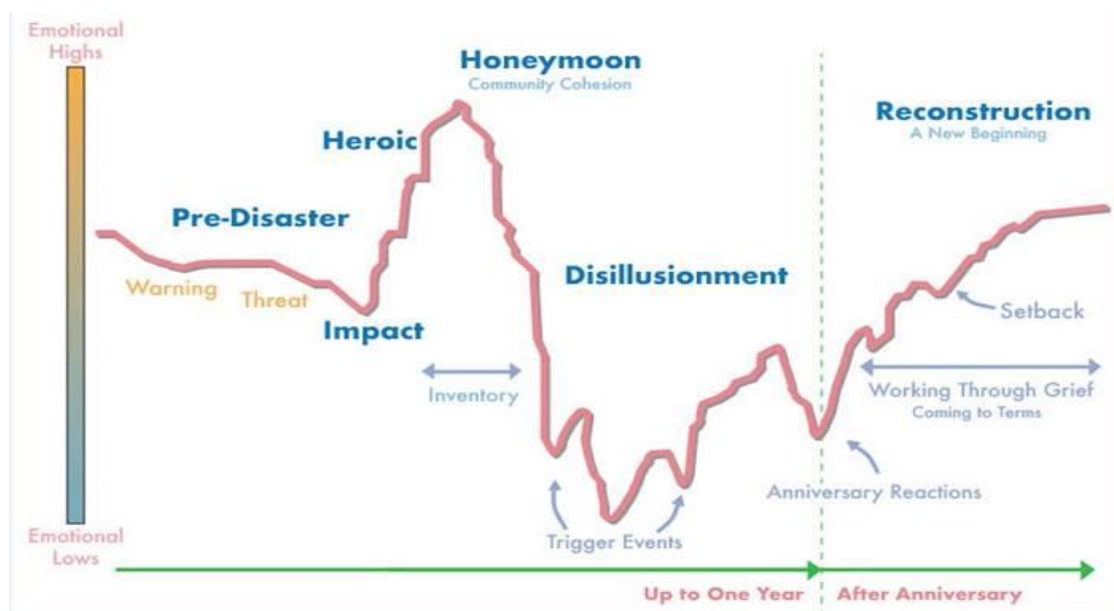
In last week's feedback survey, one of you commented that this '*no change*' message can feel frustrating when we look around and think '*things should be changing, COVID cases are rising, there should be more measures to try and stop this*'. This theme has come up in team meetings too.

I know how frustrating it feels that local government currently has limits on what they can control in terms of COVID restrictions, I trust that Georgia Gould, Julie Billett (Camden's Director of Public Health) and our Council leaders are doing everything they can to make representations to central government. I'll keep giving you the information as soon as I get it, so we can all make informed decisions for ourselves, our own families, and the families we're helping. There will also be a whole service meeting the week after half term.

If anything, this second wave is even more difficult to navigate than the first wave. The constant uncertainty about restrictions, feeling boundaries blurring between work and personal life, the fact its autumn, shorter days and the weather is awful, pressures or worries at home. All of this is a big ask of our physical and emotional reserves that were already depleted from lockdown in the spring. We can't forget too that we might be 'grieving for normal'. That's no small thing. We're all wrestling with these multiple layers, wherever we live in the country. I see you and I feel you. And I feel it too.

Whatever you're feeling today, let's keep looking after ourselves and each other. Name the stuff that's feeling difficult, and name the feelings we're having because of it. Let's treat ourselves with kindness and gentleness, and have realistic expectations of ourselves. We will get through this next part of the journey, whatever twists and turns this pandemic takes.

The image below is about the phases of disaster recovery. What we're experiencing right now is a normal reaction to extraordinary circumstances. You can read more about this image here <https://www.samhsa.gov/dtac/recovering-disasters/phases-disaster>. You are not alone. Your managers and I are right beside you. You are loved.



