

Good morning to you all

A second national lockdown will start from Thursday until 2 December. We have some of the guidance we need from the Government about what lockdown will mean this time, and we await some other key information due today. I will be holding a whole service briefing on Tuesday morning where we will run through what this means for family support. Calendar invite to follow.

Although perhaps anticipated, this second national lockdown will mean temporary but significant change again for us and our own families, and for the families we help. We have some memory muscle to draw on this time. We have been through the first lockdown, learned a great deal, and we are much more prepared and ready. We have our emergency management plan, which sets out precisely how we will work. We have a strong set of policies and procedures to guide our work during a lockdown.

We have strong relationships with Camden community organisations, who will be vital to helping Camden families feel safe and strong during lockdown. Schools, nurseries, colleges and universities will remain open during this lockdown, which means they will see (most) children every day. Not all businesses will close completely this time. So this is a different lockdown to the first one.

However, any lockdown will of course bring its challenges - physically, practically and emotionally. The importance of us all looking after each other has never been stronger than it is now. It's also important we stay open to the idea of this second lockdown lasting beyond 2 December. The more open we are to the possibility, the easier it might feel to cope if it happens.

When the first lockdown started on 23 March, I wrote to you all to say we would get through it together. We've got through the last 33 weeks together and we'll get through this next chapter together. I will keep preparing us for what is to come as much as I possibly can, and I am by your side every step of the way, just as I know you will be by the side of every family you help. We are not doing this alone. We stand shoulder to shoulder with the Camden community as part of a collective effort.

Updates for you this week:

Government Guidance on the Second Lockdown

The latest guidance from the Government about the second lockdown restrictions is on the Guidebook here <https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/covid-nhs-and-government-information/>

People Previously Shielding – Guidance during Second Lockdown

The new Government guidance says that anyone in the previous shielding group (classed as extremely clinically vulnerable to COVID) should work from home exclusively during the second lockdown. If you were previously in the shielding group, your manager will be in touch today to talk this through with you, as we must make sure we do all we can to help keep you safe. This means you should not come into 5PS or do any face-to-face visits or meetings from at least Thursday when the second lockdown starts but I would strongly advise starting this from today.

The new Government guidance also says that anyone in the clinically vulnerable group "*should be especially careful to follow the rules and minimise your contacts with others*". You can read the government guidance here <https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/covid-nhs-and-government-information/>

Furlough Scheme Extended for the Second Lockdown

The Government furlough scheme that protected some jobs was due to change today. However the Government has announced that furlough will continue as it is until 2 December

when the second lockdown is due to end. Please do let parents know about this if they are worried. You can find more information on the Guidebook here <https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/employment-jobs-and-benefits/employees/#main>

New Guidebook Home for the Direct Work Kit Bag

To support you with virtual work, the Direct Work Kit Bag has been refreshed and has a new, more streamlined home on the Guidebook here <https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/direct-work-kit-bag/>

Emergency Food Provision during Second Lockdown

Whilst it is unlikely the second lockdown will bring the same level of need for food as the first lockdown, it's really important you know what to do if a family needs food. You can find all the guidance about sourcing food for families on the Guidebook here <https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/food/>

Consent Form and Privacy Notice Now on the Guidebook

You can now find the family early help consent form and privacy notice on the Guidebook here <https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/fscf-procedures-during-covid/consent-form-and-privacy-notice/#main>. A reminder that you must get a signed information consent form as soon as you start work with a family, and upload the signed copy as an attachment to Mosaic. You must also give the family a copy of our privacy notice (you can provide either a link to our early help web page or a hard copy, both are on the Guidebook). Information Rights are having a look at information sharing consent procedures at the moment, and I will let you know if anything changes.

