# Appendix 3f: Example Protocol-Outings / Holidays & Visits to Family & Friends (away from the care setting)

As a country we are slowly lifting restrictions on the general population that were in place to stop the spread of COVID-19 however we still need to take extra care to protect people who live in residential and nursing homes, supported living environments, and those who work with them.

With the introduction of controlled and time-limited visiting insidethe care setting we are now looking at how we can safely facilitate residents/ tenants visiting with family away from the care setting. For example to go for outings, to visit family/friends at their own homes or to go away on holiday with family/friends. This would only be where a risk assessment has been completed and shown it is safe and appropriate to do so, and has considered the possible positive and negative impacts of visiting away from the setting or not visiting away from the care setting.

Your continued support in protecting not only our residents/tenants and staff, but also you as visitors and the wider community, is equally important.

**Basic Principles**

Any visiting or holiday arrangements will be jointly agreed between you, the resident/tenant and the care provider and are subject to full risk assessment and robust care planning.

We are asking residents/tenants to agree to visits away from the care setting only where this is necessary to maintain their wellbeing and where virtual communications and visits within the care setting are not enough to support good mental health. This arrangement is in place to ensure we reduce the number of people in contact with the care setting at any one time, to protect both residents/tenants and staff.

We are asking that residents/tenants only visit away from the care setting with one other household consistently for the duration of the Covid-19 situation in order to minimise the close contact they may have whilst staying away from their home.

It is critical during this stage that visits of this nature only take place at pre-arranged times and we require enough notice to carry out the appropriate risk assessment (for the individual and to assess the risk and impact on the others in the setting to include staff). Adequate time must also be allowed for discussions as necessary with the relevant professionals and agencies, the staff teams and with the individual and yourselves to ensure all parties are cognisant of the risks, can agree suitable mitigations and discuss in detail the potential ramifications and subsequent actions or measures that would be required so that we can take a risk sharing and joined up approach.

To this end we would ask that whilst the individual is visiting away from the care setting that relatives observe all guidance and not expose them to any avoidable risk. Individuals and families should work with the provider on a risk assessment as to what might be safe to do with the person while visiting. In all cases you should be adhering to social distancing, face covering and infection control guidelines as a minimum.

Arrangements and agreements for visits away from the care setting should adopt a person centred approach and the individual needs and views of each resident or tenant and in the case of someone with incapacity the views of any Power of Attorney or Guardian should be central to the decision (if an individual lacks capacity the principles of the Mental Capacity Act should be applied). Any decisions reached in discussion with those involved, their friends or advocates where appropriate, should be fully documented with rationale behind decisions clearly recorded.

You should **not** collect your relative for a visit away from the setting if you or any of your household are displaying symptoms of Covid-19 or are awaiting the outcome of any Covid-19 test or if you have been contacted as part of the NHS track and trace system and asked to isolate. In this instance the trip should be cancelled to be re-arranged at a later date when these risks are not present.

**Day Trips/Outings/Visits**

Classified as a visit away from the care setting but not overnight. Appropriate face coverings and [social distancing](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-safe-outside-your-home/staying-safe-outside-your-home) measures must be observed at all times during any outing or visit away from the home. If you are unable to be 2m apart (such as when travelling in a car) then you should ensure that you are wearing face coverings. Regular handwashing should be encouraged.

**Holidays**

A holiday will be classed as any overnight stay away from the care setting (even if this is just for 24 hours) and includes overnight visits to the family home. Care settings must treat any period of overnight absence as a holiday in order to ensure robust controls are in place to protect residents/tenants and staff. As a precautionary measure, to protect other residents and staff in the setting, residents who have an overnight stay away from the care setting will need to self isolate on return to the home for a period of 14 days.

Currently we are not supporting individuals to take holidays outside of the UK due to the changing travel and quarantine restrictions. It is not possible to adequately plan trips abroad during the current Covid-19 situation.

The risk assessment and decision making process will include what would need to happen if you or any member of your household are displaying symptoms of Covid-19 or are awaiting the outcome of any Covid-19 test or if you/they have been contacted as part of the NHS track and trace system and been asked to isolate. This could include that your relative should not return to the setting in these circumstances. And that in this instance families will need to prepare for and make arrangements to accommodate and support the individual until these risks are no longer present which will be discussed in full and agreed by the care setting who may ask your relative to be tested for Covid-19 to ensure they are negative before returning home. The care setting cannot take responsibility for this.

**Action to be taken - collection from (insert home name/address)**

1. You will be asked to meet your relative outside the care setting in order to reduce any unnecessary additional entries to the accommodation. Staff will make the necessary preparations and be ready to support this to happen.
2. You should wash or sanitize your hands prior to collecting your relative.
3. You will be asked to bring and wear a [face covering](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own) for picking up your relative to leave the care setting and visit elsewhere.
4. All [social distancing](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-safe-outside-your-home/staying-safe-outside-your-home) guidelines must be observed while interacting with staff and handing over any luggage or belongings.

**Action to be taken – returning to (insert home name/address)**

1. Prior to the resident returning please telephone the care setting 30 minutes before arrival . This will enable staff to discuss the return with you and if agreed that it is safe for the resident to return, allow staff to be ready to meet you outside thus reducing any unnecessary additional entries to the accommodation. Staff will make the necessary preparations and be ready to support this to happen.
2. You should wash or sanitize your hands prior to returning your relative.
3. You will be asked to bring and wear a face covering for when you return your relative/friend to the care setting.
4. All social distancing guidelines must be observed while interacting with staff and handing over any luggage or belongings.
5. You are asked to limit any other items that the resident brings back with them. This approach is to reduce the opportunity for the virus to be carried into the care setting and being passed unknowingly to others.

**Future Focus**

At all times we will follow [Government guidelines](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus) related to visiting.

Should these guidelines change we will implement them. This could include the cessation of visits away from the care setting if there is a spike in the virus or an outbreak in the care home.

We will keep you informed of each change as it occurs and how it impacts on our residents and on you as a family member.