

Weekly stakeholder update

For many people across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent this week sees the start of a very important month, that being the Islamic holy month of Ramadan. This month-long fasting will take place from 23 April until 23 May. We are urging people to stay safe and remember to follow government guidelines around social distancing, avoiding gathering with family members and friends. The NHS has a diverse workforce, with an estimate 3.3% of the 1.4 million NHS workers being from a Muslim background. Advice and guidance has been issued to NHS managers and staff around working hours and fasting for Muslim colleagues. This, plus more information, can be found [here](#).

Most of you will have seen that yesterday the first UK vaccine trials for coronavirus started. Testing any new vaccine takes time, but this is a step in the right direction and offers a glimmer of hope for the future. Many people also took to their doorsteps once again last night, as the weekly round of applause for key workers took place. We would like to remind people not to gather in groups either in your streets or buildings and not to travel to hospital sites to gather and applaud. Please continue to show your appreciation from your homes, with members of your household. We are encouraging people to show their appreciation for key workers on social media, using the hashtags #ThankYouKeyWorkers and #StaffsStokeHeroes.

There has been lots of talk on the news about cases of coronavirus in care homes. Local councils are continuing to work very hard to support the care homes in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent both in terms of personal protective equipment (PPE) and workforce.

NHS England and NHS Improvement have continued to post on social media, encouraging people to look at the steps that we can all take to look after our mental wellbeing during this time. Head over the [website](#) to find out more about the Every Mind Matters campaign.

Mental wellbeing can be extremely difficult issue at this time, especially for families grieving the loss of a loved one. This week, the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent healthcare system very sadly lost two colleagues. We would like to express our deepest condolences to the families of Patrick McManus, a valued member of the nursing team at County Hospital, Stafford, and of Mr Manjeet Singh Riyat, Emergency Department Consultant at Royal Derby Hospital. We would also like to send our wishes to their colleagues at University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust and University Hospitals of Derby and Burton NHS Foundation Trust, and to anyone who has suffered a loss during this crisis.

All your efforts to stay indoors and to remain socially distant from friends and family is meaning that the national curve is beginning to flatten, showing that social distancing really can work. We have heard a lot from government officials about the possibility of a 'second peak' if people do not continue to abide by these instructions. It is therefore now more important than ever that we all follow the measures put in place to help fight this worldwide battle. We thank you for your support and remind everyone to stay in touch virtually, as much as possible.

Across the local health and care system, the latest updates are:

- Local councils are encouraging small business to take up the grants that are available to them. Already, millions of pounds have been granted to small businesses in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. Head to your local council website to find out more
- Positive messages have been received from Staffordshire Police around high levels of compliance in the area with the #StayHomeSaveLives campaign
- Staffordshire Police has also reported an increased level of unsafe driving. Staffordshire Police is urging people to abide by speed limits in place
- Staffordshire Fire and Rescue is reporting a high number of deliberately started fires and is urging people not to burn excess waste in their gardens or use 'Chinese Lanterns' as part of the #ClapForCarers campaign
- Staff testing at two local football grounds has now begun. These tests are for all public service staff showing symptoms and **staff must be referred**. The general public is **not** able to get tests at these centres. However, family members showing symptoms who live in the same household as staff can be. **This must also be by referral**.
- Stoke-on-Trent City Council has pledged £100,000 of financial support for community and voluntary organisations providing support to those impacted by coronavirus (COVID-19). More information can be found, [here](#).
- Staffordshire Council also pledged £155,000 to support community groups in the area on 1 April. See more, [here](#).
- Staffordshire County Council is creating a 'video sing-along' to celebrate Staffordshire Day on 1 May. Video entries of anyone singing along to the hit song 'Angels' by Robbie Williams must be submitted by 26 April. Find out more, [here](#).
- Staffordshire County Council announced £13.6m of support for the care sector in Staffordshire, to help offset additional costs around care packages and staff absence. The funding will also help with any ongoing PPE supplies.

For the latest information on coronavirus, please visit the [NHS](#) and [government](#) websites.