[Patient Name

Patient address Line 1

Patient address Line 2

Patient address Line 3]

Date

**IMPORTANT: PERSONAL**

**Your NHS number: [NHS NUMBER]**

Dear [Patient],

**IMPORTANT ADVICE TO KEEP YOU SAFE FROM CORONAVIRUS**

Your child’s safety and the continued provision of the care and treatment they need is a priority for the NHS. This letter gives you advice on how to protect them and access the care and treatment they need.

**Current NHS guidance is that your child is in the group of people thought to be extremely vulnerable to severe illness if they catch Coronavirus (also known as COVID-19).** This is because your child has an underlying disease or health condition that means if they catch the virus, they are more likely to be admitted to hospital than others.

**The safest course of action is for your child to stay at home at all times and avoid all face-to-face contact for at least twelve weeks, except from carers and healthcare workers who your child must see as part of your medical care.** This will protect them by stopping them from coming into contact with the virus.

If you are in touch with friends, family or a support network in your community who can support you to get food and medicine, follow the advice in this letter. If you do not have contacts who can help support you go to www.gov.uk/coronavirus-extremely-vulnerable, the Government’s dedicated website.

If, at any point, you think your child may have developed symptoms of Coronavirus, such as a new, continuous cough and/or high temperature (above 37.8 °C), seek clinical advice using the NHS 111 online Coronavirus service (https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19/). If you do not have access to the internet, call NHS 111. **Do this as soon as they get symptoms.**

Your child should:

* strictly avoid contact with someone who is displaying symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19). These symptoms include high temperature (above 37.8 °C) and/or a new and continuous cough
* not leave your home
* not attend any gatherings. This includes gatherings of friends and families in private spaces e.g. family homes, weddings and religious services
* not go out for shopping, leisure or travel. When arranging food or medication deliveries, these should be left at the door to minimise contact
* keep in touch using remote technology such as phone, internet, and social media
* use telephone or online services to contact your GP or other essential services
* regularly wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds. Ask carers or support workers who visit your home to do the same.

The rest of your household should support your child to stay safe and stringently follow guidance on social distancing and reducing their contact outside the home. In your home, you should:

* minimise the time they spend with others in shared spaces (kitchen, bathroom and sitting areas) and keep shared spaces well ventilated
* aim to keep 2 metres (3 steps) away from others and encourage them to sleep in a different bed where possible
* use separate towels and, if possible, use a separate bathroom from the rest of the household, or clean the bathroom after every use

If the rest of your household are able to follow this guidance, there is no need for them to take the full protective measures to keep your child safe.

*You will still get the medical care you need during this period. We are considering alternative options for managing your care and will be in touch if any changes are needed. Your hospital care team will be doing the same*. We also advise that:

**1. Carers and support workers who come to your home**

Any essential carers or visitors who support you with your everyday needs can continue to visit, unless they have any of the symptoms of coronavirus. All visitors should wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, on arrival and often.

It is also a good idea to speak to your carers about what happens if one of them becomes unwell. If you need help with care but you’re not sure who to contact please visit www.gov.uk/coronavirus-extremely-vulnerable.

**2. Medicines that your child routinely takes**

The government is helping pharmacies to deliver prescriptions. Prescriptions will continue to cover the same length of time as usual. If you do not currently have your prescriptions collected or delivered, you can arrange this by:

1. Asking someone who can pick up your prescription from the local pharmacy, (this is the best option, if possible);
2. Contacting your pharmacy to ask them to help you find a volunteer (who will have been ID checked) or deliver it to you.
3. You may also need to arrange for collection or delivery of hospital specialist medication that is prescribed to you by your hospital care team.

**3. Planned GP practice appointments**

Wherever possible, we will provide care by phone, email or online. But if we decide your child needs to be seen in person, we will contact you to arrange your visit to the surgery or a visit in your home.

**4. Planned hospital appointments**

NHS England has written to your hospital to ask them to review any on-going care that you have with them. It is possible that some clinics and appointments will be cancelled or postponed. Your hospital or clinic will contact you if any changes need to be made to your child’s care or treatment. Otherwise you should assume their care or treatment is taking place as planned. Please contact your hospital or clinic directly if you have any questions about a specific appointment.

**5. Support with daily living**

Please discuss your child’s daily needs during this period of staying at home with carers, family, friends, neighbours or local community groups to see how they can support you.

If you do not have anyone who can help you, please visit www.gov.uk/coronavirus-extremely-vulnerable.

**6. Urgent medical attention**

If you have an urgent medical question relating to your child’s **existing** medical condition please contact us, or your specialist hospital care team, directly. Where possible, you will be supported by phone or online. If your clinician decides your child needs to be seen in person, the NHS will contact you to arrange a visit in your home, or where necessary, treatment in hospital.

To help the NHS provide you with the best care if your child needs to go to hospital as a result of catching coronavirus, we ask that you prepare a single hospital bag. This should include their emergency contact, a list of the medications they take (including dose and frequency), any information on your planned care appointments and things you would need for an overnight stay (snacks, pyjamas, toothbrush, medication etc). If they have an advanced care plan, please include that.

**7. Looking after their mental well-being**

We understand that this may be a worrying time for you and your family, and you

may find staying at home and having limited contact frustrating. At times like these, it can be easy to fall into 4 unhealthy patterns of behaviour, which can make you feel worse. Simple things you can do to stay mentally and physically active during this time include:

* spend time doing things you enjoy
* try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, drink enough water, exercise regularly if and where possible)
* try spending time with the windows open to let in fresh air, arranging space to sit and see a nice view (if possible) and get some natural sunlight. Get out into the garden (if you have one) or sit on your doorstep if you can, keeping a distance of at least 2 metres from others.

You can find additional advice and support from Every Mind Matters and the NHS mental health and wellbeing advice website.

Further information on coronavirus, including guidance from Public Health England, can be found on the nhs.uk1 and gov.uk2 websites.

Yours sincerely,

[Clinician]

[Practice Phone no]

1 https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/

2 https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus