

#C19SupportBrum

Together we'll get
through this



Covid-19 Support Brum Partnership

Weekly briefing for Thematic Leads

Edition 2: Friday 17 April 2020

Introduction

It's been another busy week when we have engaged across the sector to support each other to deliver services and support to the citizens of Birmingham during this lockdown period. We are bringing together all of the CEOs and leaders who represent their thematic area for a weekly Zoom meeting to discuss the most pressing issues which may be resolved within the group or may need to go to Gold Command at Birmingham City Council for feedback.

If you wish to contribute information that you feel should be shared across a thematic area or for the weekly round-up please contact either your thematic lead (listed above) or Sharne Maher Theme Partnership Manager sharnem@bvsc.org. On behalf of Brian Carr and all at BVSC we would like to thank everyone involved for their time, effort and participation in this group. New mental health support for frontline workers, young people and adults has been announced and is detailed below. This will be accompanied by a media campaign which BVSC will support with retweets and information on our website.

We will also be promoting the new Domestic Abuse campaign detailed below. Both are huge public health issues which can affect anyone at any point in their life. Thematic areas that have not featured heavily this week will have more focus in next week's round-up.

BVSC Pathways

As many of you will know, BVSC has been working with colleagues at Birmingham City Council on the city's response to Covid19. Our role has been to help mobilise, coordinate, and join up voluntary and community sector efforts in response to the pandemic. In addition, we have been working to ensure that the voluntary sector's services are as aligned as possible with those being offered by other key agencies in the city, including the Council, the NHS, and the Police.

To that end, I want to share with you a website link which I hope you'll find useful. It outlines a possible "pathway" for those who are seeking support, and so it might be of particular use to you and those you advise. You can find it on the BVSC website here: <https://www.bvsc.org/covid-19-pathways-accessing-support-birmingham>.

The webpage includes details on how self-isolating individuals can access food supplies; information on local Mutual Aid Groups; contact details for local Neighbourhood Network hubs; access to our Route2Wellbeing online portal (a searchable directory of wellbeing services in the city, including foodbanks); and information on how to access the City Council's Covid19 helpline for vulnerable citizens.

I hope this will be of assistance to you and those you work with during this time. We are updating the website regularly, so please do let me or a member of my staff know if you have any questions or suggestions as to how we can make it more complete and user-friendly. You can do this by emailing comms@bvsc.org

I'd like to also draw your attention to an article on BVSC's [UpdateBrum](#) blog, which broaches a subject that can be difficult to address at the best of times, but which is particularly relevant given our current circumstances. It has been put together by members of Personal Health Budgets (End of Life) team, along with colleagues from Public Health (Birmingham), St. Mary's Hospice, and West Midlands Palliative Care Physicians. I hope you will find its contents informative:

<https://updatebrum.co.uk/c19supportbrum/hoping-for-the-best-and-planning-for-the-worst/>

Finally, and in addition - if you receive any queries from local community groups or volunteers that you are unable to answer, you may like to direct them to our voluntary sector support pages, which you can find here: <https://www.bvsc.org/C19SupportBrum>.

Funding announced by BCC

A five million pound package of financial support for care providers across the city has been approved by Birmingham City Council.

The focus of the funding is to support hospital discharge and to recognise the additional costs providers are incurring due to the pandemic.

The city council will reimburse reasonable additional costs that could not have been anticipated, particularly in relation to PPE, staff sickness and agency costs.

Care homes facilitating admissions from hospitals that meet certain conditions around referral and assessment will receive a one-off additional payment.

Councillor Paulette Hamilton, cabinet members for health and social care, said: "We are living in unprecedented times and we know that care providers across the city are working incredibly hard in really difficult circumstances. To read announcement in full:

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/news/article/587/5m_support_package_for_care_providers?utm_source=Twitter&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=SocialSignIn&utm_content=COVID-19.

