

Action card for homeless clients unwilling or unable to self-isolate

What should I do if someone is unable or unwilling to self-isolate?

Engage and explain

- Give them information in a clear, accessible format (see [Groundswell COVID guides](#) and [Doctors of the World translated guidance](#))
- Talk to them about the risks posed to other residents and why it is so important for them to self-isolate
- Ask them about any worries, fears or concerns about self-isolation; they may have specific worries you can help with
- If you are concerned that the client does not have the mental capacity to understand or follow guidance, please contact your local mental health team for an assessment

Enable and encourage

- Link up with other agencies to address potential barriers. These could be:
 - Safety or domestic violence
 - Loss of income
 - Access to basic necessities
 - Access to healthcare, drug and alcohol servicesIf you are struggling to coordinate with other services, please contact the public health team at CIPHAdmin@islington.gov.uk for support
- Consider incentives such as laundry services, food delivery, and access to internet/smart device. Talk to the client – what would help them self-isolate?
- Make sure the accommodation offered is suitable for self-isolation

Control the environment

- Close non-essential communal areas that they have access to
- Make sure that essential communal areas are well-ventilated and easy to clean
- Make sure that cleaning supplies, PPE and other infection control measures are available
- Enable other residents to understand and manage their own risk through supplying clear information (and potentially cleaning supplies)

Who to contact if you are experiencing these issues

The following agencies are available to provide advice and guidance.

- Contact Camden and Islington Public Health Team at CIPHAdmin@islington.gov.uk
- Contact PHE London Coronavirus Response Centre (LCRC) on 0300 303 0450 or at LCRC@phe.gov.uk
- If you have been commissioned by the local authority, your commissioners are:
 - Camden: minaxi.patel@camden.gov.uk or jodi.pilling@camden.gov.uk
 - Islington: Georgina.Earthy@islington.gov.uk

Substance misuse and addiction

We are aware that some of the most difficult situations can be when a client has a drug or alcohol addiction. They may break self-isolation to beg for money, score, or use substances with others.

- Please contact your local drug or alcohol service to ensure that the client is receiving adequate support – they should also be able to provide you with advice and support for managing the situation

Islington Drug and Alcohol Services (Better Lives)

- Contact **020 3317 6099/6650** or cim-tr.betterlives@nhs.net

Camden Drug Services (Camden and Islington NHS Foundation Trust)

- Contact **020 3317 6000/6400** or cim-tr.SCDS@nhs.net or
- Change, Grow, Live on **020 7485 2722** or Camden-referrals@cgl.org.uk

Camden Alcohol Service (Change, Grow, Live)

- Contact **020 3227 4950** or Camden-referrals@cgl.org.uk
- Advice from St Mungo's on specific scenarios will be circulated with this action card
- Volunteers will be able to collect prescriptions from pharmacies, including controlled substance ([Access to opioid substitution treatment](#)). We advise volunteers to collect/deliver in pairs and not to carry too many prescriptions on them at one time. If you require safe storage boxes for residents to store their medications please let your local drug service know; naloxone kits can also be obtained from the service if needed.
- See further guidance on [covid-19 and alcohol dependence](#)

What should I do if nothing works?

Relocation

- If the physical building the client is staying in makes the above steps difficult, work with commissioners to consider whether there is other accommodation within the borough where it is easier to meet their needs or they will pose less risk to others
- If another client at the same site is particularly vulnerable, consider whether they might be able to relocate to reduce their risk
- The Greater London Authority (GLA) may be able to find a place within the London Covid-19 Care sites. Please see [Healthy London Partnership: Referrals to COVID CARE](#)

Legal options

Legal options for enforcing self-isolation are currently highly limited. There are currently (January 2021) no secure units in London to detain those who refuse to self-isolate, although options are being explored. Enforcement of self-isolation through the threat of on-the-spot fines or a custodial sentence is not recommended for the homeless population.

Support for you

Staff at LCRC can be contacted by phone 0300 303 0450 or email LCRC@phe.gov.uk. Camden and Islington Public Health are on hand to provide support to sites where people are struggling to self-isolate. Email CIPHAdmin@islington.gov.uk for more information.

This guidance was produced by the Camden and Islington Public Health Team.
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