Oxfordshire NHS & Local Authorities Stakeholder Briefing

22 January 2021

Oxfordshire health and local authority partners are working together to respond to the pandemic and help the county restart, recover and renew after COVID-19.

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Outbreak Management

In the first week of the new year, COVID-19 cases in Oxfordshire rose to their highest level ever, with a total of 3,894 confirmed new cases. Cherwell district was particularly badly affected and saw a weekly rate of 901.6 new cases per 100,000 people, which put it in the top 50 coronavirus hotspots in England. Across the county, there was also a sharp rise in cases in the over 60s, with a 25 per cent increase over the seven-day period to 8 January, which had a significant impact on hospital admissions.

Following the introduction of national lockdown, case numbers have started to come down. For the week ending 15 January, Oxfordshire's weekly rate was 392.1, a decrease from 563 the previous week. However, the rate still remains very high – for example, it is currently over four times that of six weeks ago, when the rate stood at 83.7 for the week ending 4 December. The latest figures can be viewed on the county council's **interactive dashboard**, which is updated on a daily basis.

The rapidly increasing case numbers and resulting hospitalisations are putting immense strain on the healthcare sector. The NHS in Oxfordshire is currently caring for more than twice the number of COVID-19 patients than at the peak of the first wave in spring 2020. Owing to the lag between confirmed cases and hospital admissions, the pressures faced by our hospitals are set to intensify in the coming weeks.



OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

#StopTheSpread

With COVID cases at an all-time high and the acute system under intense pressure, communications activity across NHS and local authority partners has focused on hard-hitting messages about the rapidly rising figures, the impact on the healthcare system, and the need for everyone to scrupulously follow lockdown rules and public health guidance. Interviews with OUH's Chief Nursing Officer Sam Foster featured in the Sunday Mirror, the Oxford Mail and on Capital FM, while Director of Public Health Ansaf Azhar was interviewed on BBC South Today and BBC Radio Oxford.

Additional targeted activity has taken place in Cherwell, including texts to patients from GPs; geotargeted social media; mobile advertising; and posters at supermarkets, bus stops and railways stations. We have also worked closely with community organisations, faith leaders, schools and local businesses to spread the message.



Community testing

Community COVID-19 testing services for key workers will start to be rolled out in Oxfordshire from early February. The new service will use rapid lateral flow tests to help identify people who have COVID but display no symptoms. Identifying infectious individuals early, isolating them, and tracing their contacts can reduce transmission of the virus significantly.

The service will be for those who have to leave home to go to work during lockdown. This local initiative is in addition to existing lateral flow testing that has already been put in place nationally in settings such as care homes, hospitals and schools. The local service will be for workers who are not currently included in the national initiative. We will start with critical workers, such as the police and fire service, from early February and then gradually expand the service to other areas of activity not covered by the national initiative.

Oxfordshire County Council is working closely with local and national partners to set up the new service, including military planners who are helping with the logistics, and local authority partners who are helping identify venues in three locations – Banbury, Oxford and Wantage.

Health, Wellbeing and Social Care

COVID-19 Vaccination Programme

Twenty-two vaccination sites are now operational across the county: 21 GP lead primary care network sites (local vaccination services) and a hospital hub at the Churchill Hospital in Oxford. You can find a list of PCN sites <u>here</u>.

A large vaccination centre based in Oxfordshire run by Oxford Health, is expected to become operational from next week. The vaccination centre will be one of three sites being planned by Oxford Health for mass vaccinations across the county, Buckinghamshire and Berkshire West. A full stakeholder briefing will be made available imminently from OHFT.

In Oxfordshire, we have been working since early December to vaccinate the first two priority groups as identified by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation - which are care home residents and staff, and people aged 80 and over and frontline health and care staff. Great progress has been made so far. With the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine now available, which can be stored, transported and handled at normal refrigerated conditions, PCN sites are able to reach out more easily to housebound patients as well as care home residents and staff.

As of 21 January 2021, all care home residents who were well enough to be vaccinated, have now received the vaccination. We know that this will have been instrumental in preventing many deaths in our care homes and thanks go to all the PCN vaccination services for their efforts in vaccinating our most vulnerable residents.