Birmingham City Council, Birmingham Children's Trust and NHS Birmingham and Solihull Clinical Commissioning Group public service commissioners in the light of the Covid-19 outbreak have released a letter to VCSE groups which has some very welcome appreciation and reassurance.

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/vcse-letter?utm_source=Twitter&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=SocialSignIn&utm_content=COVID-19

Carers

Simon Fenton CEO AT Forward Carers has sent in the following update:

Birmingham Carers Hub is operating an info and advice telephone service on: 0333 006 9711 (9.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday with some limited out of hours support). Alternatively, the service can be emailed on: info@birminghamcarershub.org.uk. Birmingham Carers Hub is able to

issue one-off Wellbeing Payments of up to £200 to adult carers (caring for another adult) based on a telephone Wellbeing Check.

Forward Carers has created a dedicated web page which contains relevant information for carers including local support and writing a 'What IF' plan: <https://forwardcarers.org.uk/coronavirus-advice-for-carers/>. Also included is a link to Carer-friendly local supermarkets who are offering unpaid carers access during dedicated key worker times. We're running a weekly Carer Update Covid-19 bulletin - subscribe here: <https://forwardcarers.org.uk/enews/>.

We have additional support for dementia Carers:

- Caring for Carers Dementia Support Groups (In partnership with Sandwell Crossroads)

Support groups specifically for carers of people with memory problems or dementia living in Birmingham. The groups provide emotional support, advice and information. T: 0121 803 1065

- Learning Disability & Dementia Support Service (In partnership with Midland Mencap)

A dedicated service providing information, advice, care navigation and wellbeing support to families who have a relative with a learning disability living with dementia: Tel: 0121 442 2944 (ask for Family Carers 'Duty Worker'); E: families@midlandmencap.org.uk.

Disability

The government announced this week that testing would be made available for all carers that need one <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-to-offer-testing-for-everyone-who-needs-one-in-social-care-settings>. The criteria for this has been shared with partners. PPE remains at the top of the list of concerns for care providers and they continue to liaise with BCC to keep staff as safe as possible. New guidance was issued last week which is what should be followed locally. The most recent guidance was welcomed particularly Part 7. BBC have confirmed that they will be adopting this guidance to inform their strategy on access to PPE

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-and-control/covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-ppe>

These are links to updated FAQ info from BCC. In particular there's advice regarding financial support to providers from BCC regarding unforeseen costs, a one off payment to Care Homes and info regarding a weekly PPE audit led by public health. All new questions to BCC are highlighted in yellow:

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/file/15845/covid-19_frequently_asked_questions_for_providers

Homelessness & Housing

Last week Matthew Guest who is part of Chartered Institute of Housing Regional Board hosted an online webinar/podcast with housing professionals from Accord, Platform Housing Group and Solihull Community Housing to discuss the impact that COVID19 has had on the services available to residents.

During this episode we touched on the particular strategies that housing providers have implemented and which areas of their organisation that they have identified as a priority during COVID19.

To view episode 1, please follow the below link and subscribe to receive notifications of future episodes and updates on COVID19.

<https://niyaapeople.co.uk/covid-19-housing-property-construction-updates/>

Homeless Link have a multitude of resources available on their website relating to Covid19. To listen to their weekly webinar on the most up to date sector info please follow the link below

- Webinar: COVID-19 and Homelessness Services - 15 April 2020

This webinar will provide participants with an overview of the current situation as homelessness services prepare and respond to COVID-19

Who is this webinar for? Managers, commissioners and frontline workers in the homelessness sector.

Recorded: Wednesday, 15 April 2020

The National Housing Federation have produced some information on securing accommodation for people after Lockdown which is a key concern within Birmingham and will be discussed with partners at the next Homeless Partnership board <https://www.housing.org.uk/news-and-blogs/news/securing-move-on-accommodation-for-homeless-people-after-coronavirus/>

Domestic Abuse

Maureen Connolly CEO at Birmingham & Solihull Womens Aid has shared information regarding a Midlands campaign to ensure that survivors of domestic abuse can access the help they need, are aware that they are not subject to the lockdown rules if they need to leave. The full Press pack is attached and has useful information included for employers and professionals in addition to survivors. Please support this campaign and share with your organisations to increase awareness.