Updates for you this week (lots going on so apologies for length):

### **Camden Launches Track and Trace Self Isolating Support**

Local authorities have been asked to help central government with contacting people who have tested positive for COVID to check they are self-isolating. From last week, Camden has a team ringing residents and a team going round to residents homes if they can't get hold of them by phone. This is to make sure Camden residents have everything they need to self-isolate safely and are connected with support if not (for example if the person is worried about losing their job if they self-isolate).

I'm part of a Multi-Disciplinary Team supporting this work, just as we were during the Shielding Programme, to make sure families self-isolating have the help they need. One to be aware of if you are working with a family who has to self-isolate.

### **Financial Support for Camden Residents Self Isolating**

You may remember I mentioned a scheme where people self-isolating who need financial support can receive a payment of £500. At the time, this was just for local lockdown areas. But Camden has now launched it for any Camden resident who meets specific criteria. It starts this week.

You can find more information here <https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/covid-nhs-and-government-information/tests-for-covid-test-and-trace/#main> (scroll to "Test and Trace Financial Support for Self Isolating"). One to let parents know about, particularly if they are worried about losing their jobs or loss of income through self-isolation.

### **Camden Welfare Assistance Fund**

A reminder that the Camden Welfare Assistance Fund is available to support families experiencing financial hardship. It can also support families on no or low incomes, in receipt of benefits, who are moving properties and need help with basic items such as flooring, white goods, beds and so on.

If you are working with a family who would benefit from the Welfare Assistance Fund, please talk with your line manager. Service managers can authorise requests for welfare assistance and I currently input the requests onto the portal. You can find more information about Camden's Welfare Assistance Fund here <https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/finance-bills-and-financial-hardship/welfare-assistance-fund/>

### **Help with Housing Costs – Camden's Discretionary Housing Payment**

A reminder too that there is a scheme to support families who are struggling with rent payments called Discretionary Housing Payment. You can find more information here <https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/rents-tenancies-evictions-and-council-tax/tenant-and-rent-issues/>

### **Elective Home Education and Flexi-Schooling**

There has been a big increase in the number of Camden parents seeking information about home education. This is understandable due to COVID worries. There's a lot to think about in making a decision to home-school, and if we're working with parents exploring that option, we'll need to know what to do. There is now a new Guidebook section to give you quick links to information about elective home education and 'flexi-schooling'. You can find it here <https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/schools/home-educating/#main>. If you need help or advice on home education or flexi-schooling, please do reach out to Ed Magee, Donna Dean or Alison Pyle who have a wealth of knowledge and expertise in this area.

### **Occupational Therapy for Children Who Live with Trauma**

You may have noticed a link to a new Guidebook section last week on Occupational Therapy for children. We tend to think of OT involvement with children with SEND. But our amazing Camden OT friends also use their wealth of skills and expertise to support children who have

experienced trauma, and who may be finding sensory processing and regulation difficult either in the classroom or at home. If you're working with a child who has experienced a traumatic event, or who is living with trauma, or is finding COVID really challenging, it is well worth contacting their school OT for advice and support, and perhaps to join the scaffolding network. You can find OT information contact details here <https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/schools/occupational-therapy/#main>

### **Dependency Leave**

We found out from HR last week that the changes to dependency leave made during the height of the pandemic have now reverted back to Camden's usual policy and procedure. Just to be aware of this in case you need to take dependency leave. You can find out more here <https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/staff-wellbeing-during-covid/dependency-leave-during-covid/>

### **Webinar – Black Lives Matter Series: Culture and Protecting Children's Rights**

A reminder that the next in our Black Lives Matter webinar series will be on 15 October 2-3.30pm, exploring the often challenging subject of culture and protecting children's rights. This is mandatory unless you are on leave, and it should be an incredibly helpful session to inform and support our practice. Calendar invites were sent last week, please shout if you need it again.

### **Webinar – Welfare Rights, Housing Benefits and Universal Credit**

Our next service webinar will be on 22 October 2-3.30pm, where we explore a subject that has featured a lot in our work during COVID and will continue to feature for many months – welfare rights, housing benefit and universal credit. Our friend Rebecca Harvey from Welfare Rights will be helping us learn about these often complex systems, who housing benefit and UC is for, when to claim and how to claim, and where you can seek help for families. Not mandatory, but would strongly recommend coming along if you can. Calendar invites were sent last week, please give me a shout if you need it again.