Once the first two priority cohorts are complete, GP led local vaccination services are now able to offer vaccinations to the next two priority groups – people aged 75 and over and people aged 70 - 74 and clinically extremely vulnerable people. This will be dependent on vaccine supply. This will allow those

local services which have already vaccinated most care home residents and staff and people aged 80 and over to keep up the momentum and start vaccinating more of the at-risk people.

Given the phased approach to opening the GP led local vaccination services it is possible that, over the next couple of weeks, some people in the lower priority groups (3&4 - aged 75 and over and people aged 70 - 74 and clinically extremely vulnerable) may receive their vaccine before some aged 80 and over. The last three GP led local vaccination services opened last week and will now be working their way through their priority groups locally.

The vaccination supplies are being allocated nationally and so not all sites will be operational all of the time.

Information about the numbers of vaccinations being delivered at a regional level can be found <u>here</u>. Local data has not yet been released by the Government.

The local NHS is working hard to deliver the vaccinations as quickly as they can and as quickly as vaccine supplies are made available. There is capacity within the system to be delivering more vaccine clinics, but we are dependent on deliveries allocated by the central NHS. Everyone in the priority groups, registered with an Oxfordshire GP practice, will be invited in due course. In the meantime please continue to follow all the public health guidance to control the spread of the virus, protect the NHS and save lives.

Please don't contact your GP practice or the NHS to get your vaccination appointment. Wait for the NHS to contact you. This is the best way to #helpushelpyou

Engaging with BAME communities to encourage COVID vaccination

Research shows that some people have doubts about vaccination in general and about the new COVID vaccines in particular – and that this is a particular issue among some Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities.

A Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH) study found that only 57% of BAME people said they would have the vaccine compared with 79% of white people – and the RSPH warned that social media is being used to spread misinformation.

OUH staff and community leaders are working together to engage with BAME communities:

- Dr Hosnieh Djafari-Marbini (OUH Consultant Anaesthetist and Oxford City Council's migrant champion) and Lindley Nevers (OUH Head of Finance and Deputy Chair, OUH BAME Staff Network) hosted a virtual focus group discussion on Wednesday 20 January which was open to all OUH staff to provide an opportunity for them to speak freely about their concerns
- Imam Monawar Hussain, who is the Muslim Chaplain at OUH, has been working with community leaders in Oxfordshire on videos in different languages to encourage COVID vaccination and tackle concerns – <u>Monawar's video is on YouTube</u> and there are also versions in <u>Hindi</u>, <u>Arabic</u>, <u>Punjabi</u>, and <u>Bengali</u>
- Together we are promoting the British Islamic Medical Association's 'one stop shop' online to debunk myths associated with the COVID-19 vaccination – <u>more</u> <u>information is available on their website.</u>

Monowar Hussain receiving his vaccination



Trusts join forces to help Long COVID sufferers

Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust (Oxford Health) and Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (OUH) are working together to provide specialist help to patients suffering from Long Covid following an announcement from NHS England. New research has shown one in five people with coronavirus develop longer term symptoms.

The Office for National Statistics found that approximately 186,000 people suffer problems for up to 12 weeks.

The Trusts will run an assessment service which will take referrals from hospital consultants and GPs for people experiencing prolonged symptoms such as brain fog, anxiety, depression, breathlessness, fatigue and other debilitating symptoms. The physical clinics begin in January. People diagnosed with Long COVID by their GP will be contacted by a healthcare professional following a triage service and be given support on managing their recovery. **Read more**.

COVID-19 and planned care

This continues to be a hugely challenging time for the NHS in Oxfordshire – and indeed nationally – with a steep rise in the number of COVID positive patients admitted to Oxfordshire hospitals over the past month which increased from **88** on 18 December to **317** on 18 January.

Hospital staff are currently caring for more than twice the number of COVID-19 positive patients than at the peak of the first wave of coronavirus in Spring 2020.

In order to respond to this unprecedented situation, OUH is focusing on urgent and emergency care, including cancer care, and redeploying clinical staff to work in COVID areas in particular.

OUH would like to thank all staff who have pulled together and shown great flexibility as more clinical areas have been converted for use by COVID positive patients.

As a result of the current situation, there are some temporary changes to services at OUH in order to prioritise care for the sickest patients and those in the most urgent need of treatment.

