



QPARA Community Support Network

Update No.2

Dear Zone Co-ordinators

We hope you are staying well. We know that several members of our community have the virus seriously and that members of the PM's family are part of our community. Our thoughts are with all of them.

First a big thank you for the quick and comprehensive response to the enquiries we made in Update No.1. The results showed that there were so far more offers of help than requests, but that the system is working. In addition two or three Co-ordinators were in touch about setting up WhatsApp groups. Thanks to Keith Anderson for working with them. The current picture is shown on the website: www.kensalqueenspark.com . However the presentation and access arrangements are being improved and we will share these as soon as we can.

Ward Councillors' telephone conferences: Queen's Park Ward Councillors (Ellie and Neil) regular telephone discussions with Chairs of Residents' Associations and one or two others are continuing.

Meanwhile Brent have produced a **4-page coloured leaflet** with contact details for the main emergency services. As this seems to have been delivered somewhat erratically an electronic copy is enclosed. One specially useful number is 0208 937 6792. You can put anyone needing emergency food support in touch with this number.

Letters from GPs to the specially vulnerable as mentioned in Update No.1 were not, in the end, issued because the Government decided instead to write directly to this group of 1.5 million people, mostly the immuno-suppressed. However GPs have been asked to contact an extra 1 million people to add to the category, now described as people who should be shielding. The Lonsdale Medical Group texted many patients about this yesterday 8 April. A letter may follow. The practice is currently somewhat overwhelmed with calls about this text message, to the extent that it is affecting their ability to treat people who are actually ill. If asked about it please encourage forbearance.

The Over 70s, people with heart, lung, stroke, blood pressure problems and pregnant women were the original group identified as needing to take special care to 'social distance', based on the data from China, S Korea and Singapore. They should not be shopping or getting their medications in any situation where full distancing of 2 metres cannot be maintained. That's why the QPARA Support Network remains aimed at this wider group.

The Lonsdale Medical Group will be 'open' on Good Friday and Easter Monday for telephone and video appointments and any visits to the surgeries agreed in advance. We applaud the dedication and very hard work of all the staff who are keeping the practice going at this time. A delivery of unhealthy but hopefully yummy cupcakes was made to local surgeries and pharmacies this morning via a core group of volunteers and seemingly was much appreciated.

We are grateful to Richard Gentry, his team and the Corporation of London for keeping **Queen's Park** open. Most people seem to be maintaining distancing. It might be good if a few benches were kept in use for older people to sit on during their walks.

Other matters

There is concern that **construction work** continues on some properties, in situations where there is no attempt to observe a 2 metre separation between operatives. Similarly the continued operation of the **Farmers' Market** has been questioned but reports indicate that strong measures to achieve distancing were put in place last Sunday. The opportunity to buy fresh produce is appreciated but we ask everyone to take great care.

We are raising concerns as to why all local pharmacies are not **delivering repeat medications** to people in the groups mentioned earlier. It seems that the NHS contracts under which they operate make no provision for this and that complex discussions to address the problem are not yet concluded. We think that small teams from the 750,000 volunteers who have responded to the Government's call could act as couriers for pharmacies. (**Stop press:** looks as if such a scheme is being put into place – great minds etc! We will send round details of all local pharmacies who are delivering under this scheme as soon as we have them.)

Those of the vulnerable who want to register for **online deliveries** from one of the big chains are finding it very hard, despite claims from the chains. If anyone has a positive outcome in this area we'd be glad to hear of it. Some of the local specialist delivery firms are doing well, but they can't substitute for general grocery shopping. We should keep looking for ways of distributing the tasks now falling on willing volunteers. We thank them warmly – and of course our Co-ordinators.

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