

# Protocols and Guidelines for volunteers helping those who are self-isolating, elderly, vulnerable or in need.

Thank you once again for volunteering to help people who are in need during the crisis.

These protocols and guidelines are designed to protect both you and those who need help and ensure that everyone is always safe, and we would encourage you to follow them as much as possible.

Please let us know if any of the protocols or guidelines need amending or new ones need to be added – we work best when we work together.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us by email [hello@secra.org.uk](mailto:hello@secra.org.uk) , via the CV-19 Volunteers WhatsApp group, direct message either Paul Martin or Wendy Francis-White on Facebook or WhatsApp or call us on 07395 941032.

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## General Safety Guidelines:

- Always ensure that you have a phone on you when visiting residents
- If for any reason you don't feel comfortable make your apologies and leave
- If anyone is abusive or offensive - walk away, but also report them to us using the contact details above so that we can take appropriate action.
- Ensure that someone knows who/where you are visiting and when to expect you home.
- If you would prefer, send a message to us via the phone number above or What's app letting us know you are out visiting residents - and let us know when you are back safely
- If you have any concerns for your own safety, please step away and email [hello@secra.org.uk](mailto:hello@secra.org.uk) or call 07395 941032
- If you are concerned about the health / welfare of the person you are helping, please encourage them to contact their GP / NHS and please let us know via email [hello@secra.org.uk](mailto:hello@secra.org.uk) or call 07395 941032, so we can help where appropriate.

## Pairing up with someone that needs help:

Where possible, we will have at least two volunteers assigned to one person that needs help. The team here will contact you to let you know who we would like to pair you up with and who the other volunteers assigned are as well. Please let us know if you feel uncomfortable with the pairing, for whatever reason.

We will create a 'micro' WhatsApp group just for the volunteers and the person they are helping so that you can easily communicate with each other. Please use this as the primary method of communication for the person you are helping – another volunteer will be an admin on the group and this way it will enable us all to track communication and needs and provide additional safety and protection for everyone.

If the person you are helping does not have WhatsApp, then we will share your mobile number with them so that they know you are a legitimate caller (and we will share their number with you of course). We will still setup the micro WhatsApp group and where possible, please log any calls you make on this group so again we can all track communication and needs and provide additional safety and protection for everyone.

Please do not use any other contact numbers or tools unless provided by us as we need to make sure that everyone is safe and that those needing help are contacted regularly, which we can't do if you contact them independently.

## Shopping:

It is very important to maintain trust and safety within the Sunray Community and therefore, if you are doing some shopping for someone please follow these guidelines:

- a. Most importantly, please do not take money up front for the shopping.
- b. Agree and confirm the shopping list before you go. If there are items requested that you feel uncomfortable, or unable to, buy please ask one of the other volunteers if they can get that item or contact us and we will do our best to help.

- c. If possible, call the person while you are doing the shopping so you can discuss the product options and prices – that way they still have control over their shopping and the amount they spend
- d. If a requested item is not available, do not buy an alternative without consulting the person first
- e. Keep their shopping separate from yours so that you can provide them with a receipt that shows just their items.
- f. Let them know when you will be delivering the shopping (day / time) as this will help ensure they can bring the shopping in promptly (important for fridge/freezer items) and help prevent them answering the door to random callers. Leave the shopping by the front door and ideally call or message them immediately you deliver it. Please make sure you are at least 2 metres away from the front door if the person you deliver to wants to chat when you deliver the shopping – this will protect both of you.
- g. People may not have cash in the house, so if you are comfortable doing so, ask them to transfer the money to your account via online banking or ask them for a cheque. If they are transferring money to your account, please write your sort code and account number down for them along with a reference (such as 'Shopping for (persons name) and leave it with the shopping and receipt – this will help ensure the details are easy for them to copy and avoid any misheard numbers or other confusion and make it easy for you to track the payment in your own account.
- h. If they are unable to pay (or if there is some disagreement over the amount), please step away and contact [hello@secra.org.uk](mailto:hello@secra.org.uk) and we will help resolve the problem.
- i. If you are not able to afford to do their shopping, please email [hello@secra.org.uk](mailto:hello@secra.org.uk) beforehand and we will help.
- j. If you have any concerns for your own safety, please step away and email [hello@secra.org.uk](mailto:hello@secra.org.uk) and we will work with you to resolve as much as we can.