'Stepping Up' and Escalation Procedures Now on the Guidebook

There is now a Guidebook section about what to do if you think a family has met threshold for statutory social work intervention. You can find it here <https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/fscf-procedures-during-covid/stepping-up-escalation-procedures/#main>

Tax Relief If You are Working from Home

You may have seen the Essentials email that HMRC have simplified their system to claim tax relief on working from home expenses. If you are currently working from home you can now apply to get the whole year's tax relief at £6 per week. This equates to a gain of £62 a year for a basic 20% rate taxpayer, and £124 a year for a higher 40% rate taxpayer. You can find more information on the Guidebook here <https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/fscf-procedures-during-covid/working-from-home-guidance/#main>

Rule of 6 Exemption Letter

We now have a signed letter from our Executive Director Martin Pratt that confirms family workers are exempt from the 'rule of six' when they are meeting with families for work purposes. The letter is on the Guidebook here (scroll about half way down) <https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/fscf-procedures-during-covid/face-to-face-visits-guidance-and-procedures/#main>. Please make sure you either save the letter on your mobile or laptop or keep a hard copy with you when you are visiting families, just in case you are challenged on why you are meeting either in their home or if you are meeting with more than 6 people.

Black Lives Matter Webinar – Everyday Tools for Culturally Responsive Practice

The next webinar in our Black Lives Matter series on Tuesday at 11am is a very practical session exploring the tools on our Black Lives Matter Resource Repository that you can use in everyday practice. Calendar invites went out last Thursday – you should have received two invites, one to the main meeting and one to a breakout room. This is mandatory unless you are on leave. Please give me a shout if you need the calendar invite again.

Webinar – Poverty Proofing Our Family Work Practice

With 43% of Camden children living in poverty, our work has always had to respond to this enormous and complex structural inequality. Poverty is likely to become an even bigger feature of our work as Camden families live through the economic impacts of COVID. This

next webinar in our series will be a thought-provoking and helpful session with Professor Brigid Featherstone who is part of the Child Welfare Inequalities Project, and Diana Skelton from poverty campaigners ATD Fourth World to help us find ways to be proactive about poverty. 24 November at 11am, calendar invite to follow shortly.

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 here [FSCF FAMILY NEEDS SURVEY W/C 2 NOVEMBER](#)

New information uploaded to the COVID Guidebook this week link here

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

<p>Finding a Home</p> <p>A new Guidebook section covering bidding for council property, council housing allocation points, and finding a home to rent with private landlords</p> <p>https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/rents-tenancies-evictions-and-council-tax/finding-a-home/</p>	<p>Direct Work Kit Bag</p> <p>A refreshed kit bag in a new place on the Guidebook</p> <p>https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/direct-work-kit-bag/</p>	<p>Government Guidance on Second Lockdown Restrictions</p> <p>Updated Guidebook page with the guidance on social restrictions during second lockdown plus some advice for extremely clinically vulnerable and clinically vulnerable groups</p> <p>https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/covid-nhs-and-government-information/social-distancing-government-guidance/#main</p>
<p>Furlough Scheme Extension during Second Lockdown</p> <p>Information about the extension of the furlough scheme during the second lockdown</p> <p>https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/employment-jobs-and-benefits/employees/#main</p>	<p>Consent Form and Privacy Notice</p> <p>A new Guidebook section with links and copies of the Family Early Help consent form and privacy notice</p> <p>https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/fscf-procedures-during-covid/consent-form-and-privacy-notice/#main</p>	<p>Stepping Up Escalation Procedures</p> <p>A refreshed Guidebook page on what to do if you are very worried about a family and think threshold for statutory social work intervention might have been met.</p> <p>https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/fscf-procedures-during-covid/stepping-up-escalation-procedures/#main</p>
<p>Emergency Management Plan</p> <p>A reminder that you can find our COVID emergency management plan on the Guidebook here</p> <p>https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/early-help-guide/family-early-help-covid-guidebook/fscf-procedures-during-</p>	<p>Rule of 6 Exemption Letter</p> <p>A letter for all FSCF workers confirming that they are exempt from the rule of 6 when undertaking visits with families</p> <p>https://ascpractice.camden.gov.uk/media/2331/key-worker-rule-of-six-exemption-letter-october-20.pdf</p>	

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We are now in week 33 of COVID, and our current capacity remains stable. I will see you all tomorrow for our whole service briefing on the second lockdown, but in the meantime please do reach out if you are feeling worried or anxious about what the second lockdown means for you and your family. I will do all I can to steer us through this next lockdown clearly, calmly, safely and with purpose.

Becca

Becca Dove
Head of Family Support and Complex Families

Telephone: 020 7974 3603