



## A Message from Thera's Executive Team

23 April 2020



thank you

On 24 March 2020, we wrote to you - members of staff, volunteers, people we support and families/carers - expressing our thanks for your hard work, commitment and support during this difficult time.



change

In what is only four weeks later, a lot has happened and we have all seen change and difficulty as the “lockdown” has started.



difficult

We all see the daily news briefings, the statistics and the media coverage - some balanced, some less so - and it can be difficult to maintain perspective, to know what to think and where to turn.



protect

Our priority must remain to protect as far as possible those of you who are vulnerable, ensuring that we can continue to provide sufficient staff and other resources to maintain essential day to day support to people with a learning disability. Amidst the turmoil, we can all know that each of us is playing an important role in achieving this.



thankful

We can be thankful that, whilst we continue to see individuals - people we support, members of staff or family members - displaying symptoms associated with Covid-19 and needing to self-isolate, this is in small numbers.



praise

We want therefore to praise the exceptional success that this implies. All of you have attended to positive infection control, general good practice and followed the Government's guidance, even if you are finding this very difficult.



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sad news

At present, no staff that we know of have passed away from Covid-19, but sadly, two people we support have passed away recently as a direct result of the virus.



remember

Of one of those individuals, we should like to acknowledge the joy that she provided to those around her and to pay tribute to those members of staff who supported her and who, along with her family, have been deeply affected by their loss; and of the other to admire how hard he worked to find a job, highlight how much he had to endure finally to get things going his way and how much he too will be missed by those who knew him.



respond

It may be that these are not the last people that we lose and the character of each of us will continue to be tested in how we respond to such loss.



decisions

There are practical matters that challenge each of us individually and the organisation as a whole. Our policy continues to be updated as Government guidance changes and as the current situation develops. Our Steering Group has continued to co-ordinate the range of decisions and actions that we need to take to respond to the day to day issues that we all face.



PPE

There has been a lot of talk about PPE and the national and indeed international challenges around this. Thera went in to this situation with adequate stock and we have a clear plan to maintain it. Usage has of course increased and we do face the same problems of sourcing and supply as every other organisation in every part of the UK.

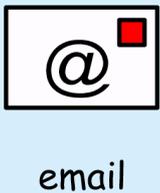


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We have applied a huge amount of time, effort and hard work to this issue and we have secured new sources of supply so that we are now less reliant on Government procurement.



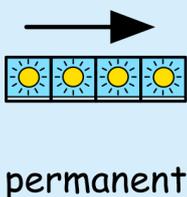
Those of you who make regular use of e-mail for work may have noticed some difficulties over recent weeks which was initially caused by an automatic software update. Believe it or not, we have, as a direct result of the world-wide spread of Covid-19, been impacted by a reduction in the supply of global technical IT support.



This has meant that we have had to wait longer for those knotty problems to be resolved, which cannot be fixed by “turning it off and turning it back on again” ! So a special shout-out for our IT team, and indeed for all of the staff working in our central functions, who have kept the often unseen but essential functions of the organisation rolling over recent weeks.



Sometimes, out of a crisis, positive change can emerge. It has been greatly encouraging over the last four weeks to see the focus on NHS workers broaden increasingly to include an acknowledgement of social care staff as an absolutely critical part of the body of key workers upon whom the country relies.



We must now hope that this acknowledgement turns into a permanent reality of an increased status for the work that each person who works for Thera undertakes.



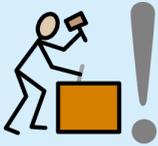
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stories

We do continue to hear some amazing stories about those of you who work or volunteer for Thera and about those of you who are supported by Thera. Some are encouraging, some heart-warming, some bring tears to our eyes.



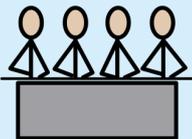
effort

All of them though are a testament to the fantastic effort each of you is making at this difficult time.



thank you

Once again our thanks go out to each and every one of you.



group executive  
team

**Jenny, Karen, Matthew and Simon**

**Group Executive Team**