

26 January 2021

**Statement jointly issued by: Department of Health and Social Care,
Public Health England, Care Quality Commission and the
Association of Directors of Public Health**

Under no circumstances should staff who have tested positive for Covid-19, regardless of whether they are displaying symptoms or not, work in a care setting until the legally required period of self-isolation has ended. The national guidance is clear on this and applies equally to other periods of required isolation, for example being a household contact and quarantine periods associated with overseas travel.

Where the CQC has concerns, it will take swift regulatory action. It will make the relevant adult safeguarding referral to be dealt with by the local authority under s42 of the Care Act.

Where providers are facing critical staffing shortages, local system partners including the local authority, CCG, wider NHS, PHE health protection team and local resilience forum, in discussion with local provider associations, should work together to ensure those providers can maintain continuity of care for their users of service. This is to ensure the health and social care system works in the best interests of all.

We recognise the pressures and workforce challenges across social care and if the local system has come together and all options have been explored and discounted, this must be escalated within the local authority, and NHS. The local authority should also notify the relevant DHSC regional lead. Directors of Public Health and Directors of Adult Social Services must be involved to ensure the issue is resolved.

Staff who are off sick or are self-isolating should continue to be paid their full wages. Employers are able to access funding for this purpose from the Infection Control Fund and local authorities will be looking to see that this is happening.