

### Rationale for decision to close day services

The provision of SCAS day services has been severely impacted by the Coronavirus Pandemic and the emerging guidance from Government and Public Health England.

During the first national lockdown there was no official guidance on the operating of day services for adults with learning disabilities, and as such, the legislation that was implemented had to adhere to and the services closed.

Throughout the lockdown in spring, guidance began to emerge from a range of organisations including the Association for Directors of Adult Services, Skills for Care and the Irish Health Service on ways to begin to resume day services during the pandemic, whilst remaining in line with Government advice and legislation.

As a result of this guidance we produced robust risk assessments that included a raft of control measures to enable us to achieve the required risk assessment rating to allow us to proceed with the reopening of the services.

The key to our ability to maintain these services rest on our risk assessments, which are required in law, to evidence that we are able to control the overall risk to the safest level possible, thereby enabling the continuation of the service.

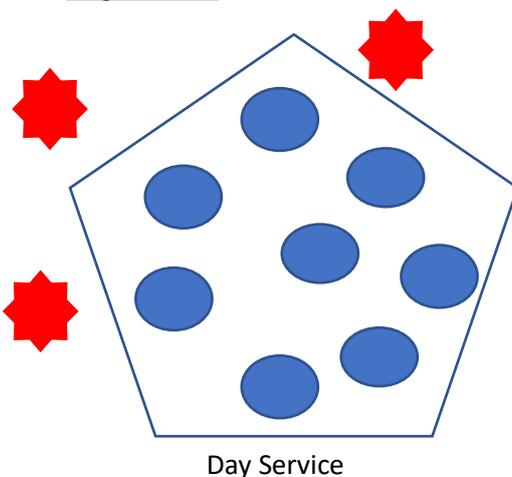
### Risk Assessments

Risk Assessments are based on a 'hazard', in this case it is customers contracting Covid-19; the likelihood of that hazard occurring, and the severity of the hazard should it occur. This is calculated using the formula: **Hazard level determined by Likelihood x Severity = Risk rating**

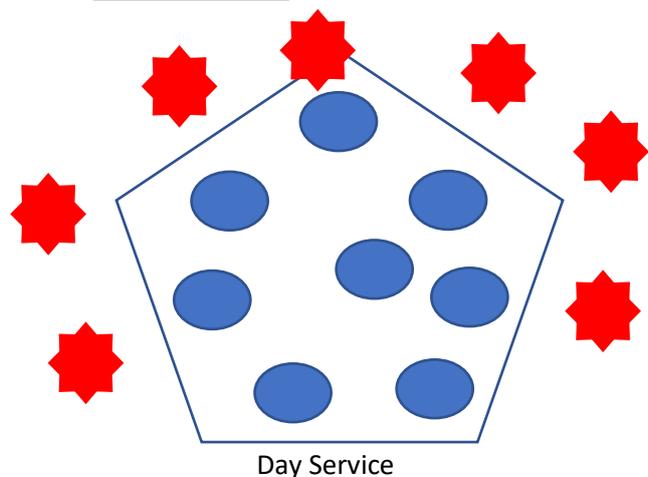
**This diagram illustrates how the current transmission rate has increased the likelihood of contracting Covid-19:**

 = Covid-19 community transmission rate       = Customers and staff

August 2020



November 2020



For information on rates of transmission visit: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-r-number-in-the-uk>

Between 27<sup>th</sup> October to 2<sup>nd</sup> November there have been 837 new cases (an average of 120 per day). There have been 3,907 new cases in October compared to 1,775 new cases in September, and 94 in August. In Sunderland there were 832 cases, a rate of 299.6 per 100,000 population, which is the third highest number in the region currently.

It is this information that has affected the overall risk ratings of our risk assessments for day services. The 'Likelihood' of people contracting the virus is currently so high that the option to continue safely is prohibited, despite the robust control measures we have in place.

The safety of our customers is our primary priority and given the vulnerabilities of many of those who use our services, the possible consequence of contracting Covid-19 could be life-changing or even fatal.

### **Comparison with schools**

The Government has said that schools can remain open during the current lockdown. There are many factors that have led the Government to make this decision, based on advice from scientist at SAGE and Public Health England, which has determined that children are less likely to carry the virus and, should they contract it, are less likely to be severely affected by it.

Many of our customers have associated health conditions that put them at increased risk of contracting Covid-19 and developing complications. These complications could require hospitalisation during a time when the NHS is under immense pressure and has announced this week it will move to its highest state of emergency alert, Level 4, in response to a "serious situation ahead" due to a rise in coronavirus patients needing intensive care.