Haywards Heath and District Probus Club

UPDATE for Probus Club Members/Wives/Partners and Widows

Issued on **5ᵗʰ March 2020**

Advice on Coronavirus for members and families of Haywards Heath & District Probus Club

COVID-19 is a new illness that can affect your lungs and airways. It's caused by a virus called coronavirus.

The Executive Committee of Haywards Heath and District Probus Club asks members and families to keep themselves up to date with advice from the government, NHS and the World Health Organisation about coronavirus. Links to several useful sources for further information are provided in this paper.

Our advice, drawn from several sources, is currently as follows:

- At all times members should follow the most up to date government advice about coronavirus. We hope that coronavirus will not affect any of our members.
- If a member has returned home having visited one of the areas identified by the government and has any of the symptoms identified on the government website, they should not hold meetings in their own homes, or attend monthly lunch meetings until they have followed the NHS advice provided after calling 111.
- If a member or his immediate family has contracted coronavirus, please can you contact **Brian Bridges**, our **Welfare Officer** to let him know. Obviously, if a member should contract the virus, he should not be visited but if the member has expressed a wish to be phoned or contacted by email (or not to be contacted), can Brian please be informed? His contact details are as follows: **telephone 01273 400686**, Email: bridgesduo@gmail.com

In general, other precautions such as washing your hands before and after lunch and/or (if available) using hand sanitiser gel at monthly lunch meetings and reducing physical contact such as shaking hands, should be followed until further information becomes available.

Information Sources

Information is available (at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public) for the public on the outbreak of coronavirus, including the current situation in the UK and information about the virus and its symptoms.

See all updates at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public#history

Information about the virus and how to protect yourself is available at: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/

The Telegraph reported today that Hong Kong has warned residents not to kiss pets after a dog contracted coronavirus.

Number of cases
By 4th March 2020, a total of 16,659 people had been tested in the UK, of which 16,574 were confirmed negative. 85 were confirmed as positive. The Department of Health and Social Care will be publishing updated data at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public every day at 2pm until further notice. LATEST: As of today, there are now 90 confirmed cases of coronavirus in the UK after three more cases were confirmed in Scotland overnight.

Risk level
Based on the World Health Organization's declaration that this is a public health emergency of international concern, the UK Chief Medical Officers have raised the risk to the UK from **low** to **moderate**. Health professionals are working to contact anyone who has been in close contact with people who have coronavirus.

What's the risk of coronavirus for travellers?
There are some countries and areas where there's a higher chance of coming into contact with someone with coronavirus. See NHS coronavirus advice for travellers at: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/advice-for-travellers/ .

Information on the Virus
Symptoms of coronavirus
The symptoms of coronavirus are:
- a cough
- a high temperature
- shortness of breath

But these symptoms do not necessarily mean you have the illness. The symptoms are similar to other illnesses that are much more common, such as cold and flu.

How coronavirus is spread
Because it's a new illness, nobody knows exactly how coronavirus spreads from person to person. Similar viruses are spread in cough droplets. It's very unlikely it can be spread through things like packages or food.

Do I need to avoid public places?
Most people can continue to go to work, school and other public places. You only need to stay away from public places (self-isolate) if advised to by the 111 online coronavirus service or a medical professional.

How to avoid catching or spreading coronavirus
Do
- wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- always wash your hands when you get home or into work
- use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- put used tissues in the bin straight away and wash your hands afterwards
- try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell

- do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean

Check if you need medical help
NHS 111 has an online coronavirus service that can tell you if you need medical help and advise you what to do.

Information on using the 111 coronavirus service is available at: https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19

You should use the 111 service if:
- you think you might have coronavirus
- in the last 14 days you've been to a country or area with a high risk of coronavirus – see NHS coronavirus advice for travellers at: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/advice-for-travellers/
- you've been in close contact with someone with coronavirus

> **Important: If you think you may have contracted the virus or have been in touch with someone who has the virus, do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital. Call 111 by phone if you need to speak to someone.**

Self-Isolation
How to self-isolate if you're asked to do so
If there's a chance you could have coronavirus, you may be asked to stay away from other people (self-isolate). This means you should:
- stay at home
- not go to work, school or public places
- not use public transport or taxis
- ask friends, family members or delivery services to do errands for you
- try to avoid visitors to your home – it's OK for friends, family or delivery drivers to drop off food

You may need to do this for up to 14 days to help reduce the possible spread of infection.

Read more coronavirus self-isolation advice at: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-advice/

Treatment for coronavirus
The World Health Organisation says that in more severe cases of coronavirus, infection can cause pneumonia, severe acute respiratory syndrome, kidney failure and even death. Older people, and people with pre-existing medical conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease) are more likely to become severely ill.

There is currently no specific treatment for coronavirus. Antibiotics do not help, as they do not work against viruses.

Treatment aims to relieve the symptoms while your body fights the illness. You'll need to stay in isolation away from other people until you've recovered.

Basic protective measures against the new coronavirus
You should stay aware of the latest information on the COVID-19 outbreak, available on the WHO website at: https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public

Take care of your health and protect others by doing the following:
- *Wash your hands frequently:* Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water. Why? Washing your hands with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand rub kills viruses that may be on your hands.

- *Maintain social distancing:* Maintain at least 1 metre (3 feet) distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing. Why? When someone coughs or sneezes they spray small liquid droplets from their nose or mouth which may contain a virus. If you are too close, you can breathe in the droplets, including the COVID-19 virus if the person coughing has the disease.

- *Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth:* Why? Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth. From there, the virus can enter your body and can make you ill.

- *Practice respiratory hygiene:* Make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately. Why? Droplets spread virus. By following good respiratory hygiene, you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and COVID-19.

In conclusion: If you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical care early. Stay home if you feel unwell.

Protect others from getting sick

When coughing and sneezing cover mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue

Throw tissue into closed bin immediately after use

Clean hands with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water after coughing or sneezing and when caring for the sick

World Health Organization