

Volunteer Guidelines for Working through Winter 2024/25

The below guidelines are the agreed way in which South Derbyshire CVS will approach the winter months in terms of seasonal increased illness and shorter daylight hours. **Please be advised that this guidance document does not replace any SDCVS policy documents.** Volunteers supporting service users in Hospitals may have additional protocols as advised by NHS Colleagues.

We will review this guidance as and when needed and will use data available to us from Local Authorities, Public Health, and NHS England.

Winter Illness

This section refers to coughs, colds, flu, COVID, sickness bugs etc.

We **all** have a responsibility to keep ourselves clean and hygienic. **Prevention is our biggest strength in reducing the spread of germs.**

- Volunteer events and social gatherings at the Hive will cease from 1st November 2024, until 1st March 2025 (subject to review).
- Volunteers should ensure effective hand hygiene, using hand gel if handwashing facilities are not available
- If you are unwell and unable to volunteer, you should notify your service coordinator as detailed in the Volunteer Handbook.
- If you have a health condition and have worries about your health, please speak with your service coordinator.
- We trust that volunteers will take sensible precautions to keep themselves, staff, and service users safe.
- Inform your service coordinator if you or anyone in your household is experiencing symptoms of COVID, flu, sickness bugs etc.

Volunteers at The Hive

- Ensure workspaces, desks and meeting rooms are cleaned after use at the Hive.
- Touch points will be sanitised by the cleaner.
- The staff and volunteer kitchen must be cleaned after use.
- The manager on site will ensure that cups and cutlery are put into the dishwasher on a regular basis.
- Please do not attend the office if you have tested positive for COVID.
- If you have a health condition and have worries about your health, please speak with your service coordinator.
- We may encourage our staff and volunteers to wear masks at the Hive should there be an increase of illness within our workforce.
- We want everyone to feel empowered to speak to colleagues about using masks if they have concerns.
- Please alert your service coordinator if you require antibacterial hand gel or masks.
- We will be respectful of each other's views on the above points.
- We trust that volunteers within our organisation will take sensible precautions to keep themselves, colleagues and service users safe.

Volunteer Drivers

- High touch points should be sanitised at the start and end of each journey, this may include but not be limited to, interior door handles, the gear stick, hand brake, seatbelts, the radio, the dashboard, cupholders, rear view mirror.
- Keep good ventilation in the car prior to and during the journey when possible.
- Sanitise your hands before greeting your passenger. Passengers should sanitise their hands before entering your vehicle.
- If the client is using a walking stick or frame it must be placed in the boot of the car. Use antibacterial wipes to clean the item down before placing it in the vehicle.
- Clean the handles of the item before touching them and use hand sanitiser after doing this.
- Wear masks when requested to do so by a service user or discuss with the service user if you would prefer to wear a mask.

Volunteer Befrienders (Home Visiting)

- Sanitise your hands before entering and on leaving a service users home.
- Wear masks when requested to do so by a service user or discuss with the service user if you would prefer to wear a mask.
- Ensure good ventilation at each visit; are windows able to be opened and/or internal doors for each visit?
- Where possible, sit with a comfortable space between yourself and the service user.

Winter Working

Volunteer Drivers

- All drivers are reminded to ensure that their vehicle is road worthy, and that preparation has been made for winter journeys. For guidance please refer to:

[6 simple checks to prepare your vehicle for winter - Met Office](#)
[Essential Winter Driving Kit Checklist | Halfords UK](#)

- Please check the weather forecast prior to longer journeys within the winter months and speak to your service coordinator if you have any concerns.

Volunteer Befrienders (Home Visiting)

- Check your car is winter ready and check weather forecast before your visit. You are not expected to carry out visits if there is bad weather which may cause the roads to be unsafe, for example, snow and ice.

[6 simple checks to prepare your vehicle for winter - Met Office](#)

- Speak to your service coordinator if you have any concerns.

Volunteer safety is our priority.



Wellbeing in the Winter

The winter months are often a difficult time for many people, so we encourage our volunteers to take steps to support their wellbeing within the working day. This will look different for everyone, but a few suggestions are below:

- Connect with colleagues and others - make time to have coffee or a short walk with volunteer colleagues or others. If you are at home, a telephone call can be just as good for us.
- Speak with your service coordinator if you have any issues or want to discuss.
- SDCVS has Mental Health First Aiders who can offer advice
- SDCVS has a mental health champion who can be contacted with suggestions you may have for the organisation

Useful Links

The Hub of Hope is a national mental health database

[Mental Health Support Network provided by Chasing the Stigma | Hub of hope](#)

Resources and support available through Joined up Care Derbyshire

SDCVS has signed up to continue working with the mental health and suicide prevention team at DCC and as part of this, all of SDCVS' staff and volunteers have been granted access to wellbeing support and activities through Joined up care Derbyshire.

The website reads:

Action-packed Timetable to Support Colleagues' Wellbeing

Your Wellbeing Timetable provides a wealth of workshops, webinars, courses, clubs, activities, and dedicated colleague-support cafés which are FREE to access for our Health and Social Care colleagues across our organisations.

Consisting of over 250 support sessions each month, Your Wellbeing Timetable is delivered daily (Monday – Friday) by the team's highly trained Health Improvement Advisors, with monthly events and clubs also taking place over some weekends.

Sessions are delivered virtually and/or face to face across various JUCD locations, helping to support our colleagues across the system.

Your Wellbeing Timetable is refreshed each quarter to bring you a wide range of up-to-date services, resources and information to best support your health and wellbeing.

All of the resources and the timetable can be found here: [Your Wellbeing Service » Joined Up Care Derbyshire](#) (If prompted for a password: Spring)