The Violence Reduction Unit and Office of Police and Crime Commissioner have launched a regional domestic abuse campaign to let those who are at risk of or currently experiencing domestic abuse that they are not alone and help is still available. There are exceptions to 'stay at home' restrictions for those who are not safe at home and need to leave. Can you please support this campaign and share with your own comm's teams.

Police say #NoExcuseForAbuse as new campaign launched to prevent domestic violence

A multi-agency campaign led by Police and victims' services has been launched to give information to the public around what services are available to victims of domestic abuse and to emphasise that support is available to those in need whilst coronavirus continues to present new challenges.

The **#NoExcuseForAbuse** campaign, led by the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner – supported by the police, health, local authorities and domestic abuse specialist agencies aimed at providing those who are victims of domestic abuse with the right information on how to get help and end the abuse they are suffering.

OUR OPEN LETTER TO THE GOVERNMENT: MORE MUST BE DONE TO PROTECT WOMEN EXPERIENCING SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND ABUSE DURING THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK

Changing Lives, alongside a number of our partners, are calling on Government to do more to protect women who are experiencing sexual violence or sexual abuse during the Covid-19 outbreak.

<https://www.changing-lives.org.uk/news-stories/our-open-letter-to-the-government/>

Domestic abuse sufferers are the hidden victims of lockdown

Opportunities for help – or escape – are scarce.

<https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/domestic-abuse-sufferers-are-the-hidden-victims-of-lockdown>

Guidance on how to obtain an injunction over the phone / email for people experiencing domestic abuse was issued late last week. Applying for a domestic violence (Family Law Act) injunction for unrepresented applicants

This page provides detail on how to apply for a domestic violence injunction as an unrepresented applicant during the coronavirus outbreak.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/applying-for-a-domestic-violence-family-law-act-injunction-for-unrepresented-applicants>

Advocacy

All of POhWER's advocacy are operating with advocates home working. Our B'ham help hub is fully operational and open from 8am-6pm. We are in regular contact with key stakeholders across health and social care to ensure the most vulnerable citizens across the city do not go unrepresented during this difficult and uncertain period and can access independent advocacy support where needed. We are monitoring changes following recent legislation and any impact on our clients;

Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA) – An IMHA is an independent advocate who is trained to work within the framework of the Mental Health Act 1983 to support people to understand their rights under the Act and participate in decisions about their care and treatment. Our advocates are not employed by the NHS or any private healthcare provider, and they provide free, independent and confidential support.

Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy (IMCA) – An IMCA is an advocate who has been specially trained to support people who are not able to make certain decisions for themselves and do not have family or friends who are able to speak for them. IMCAs do not make decisions and they are independent of the people who do make the decisions.

Care Act Advocacy – The Care Act says that local councils must involve people in decisions about their care and support needs. If it would be difficult for someone to be involved without support the council must make sure they get the help they need. If the person doesn't have someone who can help them they have the right to have an independent Care Act advocate.

Community Advocacy – People who are vulnerable due to a disability, illness or their age may find it difficult to put their views across or feel they aren't being listened to. Our advocates can support people to deal with an issue they are facing. POhWER's community advocacy services are free and confidential; our advocates are independent and only take actions they have agreed with the person they are working with

NHS Complaints Advocacy - If you need help to make your complaint you can use our NHS Complaints Advocacy service which is free, independent of the NHS and confidential

POhWER's staff are providing remote support to people so they can remain safe and continue to receive the advocacy support that they need. POhWER remains committed to providing information, advice and independent advocacy support wherever possible. Even if we can't provide advocacy in person at this time due to the government's social distancing advice we will still do what we can to support you, including providing help by phone and email.

