

## **ADVICE TO COMMUNITY HELPERS FROM “READY SCOTLAND”**

We all need to stay at home to protect ourselves and others. However, those who are well and not at risk can provide essential support for their family, friends and neighbours who cannot leave the house.

During this challenging time, it's really important that we take care of ourselves and others. And that's the case no matter where you live - from a flat in a city to a croft on an island.

The information below explains how you can provide essential support safely.

### **Only help if you are well**

We should all be staying at home and only going out for essential reasons to reduce the spread of coronavirus. Follow advice on [nhsinform.scot/coronavirus](https://nhsinform.scot/coronavirus)

However, you can still provide essential support to people who cannot leave the house if you fulfil ALL of the conditions below:

You are well and have no symptoms of coronavirus (a new and continuous cough or high temperature)

Nobody else in your household has shown symptoms

You are under 70

You are not 28 weeks pregnant or more

You do not have any underlying health conditions (that means you are offered the flu jab on grounds of health each year) that make you vulnerable to Coronavirus

Guidance for those at increased risk of severe illness from coronavirus can be found [here](#).

### **People who may be in need of help**

You can help:

Neighbours, friends or family who have to stay at home because someone in the household has coronavirus/symptoms.

Neighbours, friends or family who are 70 and over, or have and health conditions (that means you are offered the flu jab on grounds of health each year)

## **Providing practical help**

There are simple ways you can help your neighbours without exposing yourself or them, if they cannot leave the house:

You could do some food shopping for them when you are doing your own.

You could place an online shopping order for them or talk them through the process over the phone.

You could pick up their prescriptions or arrange a pharmacy delivery where available.

You could support with general errands such as posting letters or putting the bins out.

If you are helping with prescriptions, you should remind people that they must only order the medication they need in their usual quantities; nobody should be stockpiling.

## **How to do this safely**

Try to limit the amount of time you spend outside of your home by picking up essential items for others only when you do your regular shop.

You should not physically visit people who are self-isolating as this would put you at risk of infection, or risk spreading it to others. This means you shouldn't enter their house or go on a car journey with them.

Keep a distance of at least 2 metres (3 steps) away from people you are helping – if you have to see them on the doorstep

Leave any shopping or other messages on the doorstep, but make sure that they have been collected before leaving.

Remember to wash your hands regularly with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.

Do not place yourself in compromising positions where you may feel unsafe, for instance helping late at night.

Be aware that if you are helping someone you don't know personally, they may not want to share personal details with you like phone numbers.

You should also warn those you are helping not to let strangers into their home – and not to give strangers money under any circumstances.

## **Providing emotional support**

Self-isolation can be a really lonely time. However, Government advice is available to protect the most vulnerable in our society. We can help each other by staying in touch – whether neighbours or friends and family who live further away. You can do all of these from your own home:

You personally can help with regular calls, text messages and contact via social media.

You can also help by talking people through the setup for video calls so they can connect with their friends and family remotely.

You can encourage people to stay mentally and physically active with activities such as cooking, reading, gardening, online learning or watching films.

Swap suggestions about how to keep busy. If people are well enough; encourage them to do some light exercise and keep active around the home, perhaps by using an online exercise class.

Share trusted sources of information. It's easy to become worried by online information, some of which may be deliberately designed to mislead people. Help your community by sharing trusted information from websites like

[NHS Inform](#)

[Scottish Government](#)

[Mind](#)

Our [list of services](#) providing additional support

## **What should I do if I'm worried about someone's health?**

If the health of anyone you are in touch with or supporting is a cause for concern, encourage them to call their GP practice or NHS24 on 111 if the GP is closed.

Similarly, if they cannot cope with their symptoms at home, their condition gets worse or their symptoms do not get better after 7 days, please call NHS24 on 111.