

**Association of Directors of Adult Social Services
South East Region
Protocol for communication between
South East ADASS and DHSC during the pandemic**

1.0 Introduction

All councils within South East ADASS work co-operatively within a Regional Programme to help lead improvement in adult social care services according to a Memorandum of Understanding. The Regional Programme focuses on what councils can do better together and with partners.

As stated by South East ADASS in the DHSC Service Continuity and Care Market Review, it is crucial that new DHSC appointments work together within effective and well established regional arrangements. In this way new DHSC colleagues will more quickly understand the challenges within the adult social care sector and the region to better respond effectively, assure central government and be able to direct support where it is most needed within local systems.

This protocol describes working arrangements and the expectations of both South East ADASS and DHSC Regional Assurance Leads within established and structured governance arrangements in the region which are supporting the response of the sector to the pandemic.

2.0 Working arrangements

South East ADASS supports a South East Health and Social Care Collaborative (the Collaborative). This enables DASSs and other system leaders to have a single, coherent “offer” – an overview of the support and resources available to them collectively from regional and national organisations including the LGA/CHIP programme, NHS Confederation and NHSE/I, as well as South East ADASS. PHE is now a key part of these regular weekly discussions. Colleagues in the weekly Collaborative call link to the wider cell structure in the South East, particularly for care homes and testing.

In constructive early meetings with co-chairs of South East ADASS, DHSC Regional Assurance Leads have agreed to participate in weekly Thursday morning meetings of the Collaborative which is established and has a system-wide approach to respond to the pandemic.

3.0 What each party can expect

DHSC Regional Leads:

- a verbal summary from South East ADASS co-chairs of system pressures and key issues described by DASSs from across all 18 councils in the region
- direct and immediate communication from DASSs on issues arising which can be used to inform the Minister for Care
- detailed analysis and discussion of data sets including the Capacity Tracker, PHE reporting from Pillar 1 and 2 testing and Joint Biosecurity Centre reporting with a direct link to DASSs through co-chairs for any support which might be required
- a highly informed and time sensitive understanding of risk
- discussion about targeted system support when required
- an opportunity to raise questions, concerns and issues for clarification with South East ADASS

South East ADASS:

- for all communication from DHSC Regional Leads to be channelled through this weekly meeting
- for questions from DHSC about a specific council to go to co-chairs who will co-ordinate the response from individual DASSs
- commitment that if issues are identified with care homes through a local council or South East ADASS that DHSC will provide an urgent response, working with NHSE/I and CQC as necessary
- for concerns and questions raised with DHSC Regional Leads to be escalated and a response given