

To: All home oxygen patients in England

28 March 2020

Dear home oxygen user

Home oxygen supply during the COVID-19 outbreak

As the coronavirus (COVID-19) **pandemic** continues to evolve, NHS England and NHS Improvement would like to assure patients currently receiving medical gas that supplies will continue. The home oxygen service and your local home oxygen supplier are very aware of what a worrying and stressful time it is for patients who already need oxygen.

Firstly, can we reassure you that existing home oxygen users are **our top priority**, and both the home oxygen suppliers and NHS clinical teams are working to keep you safe and well at this time. All home oxygen users should be self-isolating to minimise the risk posed by COVID-19 as advised by the Government.

As you may have seen from our recent communications, plans are underway to support the increased need for oxygen for COVID-19 patients, both in hospital and community settings. We are working closely with suppliers to maintain an effective service for all patients requiring oxygen. In doing so, some oxygen cylinders and concentrators may be required for redistribution to support an expected increase in demand. However, please be assured no patient will be left without oxygen.

As part of this pandemic response, we ask all current home oxygen users to help support the following plans we have put in place to save as many lives as possible:

- Cylinders will be delivered and left outside the user's property as much as possible. Contact with home oxygen users will be kept to a minimum for everyone's safety.
- All holiday installations are suspended until the COVID-19 situation is resolved.
- All suppliers have instigated their major incident plans to make sure patients are supplied during the coming weeks

We would like to take this opportunity to remind all users that home oxygen is only for the named person for whom it is prescribed. If other family members are unwell and need oxygen, this should be authorised by a registered healthcare professional.



The following requests **may** apply to some current home oxygen users. **However, please do not contact your oxygen supplier to check if it applies to you. They will be in contact.**

- Users with equipment at two addresses may be contacted to arrange temporary removal from one address during this pandemic as high-risk home oxygen users should be self-isolating at home.
- Some users will be contacted to request removal of their back-up cylinders for concentrators for emergency ambulatory oxygen.
- Some users may be contacted to request removal of their second concentrator.
- Some users may be contacted to request removal of excess transportable concentrators given they should not be leaving their properties.
- Where a user's prescribed oxygen usage is low, or where they have both a concentrator and ambulatory cylinders, they may be contacted to request removal of their large back-up cylinder.

Thank you for your support in advance and keep safe.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sue Hill". The signature is fluid and cursive, with "Sue" on the top line and "Hill" on the bottom line, with a small dot above the "i" in Hill.

Professor Dame Sue Hill DBE FMedSci FRSB FRCP (Hon) FRCPath (Hon)
Chief Scientific Officer and SRO for Genomics
NHS England and NHS Improvement