### Phoning / messaging people:

Self-isolating can obviously be lonely, but it can also be stressful and worrying and therefore having contact with the outside world and a friendly voice is very important. Please try to follow these guidelines when contact people:

- a. Keep to the contact information you are originally set up with, if this needs to be changed, please let us know
- b. Try to agree a day/time when you will next call/message them. This helps make sure they will be available to take the call at a convenient time. If you call at any other time, if they don't answer the call you won't know if it is just because they are busy elsewhere or if they actually may need a visit to physically check on them. If they do not answer your call, try again in 15 minutes and if there is still no answer please alert us via the WhatsApp group or call either Paul Martin or Wendy Francis-White directly.
- c. Try to keep the conversation light and cheerful and where possible avoid topics that may be stressful for either of you.

- d. If you feel uncomfortable during a conversation, try to steer it in another direction or make a polite excuse to end the call. Please let us know if you feel uncomfortable or threatened by any conversation and we will help resolve it.
- e. If you are concerned about their health / welfare, please encourage them to contact their GP / NHS and also please let us know so we can help where appropriate.

## Collecting prescriptions / medicines:

If you are asked to collect a prescription on someone's behalf, please follow these guidelines:

- a. Please collect the prescription from the same pharmacist that they usually use. The pharmacist will be familiar with their prescription and it will help avoid any additional concerns.
- b. Ask them to call the pharmacist and confirm that the prescription can be collected by someone else as not all prescriptions can be.
- c. Ask them to let the pharmacist know that you will be collecting on their behalf (this is not essential, but will provide some extra peace of mind for you, them and the pharmacist)
- d. Make sure that the back of the prescription is filled in correctly. There should be a section on it requesting details about who will be collecting on their behalf. **It is very important that this is filled in correctly otherwise you will not be able to collect the prescription.**
- e. Take some photo ID with you as **the pharmacist may ask for proof of identity** – a photo driving license or passport is usually best. Note that office/work ID cards are not normally accepted as valid ID.
- f. If the pharmacist has any questions or concerns, please phone the person and ask them to speak directly to the pharmacist. If the pharmacist has any concerns, they will not give you the prescription (they have a duty of care to their patients the same as GPs) and in this instance you should try to understand what the issue/concern is and then either relay it back to the person you are helping or contact us.
- g. Once you have the prescription, please deliver it as soon as you can, but ensure that the person is available to receive it as you should minimise the amount of time it is left on a doorstep.
- h. If you are concerned about their health / welfare, please encourage them to contact their GP / NHS and also please let us know so we can help where appropriate.

## Visiting / doing errands:

Some people may need other types of help, such as walking the dog, putting the bins out or posting letters for example. If you are able to help with this type of request, please follow the guidelines below:

- a. Please remember to always stay at least 2 meters away from the person you are helping in order to protect both of you. This of course may be difficult to do if you are taking their dog for a walk, but if there is a gate in the front garden, it might be possible for them to put the lead on the dog and let it come to you. If not, try and

minimise the amount of time taken during the exchange of the lead and walk 2 meters away immediately you have secure hold of the dog lead.

- b. When out walking a dog, please ensure you have small bags available to clear up any dog mess that may occur
- c. Do not agree to help with anything that would involve you entering their house. This helps protect both of you – both from potentially catching / passing the virus, but also from any risk of allegation or potential danger/difficult situation. If there is a critical need for someone to enter the house, please contact us and we will work with the appropriate authorities or services to resolve the issue.
- d. If you are just visiting to have a chat in person, please remember that it is generally not recommended to do this with people that are self-isolating due to them potentially having the virus, even if you stay 2 meters away. Instead it would be better to have a phone or video chat if possible. Otherwise, please stay at least 2 meters away, do not enter the house and follow the same guidelines as those for talking on the phone / messaging.
- e. If you are concerned about their health / welfare, please encourage them to contact their GP / NHS and also please let us know so we can help where appropriate.

### Cooking/preparing meals:

While this is a very kind thing to do, we currently recommend not to do this as it can be fraught with several challenges:

- a. Food safety during storage and preparation is critically important
- b. Allergies and intolerances need to be known and the ingredients of every item (including any ready-made ingredients like sauces or flavourings) needs to be checked prior to preparation
- c. Cooking meats requires absolute assurance that the correct temperature and duration is achieved
- d. You may unknowingly pass the virus to the person you are trying to help

Therefore, **we highly recommend that you offer to buy the ingredients for them (whether you ask for them to pay for it or not is up to you) rather than providing cooked meals.**