### **Families in the Driving Seat – New FSCF Participatory Project**

I'm working with the Participation Team on an exciting project for Camden families to design the help they think they might want and need in a post-COVID world.

The Camden Good Family Help project will be a participatory, social action project. A representative sample of Camden families will come together to create their own design vision for what good help for families should look and feel like during and after COVID, based on their experience of how family life in Camden is changing because of COVID. This rich insight will give all Camden family services a steer on how they might adapt and flex for a post-COVID world. I have two Camden parents designing this project with me, with help from UAL Social Design Institute.

I'll be contacting those of you who live in Camden to ask if you would like to be part of this work. You have a unique insight because you bridge Camden professional world and Camden life world. So I hope you'll join me on what could be a really interesting and creative project, with Camden families firmly in the driving seat. Invite to follow.

### **Weekly Survey**

The weekly survey is open for you to let me know about any emerging family needs, and anything you need. This weeks survey link is [FSCF FAMILY NEEDS SURVEY W/C 12 OCTOBER](#)

### **New information uploaded to the COVID Guidebook this week link here**

<https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/>

<b>Black Lives Matter Resources Repository – Managers</b> A new resource for supervisors, managers and	<b>Welfare Assistance Fund</b> More information about how to access the Council's welfare assistance fund	<b>Financial Support for People Self-Isolating</b> Information about Camden's scheme to provide financial help to people who are self-
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<p>leaders to think about their role in either upholding or dismantling racism (scroll to the bottom)</p> <p><a href="https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/black-lives-matter-resource-repository/resources-for-daily-practice/#main">https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/black-lives-matter-resource-repository/resources-for-daily-practice/#main</a></p>	<p><a href="https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/finance-bills-and-financial-hardship/welfare-assistance-fund/">https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/finance-bills-and-financial-hardship/welfare-assistance-fund/</a></p>	<p>isolating including who qualifies</p> <p><a href="https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/covid-nhs-and-government-information/tests-for-covid-test-and-trace/#main">https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/covid-nhs-and-government-information/tests-for-covid-test-and-trace/#main</a></p>
<p><b>Black Lives Matter Resource Repository – More Article and Videos</b></p> <p>Added to the Repository this week, more articles and videos to reflect on (with thanks to Nicky and Trini for sending)</p> <p><a href="https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/black-lives-matter-resource-repository/">https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/black-lives-matter-resource-repository/</a></p>	<p><b>More Community-Based Employment Support</b></p> <p>Details for SHAK, NW5 and West Euston Partnership who are all offering support for people seeking employment</p> <p><a href="https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/employment-income-and-benefits/finding-a-job/">https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/employment-income-and-benefits/finding-a-job/</a></p>	<p><b>Home Schooling and Flexi-School</b></p> <p>A new Guidebook section on elective home education, and flexi-schooling.</p> <p><a href="https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/schools/home-educating/#main">https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/schools/home-educating/#main</a></p>
<p><b>Resilient Families Practice</b></p> <p>A reminder that all the information, materials and resources about the Resilient Families Practice Model are now on the Guidebook</p> <p><a href="https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/resilient-families-practice/">https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/resilient-families-practice/</a></p>	<p><b>SHAK Cooking Club</b></p> <p>New project from our friends at SHAK offering meal ingredients and cook-along to an online video or recipe card to create the meal at home (with thanks to Elaine C for sending)</p> <p><a href="https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/food/cooking-and-eating-at-home/">https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/food/cooking-and-eating-at-home/</a></p>	

We are now in week 30 of COVID, and our current capacity remains stable. We're keeping a very close eye on capacity and workloads in the next few weeks as more families in need of help come in through front door, but also just as importantly making sure your working life is manageable.

As always, please do shout if there is anything you need.

Becca

Ps whoever it was in the feedback survey who said the remote kit bag page has got too big and hard to use – you're 100% right and it's on my list to sort out later this week! Watch this space

Becca Dove

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