Elective (non-urgent, planned) inpatient and daycase surgery at OUH has been postponed in order to focus on urgent and emergency care for COVID and non-COVID patients, and to enable the redeployment of staff to treat this cohort of patients (urgent care, including essential cancer operations, will continue).

Information about these temporary changes to services is available on the OUH website.

This will be frustrating for patients affected and many people waiting for treatment will be disappointed or worried. OUH are contacting everyone affected.

The trust have not taken this decision lightly and would like to reassure patients that all necessary

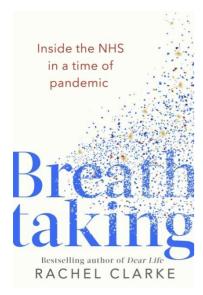
steps are being taken to try to keep any disruption to an absolute minimum.

Patients affected will be contacted as soon as their planned surgery is rescheduled which will be done according to clinical need and length of wait.

Inside the NHS in a time of pandemic – Rachel Clarke's new book published next week

Dr Rachel Clarke's new book, *Breathtaking*, is being published next week – it provides a fascinating insight into the response to the COVID-19 pandemic here in Oxfordshire.

Rachel – who is a consultant at Katharine House Hospice in north Oxfordshire– worked shifts at Oxford University Hospitals (OUH) during the COVID 1st wave and she was keen to explore people's experience of the pandemic in the book, both from a staff and patient perspective. The book is a positive portrayal of the OneTeamOneOUH response to the pandemic, focusing on the human stories behind the media headlines.



The story of COVID patient Ken Wood (who featured in the Working through a *pandemic* mini **documentary**) is central to the book and there is also a chapter which focuses on OUH staff sadly experiencing the loss of staff colleagues and friends to COVID. An extract from the book was published in The Sunday Times magazine last Sunday

17 January and an extract is also due to be published in the *Observer* on Sunday 24 January.

Families asked to think 'Home First' for relatives

NHS and social care staff in Oxfordshire are asking families to help support their loved ones when leaving hospital. Colleagues across the health and social care system have been working together over recent winters to ensure that as many people as possible receive treatment at home when safe and appropriate to do so, including after discharge from hospital. For some people the medical, nursing, and therapy care they need can be delivered at home avoiding the need to go to hospital in the first place.



As pressures in local hospitals grow because of COVID, families are reminded of their pivotal role in how they can support this approach. Home First not only enables people to be confident and happy in their own homes, but it also means there is more capacity in our hospitals for those who need more acute care.

Help Us Help You by handing it back

Oxford Health sent out a rallying cry to the community via social media to help return any unused equipment that can be recycled or reused to support more people leaving hospital on needing support at home. Aids, which have an NRS Healthcare sticker, that need returning include chairs, beds, wheeled commodes, mattresses, electrical items, bed rails, walking and toilet frames, telecare items and slings. More <u>here</u>.

Mental health help is just a 111 call away



With lockdown in force and a resulting impact expected on mental health, Oxford Health is reminding the public via an extensive social media campaign, of its 24/7 mental health helpline which can now be accessed via NHS 111. Over the festive break this reached 35,000 people. Adults and young people can access trained mental health advice and support round the clock.

The NHS111 number is aimed at making it quicker and easier for those who are worried about

themselves of a loved one, to get the right advice they need for their mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Oxford Health hero Karl immortalised in oil on canvas

A portrait of a healthcare assistant who supports patients with learning disabilities has now featured on a book cover, online exhibition and has graced the walls of Fitzrovia Chapel gallery as part of a celebration of NHS heroes.



Karl Ellis works at Oxford Health's Evenlode, a medium secure inpatient service for men who have a history or risk of offending behaviour and may also have mental health problems. He is on the cover of Portraits for NHS Heroes is an initiative by Oxford-based portrait artist Tom Croft. More here.

Personalised kits to help patients in distress

A new patient care initiative using self-soothe kits has been launched on Sandford Ward at Oxford Health's Fulbrook Centre. The mental health ward cares for people aged over 65 who are experiencing mental health problems and cannot be nursed safely in the community. For some patients this may be a brief stay for intensive treatment and support, whereas others who suffer from severe and enduring mental illness may require more frequent admissions. Self-soothe boxes are personalised and filled with items that can help someone in distress to feel better. They include items like calming scents, a favourite food, or activities, Patients report feeling calmer after creating them for themselves with the intent on using them when they leave hospital as they continue their recovery.

