TEMPLATES

Examples of help parishes can give

**NB: Remember that nothing should be done which could endanger the health and safety of either the helper or recipient or those living with them. Refer daily to the** [**NHS guidance on Covid-19**](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/) **and refer to any policy or guidance published by your diocese. Please complete a full risk assessment for your chosen action, using, for example,** [**Appendix 4**](#_Appendix_4:_Risk)**.**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **What is the need?****(see** [**Appendix 1**](#_Appendix_1:_Coronavirus_1)**)** | **What would help** | **Some typical risks** | **Could we overcome the risks and have the skills and resources? How? *(for parish to complete. Initial suggestions below)*** |
| Combating isolation/loneliness  | * Set up a listening, befriending helpline
* Friendly phone calls to people (like [***Call and Care*** (Diocese of Northampton)](https://formationpathways.co.uk/call-and-care/)
* Group meetings online
 | * Unwelcome response if not initiated by the person
* Extra support requested but helper unprepared
* Unintentional emotional abuse
* With online meetings you are exposing yourself to far greater risks, we would not advise this option at present
* Distressed callers who might need professional support
* Not knowing how to end the conversation
 | * Letter sent to people whose address is known (but not their phone no.)
* Coordinator(s)/ led by a Coordinating team with a DBS and central phone no
* Training on main advice to stay well and access essential services in the area
* Clear understand of what befriending is and is not (*see* [*Appendix 3*](#_Appendix_3:_Telephone)*:* [*Telephone befriending at a time of crisis*](http://www.svp.org.uk/svps-response-covid-19)
* Brief volunteers on safeguarding and GDPR practices
* Brief people on using IT technology (as required)
* List of other services to hand e.g. Samaritans, Citizens Advice Bureaux, etc
* Keeping logs of all calls
* Scripts for team to refer to
* Regular team briefings/handovers
* Build up useful suggestions/knowledge
* List of priests, deacons, sisters, etc offering spiritual support
* Collect (anonymised) case stories of your work to promote The Church’s work
 |

Continued …

**Following the above model, you can use the risk assessment in** [**below**](#_Appendix_4:_Risk) **to help all stay safe and your support to be as effective as possible using the above or other options below:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **What is the need?****(see** [**Appendix 1**](#_Appendix_1:_Coronavirus_1)**)** | **What would help** | **Some typical risks** |
| Supporting people who are vulnerable or self-isolating and can’t go out with practical help | * Shopping for essential items, prescriptions and medication, items for posting, etc akin to SVP “Knock and Drop” service (remember contactless delivery and safety principles above)
* Hot meals: sharing microwaveable meals
* Dog Walking volunteers
* Signposting team
* Referring people for support to other services.
 | * See Government Guidance on handling money
* People not observing Government Covid-19 guidance (see [Appendix 2](#_Appendix_2:_Additional) also)
* Allergic reaction to particular ingredients
* Loss of an animal (pet)
* Support interpreted as offering advice rather than signposting
* Complaints if people haven’t given consent
* Keeping safe up-to-date simple records
* Not passing on correct/complete information
* The agency may not respond as expected
 |
| [Supporting Catholic charities](https://www.csan.org.uk/member/)  | * Contact local Catholic agencies
* Fundraising/in-kind donations (e.g. maildrop, social media campaign), volunteering and prayer. Article for local press.
 | * Catholic agencies overstretched and work impaired/lost
* Some people could find it difficult being asked for money when they may be in financial difficulty themselves
 |
| Support in kind for local projects (like foodbanks: e.g. [Trussell Trust](https://www.trusselltrust.org/get-help/find-a-foodbank/)) | * Encouraging donations/support for local projects
* Safe delivery to them.
* Ask if they need volunteers: Foodbanks, hospices and mental health charities are likely to be particularly in need at this time. Citizens’ Advice Bureaux may also need help with the volume of people needing financial advice
 | * Information is not up-to-date or unsafe
* Potential contact with Covid-19
 |
| Advice on volunteering outside the parish  | * Volunteering helpline to enable parishioners to engage in initiatives e.g. [Caritas Plymouth’s guidance](https://www.plymouthcathedral.co.uk/uploads/7/9/9/6/79967610/covid_19_caritas_guidance_for_parishes.pdf)
* You might want to speak to your local authority Social Services Dept or the local council for voluntary service or volunteer bureau because they will be appealing for volunteers to help take food parcels to vulnerable people and you may be able to work with their systems. Equally they may have a pool of DBS-checked volunteers
 | * Lack of clarity about providing information rather than unfounded recommendations
 |
| Prayer and liturgy support | * E/mailing prayer resources (e.g. [Appendix 5](#_Appendix_5:_))
* 1-1 prayer partners
* Prayer over the phone/internet accessed from home e.g. Accessing Mass online/streamed, advice on accessing Sacraments
* Intercession Ministry
* Getting people to pray for others and join in at a specific time each day
* Virtual Liturgy of the Hours “in virtual choir” a group of people using the liturgy of the hours (book or Universalis app) pray together each day at a certain dedicated time wherever they are.
* A group of people pray together alongside the Mass being streamed or at the same time as the local priest is celebrating
 | * Extra support requested but helper unprepared
* Protect people’s data (e.g. don’t send round-robin emails under GDPR. Group emails sent to organiser and recipients as bcc
 |
| Encouraging people to deepen their commitment to ministry | * Emailing suitable podcast/streaming material on Catholic Social Teaching/theology to volunteers and other parishioners interested
* Discussion group online
 | * People without access to IT and the most vulnerable are excluded
* Technology dependent
* Discussion to abide by rules on confidentiality, etc
 |
| Plan for what you can do when all this is over | * There will be significant impact on the mental health of many people when this is over.
 | * Work towards your church being mental health-friendly,
* Provide a small peace or memorial garden or quiet garden,
* Get people trained to help bereavement or trauma support and work with other charities to support this
 |

# **Risk assessment for designing our response**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Response: |  | Name of lead assessor: |  |
| Date completed: |  | Date for review: |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | ***If high or medium risk rating, then complete below:*** |
| What are the hazards? | Who might be harmed? | What are we already doing? | RiskRating (L, M, H) | Action to be taken to control/reduce risk: | Who will action? | By when? | Reassess: Has risk been lowered? | Datecompleted |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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*Source:* [*CSAN Reaching Out Toolkit*](https://www.csan.org.uk/embrace-downloads/#contact-form-2862) *(used by Father Hudson’s Care, 2020)*