Our Help Hubs are open for you to call or email as usual. They may be very busy so we would ask for your patience but we will respond to everyone who sends us an email or leaves us a voice message, if you can't get through to one of our Hub staff immediately. We will be updating our website regularly to provide new information as it becomes available and will provide information in as many formats as we can.

www.pohwer.net Telephone: 0300 456 2370 Text: send the word 'pohwer' with your name and number to 81025 Email: pohwer@pohwer.net Post: PO Box 14043, Birmingham, B6 9BL

Food

All is going well with the food theme group. The need has continued to rise consistently since Lockdown started, and as a result Active Wellbeing Society have asked BCC (who have agreed) to increase the tonnage of food from Fareshare.

The Ladywood distribution centre is up and running and TAWS are exploring the insight we are able to generate about who is receiving food and where the requests are coming from. Please contact TAWS if you know someone who needs a food parcel delivery or for any enquiries around this.

Mental Health

Helen Wadley, CEO at Birmingham Mind, has shared the good work carried out to create a mental health response bringing together the NHS and sector partners like Mind to create a bespoke offer for frontline staff (as well as many other groups to include young people, members of the public and almost anyone who may be affected by mental health concerns for themselves or someone they support). The definition for frontline staff is a wide one for the service and includes supermarket workers, support workers and carers so please share with all staff teams who are still providing services during this time.

A summary of all the lines for adults and children are here

<https://www.birminghamandsolihullccg.nhs.uk/your-health/mental-health-support-offer>

The General Public who are struggling with Covid 19 anxiety or just general mental health issues ring us on 0121 262 3555 and Keyworkers who need extra emotional support can ring 0121 663 1217.



Are you between the ages
of 0-18 & live in Birmingham?
There is help & support available for your
mental health & wellbeing.
Call the new support line on:
0207 841 4470 - 10am to 6pm, 7 days a week
0300 300 0099 - 6pm to 10am, 7 days a week

Children and Young People

Birmingham City Council has announced £0.8m emergency funding to help children and families.

Community, voluntary and faith groups who are helping children, young people and families through the challenges of Covid-19 are invited to apply for grants of up to £10,000 to continue supporting families through this difficult period.

Birmingham has flourishing communities which have stepped up heroically to support vulnerable people. This announcement extends our community grant scheme for older people to reflect the needs of our city, and responds quickly to the Covid-19 emergency.

All voluntary, community and faith groups are invited to bid for funding to support their activities, through a simple and accelerated process designed to get the money out the door to where it will make the most difference. Go to www.birmingham.gov.uk/Covid19CYPF for more details.

All support should be designed to put prevention and early help first, for example:

A local community group for parents of children with autism wants to provide online activity packs for the children but needs new software. A grant of £300 would help to support the children and parents.

A local mosque that previously ran family support sessions, with stay and play, and lots of activities for children wants to ring all the parents that are on their database, three times a week. A grant of £2,500 will enable the mosque to pay a professionally trained worker to support families.

A local charity runs services for families in the city, particularly more vulnerable families and young people. The £10,000 grant will enable them to expand over their domestic abuse support programme over the next four months.

This is part of the Birmingham Children's Partnership response to Covid-19 for our families. Birmingham Children's Partnership includes Birmingham City Council, Birmingham Children's Trust, Birmingham and Solihull Clinical Commissioning Group, Birmingham Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, Birmingham Women's and Children's NHS Foundation Trust and West Midlands Police.

Migration

<http://migrationpolicy.org.uk/covid-19-support/>

Andy Hoole from Migration Policy is hosting a weekly zoom meeting for sector groups to come together and raise any issues for development. These are every Friday at 2 pm.