Emergency teddies

Injured youngsters attending Oxford Health's minor injuries and first aid units in Witney, Abingdon, Bicester, Chipping Norton and Henley, and the GP Out of Hours service in Oxford, and Banbury, are being given Covid safe teddy bears to make them feel less stressed and anxious. It's part of the Freemasons' TLC teddy bear scheme to help young people who may be nervous or scared or need reassurance. More **here**.



New role for Oxfordshire's firefighters

Residents being treated in emergency situations in Oxfordshire have a better chance of a speedy recovery thanks to a new role for the county's firefighters as they join forces with paramedics to deliver a faster response and improved outcomes.



Ambulance crews across the country face a common problem when responding to an emergency 999 call for help. It is not uncommon for them to arrive and find that the resident, incapacitated by injury or illness, cannot reach their door. A year-long trial across the Thames Valley has demonstrated that involving firefighters in the first-call attendance can result in faster response times, less damage to property, and most importantly, improved outcomes for residents requiring emergency medical treatment. You can read more in the **news story** online.

Oxford Health's Maddy keen to line up for COVID jab

"We all must have this vaccine – we must respect those we love", according to one Oxford Health Governor who is helping with the vaccination rollout. Maddy Radburn, 75, has been busy throughout the coronavirus pandemic, not only as a Trust governor but also volunteering to help her community in Witney.



And she is a secretary of the Patient Participation Group for Windrush Medical Practice, producing newsletters and recruiting volunteers for vaccine trials. Right now, she is helping with the roll-out of Covid-19 vaccinations to priority patients at the Windrush practice. She recently featured in Oxford Health vaccination publicity and said: "Will I have the jab when my turn comes? Yes, definitely! It isn't just about me; it's about people with whom I have close contact. We are all part of a larger community; we all need to help each other. That's what we are here for."

Oxford Health school nurses offer support and relaxation to pupils and parents in the pandemic



Health advice and support is only a click away for Oxfordshire school pupils and parents who are feeling the strain during the latest lockdown thanks to Oxford Health's school nurse team. The nurses have put together two special free offers to help ease the strain of isolation and stress caused by living through the pandemic. One of the team, Tikki Harrold, joined Kat Orman on BBC Radio Oxford's mid-morning show to explain more and reach out to parents and pupils via the airwaves. Find out more about what the school nurses have to offer <u>here</u>.

Parental mental health worse since new national restrictions



Parental stress, depression, and anxiety have increased since new national restrictions have been introduced according to the latest report from the Oxford University-led COVID-19 Supporting Parents, Adolescents, and Children in Epidemics (Co-SPACE) study based on data from over 6,000 UK parents and supported by the NIHR Oxford Health BRC. <u>Read more</u>.

Oxford Brain Health Centre celebrates brilliant participation and positive feedback



The Oxford Brain Health Centre is going from strength to strength in spite of the challenges presented by opening and operating during the pandemic. The centre integrates research into clinical services to improve the diagnosis and management of mental health disorders in a way that can rapidly be implemented to provide improved care for patients. Since it opened more than 90% of those attending have agreed to take part in research, whether by joining the centre's research database or completing additional assessments during their visit. This massively exceeds the 10% participation goal set by the Prime Minister in his 2020 dementia challenge. The centre has achieved high levels of patient attendance, and feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with attendees remarking on how staff made them feel at ease, that the experience was 'much better than expected' a nd saying that their appointment was 'really helpful and good for self-confidence'. Read the full story here.

Tom in the running for national award



Community support worker Thomas Gregory-Smith from Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust has been shortlisted for the Clinical Support Worker of the Year award at Our Health Heroes Awards 2021. Being a finalist means that Tom is in the running to be named gold, silver or bronze winner, and the final position will be decided by a public vote._ Tom has been working as a community support worker in the Older Adults Community Mental Health Team since 2016. His interest in health care was sparked as a boy when he saw news about the violence in Northern Ireland: he wanted to help people who had been hurt. You can cast a vote for Tom at <u>skillsforhealth.org.uk/about-us/vote-for-your-our-health-heroes/</u> before February 8.

