

The home manager is entitled to set appropriate and proportionate restrictions upon visiting times and arrangements during the pandemic in order to protect all staff and residents, taking into account changing guidelines.

From tomorrow, the statutory guidance states that *you can meet in groups of up to two households (your support bubble counts as one household) in any location - public or private, indoors or outdoors. However, it remains the case - even inside someone's home - that you should socially distance from anyone not in your household or bubble. When you are outside you can continue to meet in groups of up to six people from different households, following social distancing guidelines. From 4 July, people will be trusted to continue acting responsibly by following this and related guidance.*

*You should not:*

- gather indoors in groups of more than two households (your support bubble counts as one household) - this includes when dining out or going to the pub*
- gather outdoors in a group of more than six people from different households; gatherings larger than 6 should only take place if everyone is from just two households*

*From 4 July, you will be able to meet indoors in groups of up to two households (your support bubble counts as one household). This includes inviting people from one household into your home or visiting the home of someone else with members of your own household. You should continue to maintain social distancing with anyone you do not live with or who is not in your support bubble when doing so.*

*The more people you have interactions with, the more chance the virus has to spread. Therefore, try to limit the number of people you see - especially over short periods of time. The risk of transmission is also higher indoors, so you should take extra care to stay as safe as possible.*

The difficult decisions that the home has to make is balancing people's right to a private and family life and seeing their loved ones against keeping their staff and the other residents safe, as well as other visitors to the home. That balancing act will mean that people's rights will be infringed upon. If the infringement is reasonable and proportionate, then in my view it is justifiable.

The care home should take into account the changes being made to the guidance from tomorrow and ensure that they have reviewed their visiting policies in line with this.

I would also recommend that the care home has a written policy setting out what their restrictions are and - more importantly - why they feel those restrictions remain necessary. If there is a reasonable, justifiable and proportionate reason for having the restrictions in place, I think they can be maintained.

I would suggest that the manager is asked to consider the individual's request to use the garden, and/or have contact at any time. What are their reasons for not agreeing to this? Being able to manage who is visiting in terms of numbers is a reasonable provision.

If the manager has not already done so, I would also recommend just talking to this person and finding out why they feel this way - they may have a good reason such as work commitments/availability. Also, the views of the person they are visiting should absolutely be taken into account, especially if they have capacity to make decisions about contact