They are engaged with regular discussions with the Home Office alongside sector partners to seek clarification and legislation and processes (primarily access to benefits, financial support and immigration pathways) and there is regular feedback on these. Many groups are now trying to offer support to their clients remotely through WhatsApp or Zoom. A number of user guides are being produced in different languages.

<https://www.doctorsoftheworld.org.uk/coronavirus-information/>

Groups have used these to explain the situation to their clients. As we move forward, there is a growing need for greater online resources for ESOL learning and other activities that are slowly being worked on. Many organisations are actively moving courses online and others in our network are working on user guides for Zoom in a number of languages so that conversations can continue whilst people remain in isolation.

Information on Neighbourhood Network schemes

Neighbourhood Network Schemes are Constituency and neighbourhood based networks which enable the engagement with and investment in community assets. This is for the purposes of supporting older people to connect to individuals, groups, organisations, activities, services and places in their neighbourhoods. This approach is integral to the new community social work model and the overall investment by Adult Social Care in "Prevention First".

Community assets are considered as any group, organisation, place, activity or service which can contribute to the following outcomes for citizens:

- Social participation
- Healthy lifestyles
- Maximised income
- Living independently in their own homes
- Carers feel more supported

Neighbourhood Network Scheme Lead Facilitators, commissioned by Birmingham City Council lead and coordinate Neighbourhood Network Schemes across the city's ten Constituencies and neighbourhoods. Broadly they are responsible at a Constituency and neighbourhood level for the following:

- Identifying, engaging with and supporting the development of community assets;
- Connecting and developing relationships between local stakeholders, particularly communities and social care, as well as through a local NNS Steering Group;
- Local commissioning and grant funding of activities which can support the accessibility and development of the community offer for older people;

[What is NNS?](#)

Thematic Leads

BVSC has been working hard to support Birmingham citizens, professionals and volunteers during the Covid19 lockdown and one of the many ways we have been working with key figures across sectors is to have a specific Thematic lead strand to our work.

The details for the thematic leads are below, if you are part of one of these sectors and cannot find information or want to feed information back in please contact either the lead for the theme you are interested or Sharne Maher as Theme Partnership manager at BVSC who will assist with information sharing or signposting.

Contact details for Theme Leads

Mental Health: Helen Wadley, Birmingham Mind HelenWadley@birminghammind.org

Community Health: Andy Cave, Healthwatch Birmingham AndyC@healthwatchbirmingham.co.uk

Disabilities: Dave Rogers, Midland Mencap Dave.Rogers@midlandmencap.org.uk

Carers: Simon Fenton, Forward Carers simon.fenton@forwardcarers.org.uk

Faith: Dr. Peter Rookes, Birmingham Council of Faiths pjrookes@gmail.com assisted by Amrick Singh Ubhi, Nishkam Centre amrick.ubhi@ncauk.org Fred Rattley and Jo Bagby, Diocese of Birmingham job@cofebirmingham.com; fredr@cofebirmingham.com

Housing: Martyn Hale, Citizen Housing Martyn.Hale@citizenhousing.org.uk & Peter Richmond, Bournville Village Trust PeterRichmond@bvt.org.uk

Children Young People & Families: Lisa Martinali, Compass Support lisa.martinali@compass-support.org.uk

Food: Karen Creavin, Active Wellbeing Society: Karen.Creavin@theaws.org

Homelessness: Matt Green, Crisis matthew.green@crisis.org.uk

Migration: Andy Hoole, Birmingham Settlement andy@migrationpolicy.org.uk

Domestic Abuse and Vulnerable Women: Maureen Connolly, Bham & Solihull Women's Aid maureen.connolly@bswaid.org

Attachments

[What is NNS?](#)

[ACB Emergency Newsletter \(Issue 1 pdf\)](#)

[Domestic Violence and Abuse Professional Briefing in Response to COVID-19](#)

[Coronavirus Mental Health Response Fund \(CMHRF\)](#)

[Pause Call Back Service](#)