Opt-out approach to research benefits patients and staff

A study by a team from Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust and the Oxford Health Biomedical Research Centre, has shown that an 'opt-out' approach to research recruitment could benefit both clinical research and patient care. The study compared two approaches to discussing research with patients. These included an 'opt-in' approach, where clinicians communicate opportunities to patients, and an 'opt-out' approach where all patients have the right to be informed about research opportunities. The team's findings showed that 'opt-out' has significant advantages for both patients and researchers. Read <u>more</u>.



Walking to wellbeing

Residents of Kidlington are being invited to being invited to use their daily exercise under lockdown to test out seven new walking routes in the village. Developed by Cherwell District Council's K5 Better Together partnership, the paths have been designed with families in mind, connecting neighbourhoods and encouraging people to explore their local area on foot.

The seven routes, which vary in length from 2.4km to 5km, are part of an initial pilot. Feedback from the test walks will help identify the most popular circuits, with the aim of them becoming a more permanent offering for the village. The wayfinding project is funded by Sport England and supported by Kidlington Parish Council. A similar initiative in Bicester resulted in the creation of the popular Blue Line Health Walks, which are estimated to save the NHS £2.10 for every £1 spent over the next 25 years.

OUH launches search for new governors

As an NHS Foundation Trust, Oxford University Hospitals (OUH) has a Council of Governors including elected representatives of the public and our staff, as well as nominated representatives of partner organisations, who help guide and advise us on how best to meet the future health needs of the communities we serve. All OUH Foundation Trust members can nominate themselves to stand for election as a governor. Anyone aged 16 and over can sign up to become a member by visiting our <u>website</u>. This means they can then nominate themselves to stand for election.



We have vacancies for public governors in each of the following constituencies:

- Buckinghamshire, Berkshire, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire
- Cherwell
- Northamptonshire and Warwickshire
- Oxford City
- South Oxfordshire
- Vale of White Horse
- West Oxfordshire

Our Council of Governors elections are conducted independently by UK Engage, a company with expertise in running local government elections and elections for other Foundation Trusts. Nomination forms are now available for OUH Foundation Trust members who are interested in standing for election. They must be completed and returned to UK Engage by **5pm** on **Monday 15 February 2021**. <u>More information is available on the OUH</u> <u>website.</u>

Dr Karl Marlowe to become Oxford Health's new Chief Medical Officer



Oxford Health is to be joined by a new Chief Medical Officer (CMO) in Spring 2021 who has his sights set on clinical excellence, quality improvement and ensuring the Trust's research and development work receives international acclaim. Dr Karl Marlowe is currently the CMO at Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust where, since April 2018, he has been responsible for the clinical leadership of 6,000 staff across more than 300 sites - including five community hospitals - and a £320m budget. During this time, he had worked alongside Oxford Health's current CEO, Dr Nick Broughton, and saw Southern Health experience a shift in culture, transforming it from a trust requiring improvement to one rated as 'good' by the Care Quality Commission. Oxford Health is already classified as 'good' and Dr Marlowe will be joining an executive board which has ambitions to turn the Trust into one that is rated 'outstanding' and considered a leading organisation nationally and on the world stage.

National award for hospital arts project

Creating with Care, the innovative arts programme running at Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust's six community hospitals, has won the Innovation and Best Practice improving Patient Care award at the Community Hospitals Association's (CHA) Innovations and Best Practice Awards 2020.

The programme started in January 2017 as a joint initiative with West Oxfordshire District Council. It was set up by Arts Coordinator Angela Conlan and dementia nurse Paula Har after Angela originally came in as an artist-in-residence at Witney Community Hospital. "They wanted to install a piece of art in the hospital in Witney and we saw an opportunity to go further. The idea for artistic activities and therapeutic work funded by the council was born," explains Paula.

Sessions on photography, art, mosaics, dance, music, drama and poetry have followed for patients with dementia and a range of enduring and complex conditions. Evidence shows how being creative can help people's wellbeing and their recovery from illness.



Creating with Care has been rolled out across all six of Oxford Health's community hospitals, supported by the Oxford Health Charity. Over the past four years, it has had a total of 4,350 patient attendances and 1,666 staff attendances at its sessions. And on the top of the uplifting experiences, many pieces of beautiful art have been created to enhance the hospital environments.

Watch a recording here and more on Creating With Care online talks here.

Community resilience

Helping rough sleepers

Rough sleepers in Oxford will be able to access more support for problems with drug and alcohol use thanks to a government grant awarded to Oxfordshire County Council. The £584,000 grant will be used to offer specialist support for intensive substance misuse and to facilitate access to wider services through wraparound care. This will be provided through Turning Point, Oxfordshire's drug and alcohol treatment service, and arranged in partnership with Oxford City Council and the NHS.

In South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse districts, six new long-term homes have been provided for former rough sleepers, with the first tenant moving in earlier this month. The Housing First project is run by the two district councils and Soha Housing in partnership with Aspire Oxfordshire, who provide intensive and long-term support for the tenants. Housing First offers former rough sleepers with complex needs the opportunity to be rapidly rehoused into suitable accommodation. This extension of the Housing First project follows a successful pilot in 2019 in South Oxfordshire, when six households accepted an offer of long-term accommodation and support. All are still in their homes and are celebrating the new year away from rough sleeping.

Contain Outbreak Management Fund

Oxfordshire County Council has received two allocations of grant funding totalling £7.1 million from the Department of Health and Social Care's Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF). The grant is to be used in 2020/21 to manage the costs of current measures to respond to the pandemic, although the fund can be used for ongoing costs into 2021/22.

The county council is sharing the grant with its district council partners as local authorities in Oxfordshire work together to support the impact of COVID-19 on local residents. 50 per cent is being retained by the county council for the management of countywide interventions, while the remaining 50 per cent is being divided between the district councils to take measures to manage the pandemic based on the services they provide.

The county's measures include local testing and contact tracing services, social care services, the COVID Secure team which helps business comply with regulations that help keep people safe, and to support the work of the voluntary and community sector. Services provided by the districts that will be aided by the funding include assistance for the clinically extremely vulnerable and those selfisolating, support for community food networks and advice centres, help for local businesses to operate safely, and resources to support local contact tracing and community testing.

Councillor Ian Hudspeth, the leader of Oxfordshire County Council, said: "All six councils have worked in very close partnership since the start of the pandemic. Although the grant funding comes to the county council, we felt that we must share it with our colleagues at district councils to help support the invaluable work they are doing. This money will continue to be of great assistance as we continue to manage the local impacts of the pandemic through what we hope will be its latter stages."

Economy

Post-EU Transition Support

Following the end of the UK transition, the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP) is offering businesses in the county a tailored support service from experienced business advisers. The Post-EU Transition Service can help find answers to businesses' specific questions, as well as reviewing the impact the recent changes may have on companies, helping them to develop an action plan too.

Children, Education, Families

Free school meal provision during February half-term

All schools are providing meals free of charge to all infant pupils and pupils who meet the benefitsrelated criteria and who are currently attending school. For those at home who meet the benefitsrelated criteria, schools are providing food parcels or supermarket vouchers as set out in the government's <u>free school meal guidance for</u> <u>schools</u>. This provision is funded by government, and current national plans are that it will not be available over the February half-term holiday.

As part of its Winter Support Scheme, Oxfordshire County Council has already agreed to provide funding for free school meal provision over the February and Easter school holidays at the level of £15 per week for each child known to be entitled to benefits-related free school meals. This follows the The business advisers can provide businesses with one-to-one guidance and advice on challenges and opportunities in the following areas:

- Importing and exporting
- Regulations and standards
- Workforce and people
- Business and legal requirements
- Energy and climate
- Public procurement, IP and UK EU Funding

Further details can be found at <u>www.oxfordshirelep.com/uk-transition</u>.

successful funding round that paid out more than £350,000 to approximately 12,000 children and young people in schools, colleges and early years settings ahead of the Christmas holiday period.



It also sits alongside local welfare schemes being administered by the city and district councils for those families and individuals who have additional urgent need for support with food, basic utilities and related costs.

And finally...

We hope this update is useful. Please email <u>occg.media-team@nhs.net</u> with any queries and we will endeavour to get back to you as soon as we can.